

REVIEWS

*JEAN BESSIÈRE. *Dire le littéraire: Points de vue théoriques*. Liège-Bruxelles: pierre Mardaga, 1990. 338 pp. FF 242.00

Un constat paradoxal détermine la démarche critique de cet ouvrage de réflexions épistémologiques sur la littérature, sur la constellation de concepts, de théories critiques que la "modernité" aura forgés pour tenter sa caractérisation: depuis les notations de "l'intransitivité" et de la "dépragmatisation" du texte littéraire et la conclusion (rétrospectivement analysée par Jean Bessière pour ce qu'elle est: une aporie), de l'irrésolution du sens qui résulte de cette décontextualisation jusqu'aux "idéalismes herméneutiques" de toutes tendances qui lisent le texte en le soumettant au contraire à une contextualisation coercitive, celle de l'attente des lecteurs, de sa fonction idéologique, de son pouvoir "configurant" etc... Or, il faut constater que si la littérature est, certes, du langage rien de ce qu'elle est, ne peut être dit à partir des lois et des fonctions qui régissent le langage commun et son emploi dans le cadre de la communication interhumaine "courante." Le littéraire apparaît ainsi comme l'autre de tous les discours, comme un art de faire qui déjoue toute description. Aussi l'acte critique ne devra-t-il pas oublier que dans sa tentative de rendre compte de cette altérité radicale il s'institue lui-même comme fiction. Et c'est bien la raison pour laquelle, dans le titre même de l'ouvrage, le "littéraire" apparaît prédicat placé sous l'empire du dire. Exemplaire façon de signifier que tout acte critique est d'abord mise en communauté de deux organisations, de deux stratégies fictionnelles; celle constitutive de l'oeuvre littéraire elle-même et celle instaurée par l'acte critique qui cherche à la "dire."

Mais que l'on ne se trompe pas sur la nature de ce constat; l'identification de cette double aporie est formulée "hors de tout désenchantement de la raison." C'est précisément en effet dans cette double "communication inachevée" que réside à la fois la justification même de la continuité des élaborations critiques qui en rendent historiquement compte. Puisque "l'écriture est un médium à faible définition ... un matériau qui ne cesse d'advenir" (317), c'est dans le rapport "j'écris, tu me lis [que] se résoud tout pouvoir d'écrire et [que] se trouve exclu tout accomplissement téléologique du littéraire" (299).

Dire le littéraire déplace utilement, en cette fin de millénaire, la question de la caractérisation de la littérature. À l'écart de tout dogmatisme idéologique, cet ouvrage de réflexion synthétique rappelle avec force que la littérature et son interprétation sont d'abord un faire, une volonté de communication,

idéologiquement "faible" et, parce que "faible," porteuse d'un authentique pouvoir démocratique: celui du partage des discours. (PHILIPPE DAROS, UNIVERSITÉ DE PICARDIE)

*GEORGE P. LANDOW. *Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992. 242 + x pp. US\$ 48.50

The substantial, permanent feedback impact of computers on the (re)conceptualizing and (re)theorizing of literature has not yet been fully investigated, although computers have manifested themselves as valuable research tools in many fields of literary research since the early 1960s. George P. Landow's *Hypertext: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*, a reader-friendly book, is certainly a welcome contribution to the current exploration of the effect that computer technology has on scholarship, and to the investigation of how computers have changed and why they will continue to change the concept and theory of literature. Landow's book, different from most computer assisted research works, can well be regarded as self-reflexive or as a theoretical reflection on the role of computers in criticism and literary theory. "This book," Landow claims, "is an invitation to make connections. Take it, then, as a plea to link up very different areas of endeavor — contemporary critical and literary theory and late-twentieth-century-state-of-the-art computing — that supposedly have little in common" (203).

Landow employs computers as something other than number-crunchers or research tools in his study, namely as major conceptual foundations for his theoretical "reconfiguration" and critical analysis, and as powerful analogous models for his examination of the complex processes involved in experiencing literary text. His endeavour is worth our attention because it explores new ways to use computers in a less mechanic but more theoretical manner, and seeks for a more relevant and more extensive use of computers in criticism and literary theory. Specifically, Landow examines a new and unique environment — hypertext in relation to various critical theories, and explores their "confluence" in the present re-conceptualization of the text, the author, the narrative, and literary education. His research is designed as a two-way process, which highlights the convergence of contemporary critical theory and computer technology, and illustrates the connection between electronic hypertext and other printed text. Landow argues that "over the past several decades literary theory and computer hypertext, apparently unconnected areas of inquiry, have increasingly converged" (2).

"Hypertext" is not a system but a generic term, introduced by Theodor H. Nelson into the discourse of computing in the mid-1960s (a few years before Julia Kristeva [1969] introduced the term "intertextuality" into the discourse of literary criticism) to describe the writing done in the "nonlinear" or

"nonsequential" space made possible by the computer. Unlike static printed text, hypertext provides multiple, variable paths between blocks of text or what Roland Barthes terms *lexia*. With its webs of linked lexias and its networks of alternate paths, hypertext presents a radically divergent textuality, multi-sequential and interactive, favouring a plurality of discourses over definitive utterances and freeing the reader from domination by the author. (Hypermedia extends the scope of hypertext by including visual information, sound, animation, and other forms of data.) Instead of facing a stable text, the hypertext reader sees only the image of a single virtual text on the computer screen. Behind that virtual image lies a nest of Chinese boxes of possible texts that can be represented on the screen in different ways, according to the reader's choice of links to follow. With its multi-sequentiality, flexibility, and expandability, hypertext provides a infinitely re-centrable textual heterarchy whose provisional point of focus depends upon the choices made by a truly active reader.

Because it breaks down habitual ways of understanding and experiencing text, hypertext has important implications for our changing conception of text in a broad sense. The theoretical significance of hypertext, as Landow argues, converges with some major points of contemporary critical theory of text, particularly with Jacques Derrida's theory of decentring and differential network, with Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of polyphony and heteroglossia, with Roland Barthes's conception of readerly versus writerly text, with post-modernism's rejection of sequential narratives and unitary perspectives, and with the issues of intertextuality, self-reflexivity, and con-textuality. "The many parallels between computer hypertext and critical theory," Landow maintains, "have many points of interest, the most important of which, perhaps, lies in the fact that critical theory promises to theorize hypertext and hypertext promises to embody and thereby test aspects of theory, particularly those concerning textuality, narrative, and the roles or functions of reader and writer" (3).

Inquiry into hypertext will help us theorize the text and characterize some of its deep structures. "Using hypertext," Landow observes, "critical theorists will have, or now already have, a new laboratory, in addition to the conventional library of printed texts, in which to test their ideas" (3). With the help of computer technology, for instance, hypertext can readily fulfil Roland Barthes's description of the "ideal text" whose "networks are many and interact, without any one of them being able to surpass the rest.... We gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively declared to be the main one; the codes it mobilizes extend as far as the eye can reach, they are indeterminable" (S/Z, 6). In a very important sense, hypertext subverts our habit of thinking in terms of linearity and hierarchical trees, and challenges us to reflect on the nature of textual discourses. In its radical mobility, hypertext, "which [is] by definition ... open-ended, expandable, and incomplete" (59), "forces us to extend ... the dominant notion of a 'text'" (59). Because hypertext is capable of

linking all variations, Landow argues, "we must abandon the notion of unitary text and replace it with conceptions of a dispersed text" so that any work will appear as "a dispersed field of variants and not as a falsely unitary entity" (56). If we examine Jacques Derrida's discussion of text, we certainly encounter a "hypertextual Derrida," who insists that text "is henceforth no longer a finished corpus of writing, some content enclosed in a book or its margins but a differential network, a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself, to other differential traces" (*Deconstruction and Criticism*, 83-84; *Hypertext*, 59).

The malleability of the electronic medium and the enormous possibilities for information gathering, linking, sharing, and appending lead Landow to make a number of theoretical assertions about the possible re-defining of the author and narrative. In chapter three, "Reconfiguring the Author," Landow explains that the collaborative nature of much work in hypertext makes the concept of authorship much "more problematic than in the world of print" (100). "In reducing the autonomy of the text, hypertext reduces the autonomy of the author" (72) and calls for a "collaborative authorship." The collaborative aspect is analogous to the world of film, where many individuals work on various aspects of production; but hypertext collaboration is primarily intellectual and distinctions are more difficult to make. Drawing from his experience in creating *The Dickens Web* at Brown University, Landow explains that this project "exemplifies the kinds of collaborative authorship characteristic of hypertext.... Creating *The Dickens Web* involved dozens of 'authors' and almost that many kinds of collaboration" (96). For Landow, the increasing use of computer hypertext not only affects the way we understand the text and the author, but also changes the way we conceptualize narrative.

In chapter four, "Reconfiguring Narrative," Landow attempts to provide a new configuration of narrative, but he is not able to distinguish clearly between conventional plot and his new model of narrative. Although he refers to quite a few literary and critical works, Landow does not provide a clear description of his new concept of narrative; instead, he talks too much about "the reader's experience" in reading a hypertext story. The closest Landow comes to defining hypertext narrative is through several vague phrases: "Hypertext therefore calls into question (1) fixed sequence, (2) definite beginning and ending, (3) a story's 'certain definite magnitude,' and (4) the conception of unity or wholeness associated with all these other concepts" (102). Obviously, the book's weakness is its discussion of narrative, where it offers more questions than answers, and more confusions than configurations. But probably just because of this, *Hypertext* can be considered as an open text, which does not seek a critical position to rest in but rather works to open still more laborious pathways of critical inquiry.

The research Landow has done is valuable, not only because the comparison of electronic hypertext with printed text helps us re-theorize the text, the author and narrative, but also because the comparative investigation points to and characterizes some deep constructions in a larger context beyond the computer screen and the page of a book. In chapter five, "Reconfiguring Literary Education," Landow explains how hypertext can improve teaching in the age of the computer: "Hypertext, by holding out the possibility of newly empowered, self-directed students, demand that we confront an entire range of questions about our conceptions of literary education" (120). The multilink and multimedia aspects of hypertext encourage collaborative learning among students and teachers, and allow the teacher to include photographs and maps, as well as historical and interdisciplinary articles on the subject being studied. "Since the essence of hypertext lies in its making connections, it provides an efficient means of accustoming students to make connections among materials they encounter" (128). In addition to the effect it has on literary education, hypertext also challenges us to reflect on the operations of the human mind and its product — human thought: "Hypertext systems promise — or threaten — to have major effects on literary education, and the nature of hypertext's potential effect on human thought appears in descriptions of it from its earliest days" (121). Unlike users of most computer systems, Landow explains, "hypertext users must be mentally active while interacting with the information" (121). Probably one of the things that is so intriguing about hypertext is that it shows how we come along a complicated, "forking-paths" mental map to a new conception of text through defining the actions that take place when the mind is engaged in the process of creating, analyzing, and sharing text.

After the four major chapters in which Landow "reconfigures" the text, the author, narrative, and literary education respectively, the book suddenly opens up a "political vision of hypertext," asserting that "like earlier technologies of information and cultural memory, electronic computing has obvious political implications" (175). At this point, Landow shares Edward Barrett's view that

in essence, then, text is a social construct, and "hypertext" a paradigm for the social construction of meaning or alternate "texts." The highly touted non-linearity of hypertext should be taken in its most complete sense: an a-cyclic, asynchronous sharing of language around central topics of concern — a communicative function for the creation of new texts, new scripts for the understanding of the individual and the group. (*The Society of Text*, xiii-xiv).

As "a democratic," "multicentered," and "even anarchic" medium, Landow argues, hypertext promotes "a new kind of academic freedom and empowerment" (177). Landow also suggests that hypertext, whose potential has thus far been only partially realized, calls the dogmas of the whole communal cultural medium into question, and consequently disturbs the conventional cultural

discourse and social and linguistic codes by which we articulate our experience of the world. "Electronic hypertext, the latest extension of writing, raises many questions and problems about culture, power, and individual" (203). Hypertextuality, therefore, is in effect a critical consciousness which demands that we dislodge from our speaking and writing of the world our unspoken and unwritten habits of thoughts. The challenge that hypertextuality poses to our modes of apprehension is not restricted to our role as readers of electronic or printed text but one which informs our reading of the world. (BENZI ZHANG, THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY)

*ANTONIO GARCÍA-BERRIO. *A Theory of the Literary Text*. Kenneth A. Hom, trans. of *Teoría de la literatura: la construcción del significado poético*. [Madrid: Cátedra, 1989]. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1992. 544 + x pp. US\$ 170.00

Among recent attempts to offer a general approach to the literary text, García-Berrio's volume counts as one of the most extensive and most traditional contributions, deserving adequate credit. Theoretical arguments in the book combine two kinds of mapping out of literature: the rhetoric and the Jungian persuasion of such thinkers as Bachelard and Gilbert Durand. For García-Berrio, "literature is a conventional and optative practice in its cultural transmission, but not arbitrary in its natural, essential foundations" (146). "Literary meaning is formulated and lives in a multiple, uninterrupted tradition" (147). This essentialist view on the status of literature, evolves via self-sufficient, thus inoperative oppositions, toward a headline naturalizing view on literary theory. It appears to the author that

literary aesthetics and poetry fulfill their function by corroborating the existence and operation of *aesthetic universals* which exist beyond any chance form of conventionalism, beyond any purely social consensus. To discover and explain the textual contents and mechanisms for the production and reception of meaning — immanent in the text's material scheme, yet transcending its confines — is the current challenge facing criticism. (5-6)

One of the alleged proofs of the existence of such universals lies in that "there is something in the great works of art, *Don Quixote* or *Las Meninas*, in the most immanent and material structures of their composition, which places them safely beyond any whimsical and irresponsible forms of consensually and culturally ascribed value (27).

This routine contention is backed by an unrelated one — that

the formalist methodology already offers us a secure basis for dealing with literature in an objective way.... Such an objective analysis of the text at the linguistic level presupposes being able to neatly and securely fix the most concrete domain of its artistic difference and uniqueness. (25-26)

This outright structuralist view expands to the level of the whole: "modern poetics definitively established the organic principle of the text's general structure as a level of decision even before the phenomena was generally accepted in linguistic theory" (22). The text is, not uncommonly, invested with transcendental virtues, and comes back in the world — of reading, of analysis — as an unquestionable entity. Yet the "organicity" of art is a notion that may not be as definitive, given that it is a historical concept; theory conceived as an *organon* always needs an "organic object" called text, in order to be granted unquestionable epistemic relevance. García-Berrio trusts a general "poetics, literary theory's first historical product — and presently its chief alternative," (6) which, against

Blanchot's and Derrida's aesthetic of despair ... can rediscover and complete the founding stimuli of the Romantic concepts of imagination, in view of the present school of the poetics of imagination which, with Bachelard and Durand, has already constructed a *symbolic semantics* of mythic representations and which is on its way towards constructing ... an *imaginary syntax* of the fantastic designs and schemes of anthropological orientation. (17)

In order to be set in motion, a general poetics must obviously assume convictions of a "universalist type" and this appears to the author to be an "entirely plausible task" (20). But I wonder whether the project of recentralizing rhetoric in its chiefly old clothes represents a reasonable choice. The author suggests we should look at literary theory as part of a supposedly harmonious conglomerate of humanities, so that nothing already acquired would be disregarded in the process of the advancement of knowledge. The ethical step may follow: consideration of literature taken out of the conglomerate will concern us as an adulterous operation. This is a universalism whose extensional character leaves no room for intensional contentions. Once "poetics, or general poetics" is made to "essentially coincide in content with a well-founded theory of literature," (36) the philosophical interest in literary theory, one might say the theoretical interest as such, diminishes considerably. As a consequence, the Proppian model is adopted as the first and founding success of the modern discipline of poetics, the reader is pushed out of the picture, back to its insignificant "nowhere" from the insignificant "everywhere" it had been placed in the wake of *Rezeptionsästhetik* (a trend which García-Berrio repeatedly criticizes for having distorted the status of literary meaning, 148 ff).

The author denounces the historical challenges to structuralism, as he claims for the universals a place denied to them in contemporary thought: "the antimetaphysical deconstructive method in philosophy or literary criticism can achieve little construction or deconstruction as far as poetic expressiveness in literature is concerned," for "expressiveness annuls the rational organization imposed by the *différence*, its poetic effects naturally recover the dissolved substance of the *trace* for artistic discourse" (129-30). But García-Berrio's concept of expressiveness has the quality of a "metaphysical entity," thus able to ground an opinionated rejection — but no significant analysis — of deconstruction. Deconstruction is said to present "itself as a legitimate activity, of course, but as an inadequate one" (224). *Rezeptionsästhetik* and deconstruction are made into the enemies of a more balanced, traditionalist view of literature, in which the author is initiated by Umberto Eco's journey from the limitlessness of the *opera aperta* of the sixties to the quieter sail of the late 1980s, by when the Italian theorist had, the author implies, exemplarily and wisely renounced the "dogma of the infinity of literary meanings." "As a result," writes García-Berrio, "I believe I understand the kind of literary rhetoric I am calling for: an authentic *general rhetoric*, capable of accounting for all of the special features characterizing linguistic expressiveness already collected or still lacking in the classical inventories of schemes and figures" (83-84). In his understanding, the youthful strength of the discipline of theory is regained by means of typology; the descriptive character of rhetoric is meant to invade literary theory, and, in unmaking its philosophical claims, to rejuvenate it.

Such a revolution-through-tradition needs a wide array of unmakings; their sheer amount accounts for the dimensions of the book. The Spanish theorist finds worthy the search for "the foundations of absolute poeity," based on the existence of "expressiveness [which] sets itself apart from literariness by the absence of conventional and automatic features ... constitutes the simplest rhetorico-verbal expression or form of aesthetic value" (103, 84). García-Berrio divides the authors who helped revive the interest in rhetoric in two categories. Those who, like Lausberg and J. Martin, investigate the classical tradition, "motivated by a desire to exhume rhetorical science in all of its various aspects and dimensions," and lack "the will to integrate that science... within the schemes of modern disciplines of discourse." On the contrary, such authors as Todorov, Genette, the members of the "Groupe μ ," H. Plett, and others

coming from different modern disciplines dedicated to the study of discourse... have caught a glimpse of the possibility of finding in the categories and analytico-interpretative paradigms of rhetoric some productive assistance for expanding or even resolving certain crises in their own respective disciplines (113, 116).

Looking for an ultimate taxonomy of figures, he finds the classical systematization of figures to be "an accomplished fact" which "provides us with a ready

and available set of theoretical and analytical instruments" (116). However, the cartography of the *intentional styles of expressiveness* (115), (that is, the figures of speech), looks more like a false beginning and a real cenotaph of the theoretical activity. One notices how the lack of theoretical control of the revivalistic enterprise is substituted for by the enthusiasm of "interdisciplinary." García-Berrio suggests the collaboration between rhetoric, poetics and linguistics as a form of *interdisciplinary integration*, which "would tend to definitively reorganize studies of the literary text, restoring the old doctrinal branch of classical rhetoric, integrated with the accurate contributions of current poetics and linguistics. This, clearly, is the option I consider as the most viable path for a general rhetoric" (117).

Such a definitive mega-project is a common extension of a quantitative and depth-lacking mode of conceiving literary theory. The author has no doubts that

the *superiority of classical rhetoric* [which] is absolute as compared to the experience of modern criticism, even without including what poetics has to offer as far as its attention to the artistic features of expressiveness is concerned, based on the infinite figures and schemes it has developed in the domain of *elocutio*. (121)

Going to the heart of the matter, he denounces the widespread irresponsible permutability of *literariness* and *poeity*; instead, these are never synonymous terms, nor are they alternating qualifiers applicable to one and the same feature of language (cf. 86-88). "Poeity ... is a feature of certain literary realizations, an aesthetic property that asserts itself as an unexpected, unforeseeable and unconventionalizable effect" (151). Aside from the general value of this proposition, García-Berrio brings the valuable suggestion that "the modern concept of novelty needs to be substituted, in the case of classical art, with the more general effect of *marvelous surprise*, the enrichment of intellectual, sentimental and aesthetic experience in the transmitter-receiver interchange" (82).

On the technical side, the idea that the search for modern *topoi* would debilitate the project of an "authentic general rhetoric" (a formula often repeated) is a worthy caveat. Yet in order to reconstruct literary theory as a general rhetoric, more is to be unmade than García-Berrio's book lets to be seen: feminist criticism, (post)lacanian psychoanalysis, the social and political concerns salient in much of the criticism of the last two decades, all these present no interest to the author. His book belongs to an older universe of critical discourse. By the same token, one acknowledges the effort made by the author to justify his own position by approaching the "inimical" directions in critical thought only to dismiss them, after short, sometimes inconclusive critiques. Also, the book is rich in short illustrative literary analyses; it presents useful historical literary connections, especially with regard to the Spanish domain.

A Theory of the Literary Text contains an ample but somewhat idiosyncratic bibliography; given its scope, it is rather odd to see that many significant authors are either missing completely or being too sketchily represented. Among the missing: Rimmon-Kennan, Cohn, Turner, Wolterstorff, Kibédi Varga, Dällenbach, Lacoue-Labarthe, Krieger, Franck, Lyotard, Johnson, Kuhn, Tarski, Carnap, Nancy, Brecht, Marcuse (but plenty of Lukács), Morawski, Geertz, Lacan, Uspensky, Ivanov, Steiner, Kott, Horkheimer, Blumenberg, Chomsky (and developments in generative syntax and semantics), Olsen, Scholem, Paz, Bellert, Trubetzkoy, Vance, etc. Others are represented by early works only; Derrida up to 1972, Ryan to 1981, Todorov to 1978, Blanchot to 1973, Sebeok to 1960, Rorty (only an article from 1982), Jameson to 1981, Kripke to 1959. García-Berrio provides fragmentary analyses of authors divided in two clear-cut categories: those with whom he agrees: Gombrich, Eco, Bachelard, Durand, van Dijk, Kuroda, Schmidt, and those with whom he rarely finds agreement: Blanchot, Derrida, de Man, Levinas, Bloom, Barthes, Jauss, Fish, Iser. He includes useful references to such Spanish critics as F. Lázaro-Carreter, J. Domínguez-Caparrós, C.M. Bobes Naves, J.M. Pozuelo Yvancos, D. Romero de Solís, T. Albaladejo Mayordomo, and also reminds one of the earlier Spanish contributions to twentieth-century poetics by Dámaso Alonso, Amado Alonso, and Carlos Bousoño. (CALIN-ANDREI MIHAILESCU, UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO)

*NORBERT GROEBEN and PETER VORDERER. *Leserpsychologie: Lesemotivation — Lektürewirkung*. Münster: Aschendorff, 1988. 378 + x pp. Cloth DM 38.00

A book published five years ago calls for a distanced review, especially since it is the companion volume to a previous tome from as far back as 1982 (Norbert Groeben, *Leserpsychologie: Textverständnis — Textverständlichkeit* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1982). *Leserpsychologie: Lesemotivation — Lektürewirkung* (LLL) still warrants our attention, however, for it is a cogent, comprehensive, and innovative theoretical argument about research on reading. The initiator of this two-volume project, Norbert Groeben, is a prominent psychologist of reading who has also been involved in the empirical study of literature since its inception in the seventies. He was one of the very first German researchers to criticize the newly launched reception-aesthetics of Hans Robert Jauss as falling short of its own objectives because it remained within the confines of hermeneutic text interpretation. Instead, Groeben advocated the study of actual processes of literary reception. LLL hence counts as a report on the state of the art in the psychology of literary and non-literary reading by one of the experts and main protagonists. Its relevance has hardly diminished since publication, because the empirical study of literature moves rather slowly.

As is indicated by the second half of the title, the domain covered by this volume is twofold: LLL is concerned with those aspects of reception which precede reading (*Lesemotivation*, or motivations for reading) and follow reading (*Lektürewirkung*, or effects of reading); the actual process of reception itself was treated in the previous volume. The combination of motivation and effect in one book seems counter-intuitive, but the justification for this set-up was twofold: when the project was begun, there were many more studies on reception than on its motivation and effect, and the relation between motivation and effect themselves seemed to be inextricable. As a result, the juxtaposition of these two aspects of reading has made for a challenging perspective on literary reading.

The structure of LLL reflects this dichotomy in two relatively autonomous halves. The first part of the book contains chapters on the description (1) and explanation (2) of motives for reading, whereas the second part deals with the reception and effect of literary texts (3) and the effect of non-literary or "pragmatic" texts (4). The reason for this curious asymmetry between the two parts is interesting: most research on motives for reading deals with people's selection of reading matter and thus includes both literary and non-literary texts within its purview; but the effect of literary and non-literary reading has been modelled and investigated in such divergent ways, that it is a matter of two entirely distinct traditions of research. Research on the effect of non-literary texts has tended to concentrate on the phenomenon of persuasion and resulting changes in attitudes of readers. In this respect, the theoretical and empirical work by Petty and Cacioppo occupies a legitimately central position in the exposition of Chapter Four. By contrast, the effect of literary texts has been largely approached in cognitive and emotive terms and speculation has almost entirely prevailed over empirical testing (Chapter Three).

The main feature of Vorderer's and Groeben's discussion of the research on literary effects in Chapter Three is their plea for a systematic *theoretical integration* of these speculations. Vorderer and Groeben also emphasize the need for attention to the conative (or attitudinal and behavioral) dimension which has hitherto been relatively neglected. It is striking in this connection that they have not attempted to build a bridge between the above-mentioned research on persuasion in non-literary reading and their *desideratum* for development of the conative dimension in literary reception. It seems to me that this link can be used for further development of research on literary effects. However, the discussion of the importance of the emotive dimension (248) signals what has since grown into a major line of research in the empirical study of literature. In the face of a lack of an integral model of literary reading effects, the authors believe that the typically piecemeal empirical research on each of these dimensions is provisionally warranted (250).

The limited number of *empirical studies* on literary effects is rightfully signalled by the authors, and the situation has not dramatically improved since.

Most literary research on textual effects has remained limited to a description of the *Wirkungspotential*, or "effect potential," of literary texts. In a critical discussion, Groeben and Vorderer raise the question of the reliability and validity of these descriptions. Reliability is at stake when we are dealing with the intersubjective content of text analyses, and literary studies have not been strong in guaranteeing this aspect of their results. Validity is in peril because there is no one-to-one relation between textual meaning and structure on the one hand and readers' realizations of this effect potential on the other. These comments in *LLL* on the availability of reliable and valid empirical studies have lost nothing of their interest today.

One critical point regarding this section of the book concerns the demarcation between effect and reception: when it is observed that the realization of the effect potential of texts is affected by reader and context variables, reference is made to work by Hoffstaedter and Meutsch, who investigated the result of reception processes by means of recall tasks and other off-line measures. However, *the result of reception* is not identical to *the effect of reading* in the broader sense of relatively long-term changes in knowledge and attitudes. This is an area which could have been developed further. It could also prove of crucial interest to the future incorporation in literary studies of the conative dimension referred to above.

If Part II of the book has a relatively psychological bias, Part I is comparatively sociological. Chapter One offers data on the competition between reading and other leisurely activities such as television viewing; on patterns of book acquisition; and on preferences for various types of reading materials. These data are related to such reader variables as class, sex, age, education, and so on. Chapter Two goes on to discuss the three most important attempts at explaining these patterns. First, there is the class-oriented approach, which relates the social position of readers to their diverging, primarily cognitive needs, a relation which is manifested in typical preferences for popular or "high" literature. Second, there is the socialization approach, in which individual developments can be related to, but also divorced from, the monodimensional perspective of class, because individual differences can also be incorporated. And third, there is the psychological approach based on curiosity as a motive for reading (Berlyne); curiosity can be related in various ways to different contexts of reading. The chapter ends with a consideration of the implications of these views for the teaching of literature.

LLL has managed to separate the issues of motivation and effect in a theoretically satisfactory and stimulating manner, but it has simultaneously reinforced the link between research on effect and reception. There are many interesting connections between these various aspects of reading which researchers of literature can explore on the basis of the theoretical integration achieved in this volume. It may thus be of considerable help in reducing the gap

between literary and non-literary research on reading. (GERARD STEEN, VRJDE UNIVERSITEIT AMSTERDAM — KATHOLIEKE UNIVERSITEIT TILBURG)

RONALD BOGUE, ed. *Mimesis in Contemporary Theory: An Interdisciplinary Approach. Volume 2: Mimesis, Semiosis and Power*. Philadelphia/Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1991. 210 pp. US\$ 53.00

For readers of the first volume of *Mimesis in Contemporary Theory*, this second volume will itself seem an instance of the Platonic complaint about mimesis itself. It is a copy of the original, once removed from the model of the first volume, which itself is but an approximation of the ideal book on mimesis. The first volume of the series, edited by Mihai Spărius under the subtitle "The Literary and Philosophical Debate" (Philadelphia/Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1984), focuses on the recurrence of the issue of mimesis in seemingly non-mimetic contemporary theory, and then goes on to examine and problematize the traditional model/copy dichotomy of mimesis. The volume is successful not only because of the quality and variety of the contributions, but because they all touch on an illuminate a single subject — mimesis.

A second volume in such a project will inevitably face difficulties in finding its own distinct focus. Ronald Bogue, in editing this second volume, seems to have made a wise choice in turning to the issue of power and semiosis. If the first volume takes to task the notion of the "being" of the literary text, this second volume seems to turn to its "doing," the activity functioning behind the copy we normally take as the heart of mimesis. The collection does not, however, ever coalesce around this issue. The vicissitudes of the term "power" exemplify the problems that this collection has in finding its focus. If we expect a book on contemporary theory with "power" in its subtitle to touch on Foucault regularly, the rarity of his appearance can be attributed to the more physical definition of power given to the term by Spărius's discussion of Platonic mimesis: "In these poets, Socrates accurately sees the manifestation of the same violent, unmediated power that infused the Bacchic reveler" (18). Power, in this sense, is evidently intended as a supporting term which emphasizes the active play implicit in semiosis. But this explanation does not hold up. Linda M. Brooks's discussion of the fascistic nature of Anselm Kiefer's work has little to do with either mimesis or semiosis. It can only be justified within the collection by returning to the political, vaguely Foucaultian definition of power (Bogue writes in his introduction, "Brooks's focus, in her study of the painter Anselm Kiefer, is less on the configurations of power that produce signs than on the signs of power themselves"). But to do so is to offer two contradictory definitions of power which the collection never attempts to resolve or even discuss.

The lack of a genuine interface between these essays is the collection's principle weakness. Bogue has brought together essays that occasionally resonate

with each other but which do not rely on a unified set of terms. In the first volume of the series, which interrogates a single term (mimesis), such diversity is interesting and valuable. In bringing together three terms in this second volume (mimesis, semiosis, power), Bogue must find common ground for these essays. This second volume, however, not only ranges across three terms and various interpretations of those terms, across two thousand years from Plato to Baudrillard, but across media as diverse as print, painting and television. All in less than two hundred pages and only nine essays. The contributions, too, approach their task in the collection in different ways. Some essays, such as Giuseppe Mazzotta's discussion of Petrarch or Marcel Cornis-Pop's discussion of postmodern fiction, seem to see their tasks as providing an entrée into a field for the uninitiated. Other essays, like Brooks's seem to take as their task to discuss, in a relatively non-theoretical way, the nature of representation and mimesis in a particular work or oeuvre. Still other essays take as their task a more theoretical and detailed analysis and definition of mimesis and semiosis. The essays thus do not always seem to be working towards the same purpose.

There are, however, moments of resonance that suggest a general center for the collection. Spariosu's essay on Plato and Mazzotta's discussion of Petrarch focus on the issue of a physical power at work in the poet's coming to the world. Louis Martin's discussion of Renaissance painting picks up on the issues of semiosis as a way of problematizing representation that Spariosu's and Mazzotta's essays imply. Although it does not use the word "power," Martin's essay implies an understanding of the dynamic and very physical functioning of semiosis. Bogue's discussion of Deleuze similarly unites the issues of semiosis and power — as we would expect an editor's offering to do. Like Bogue's essay, Joel Black's Baudrillardian discussion of the implications of mass-media representation of the body hints at a connection to power, semiosis and mimesis. Indeed, it is in the contributions of Black, Martin and Bogue that the collection seems to find its most coherent and powerful focus. All three writers consider the interaction between visual representation and its physical basis and imply a broad sense in which the visual demands a physical trace that makes it possible and that forms a moment within its semiosis. One wishes that this topic were taken wholeheartedly as the focus it promises to provide for the collection, and that the collection explored in more detail the ways in which this issue is treated by other contemporary theories. Derrida, for example, is probably the contemporary theorist who has most explicitly formulated such a theory of power as force operating in representation (see "Force and Signification"), but a discussion of his thinking on force appears nowhere in the collection.

Thus, this collection is both overly broad in conception and too narrow in its range of theoretical reference to please critical readers. Because of the generality of this collection's tripartite topic, it is likely to attract many more readers than it is capable of satisfying with its reliance on Plato, Peirce and Deleuze. This is especially the case in the work's relevance to literary mimesis, which has

traditionally been the heart of mimetic studies. Missing is any reference to Auerbach's seminal work, to Barthes's "effet de réel" and Culler's *Waisemblance*, or to the semantics ("possible worlds") wing of narrative studies. While such a collection cannot address all issues and previous scholarship in mimetic studies, it fails to define its range and audience sufficiently that readers will know how to use these individual essays. Rather than an illuminating discussion of mimesis, this collection is more a tantalizing glimpse of a number of possible, important, but largely unrealized inroads to mimesis. (DANIEL PUNDAY, PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY)

"VIRGIL NEMOIANU and ROBERT ROYAL, eds. *Play, Literature, and Religion: Essays in Cultural Intertextuality*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992. 221 pp. Cloth US\$ 44.50; Paper US\$ 14.95

Play, Literature, and Religion: Essays in Cultural Intertextuality is framed by two wide-ranging essays that explore the relations between play, literature, and religion. Virgil Nemoianu, in "Literary Play and Religious Referentiality," begins the volume by assessing the current split in opinion about the relation between religion and literature: some theorists deplore covert religiosity in literary criticism; others point to the explosions of interdisciplinary studies in, for example, literature and politics, but the paucity of studies in literature and religion. Nemoianu calls for more objective, interdisciplinary studies of the "open spaces" between literature and religion — studies of religious imagery, typologies, and sensibilities in literature, the literary and aesthetic dimensions of religious texts, and the analogies and oppositions between literary, religious, and critical discourse. The essays in this volume, he claims, explore "another avenue of cultural intertextuality: play as a mediating structure." Literature, he suggests, may be "theologia ludens' God science at play, the sweetly palatable mode of dealing with ultimate existential interrogations," and religion may be "a product of our restless and interminable impulse of imaginative play, ever again inventing possible and alternative universes" (14).

In "Ritual: The Divine Play of Time," Louis Dupré concludes the volume with an analysis of how play, ritual, and drama arrest the flux, indefiniteness, and transience of our every-day experience of time, creating moments of heightened intensity and meaning that can redeem profane time.

Once alerted by Nemoianu's introduction and Dupré's conclusion, the reader can find in some of the intervening essays explorations of a relation between the three key terms in the volume's title, *Play, Religion, Literature*. Mary Anne O'Neill, in "Max Jacob — Meditation as Play," calls attention to the puns and riddles in the last poetic meditations of Jacob, a member of the Parisian avant-garde, who retreated to a monastery and died in a Nazi concentration camp. His verbal gymnastics, which, she argues, arose from his lifetime practice of meditation in the Ignatian and Salesian traditions, allow him "to explore in

rich detail the mysteries of Christianity" (131). Jean-Michel Heimonet, in "Hegelianism and Its Monsters: The Dynamics of Writing in Georges Bataille," traces the development of another Parisian surrealist, one for whom play became, not a way toward God, but a means of "putting in question" — a play of representation that will exhaust "the language of knowledge, utilitarian language whose use is mastery, while completely maintaining the effects of that exhausting within the limits of consciousness" (154). Even this destabilizing play, according to Nemoianu, can lead toward God — by a *via negativa* comparable to that of San Juan de la Cruz.

Other essays in the volume describe how literature invokes laughter, joy, and hope as appropriate responses to the divine. In "The Mirth of God: An Essay on Biblical Humor," Arthur Quinn reads several Biblical narratives (e.g. Jonah's adventures with the whale, Abraham's haggling with God to save the righteous in Sodom and Gomorrah) as comic. The incongruities and disproportions he finds in these stories strike the reader as "frightening and humorous and wondrous" — allowing a glimpse of God's transcendent mirth beyond our fret and stir. Similarly, Eric J. Ziolkowski finds laughter in the solemn. In "The Laughter of Despair: Irony, Humor, and Laughter in Kierkegaard and Carlyle," he explicates the moral, ethical, and religious importance of mirth to these melancholiacs, both of whom contemplated suicide. In "Guilty Pleasure: The Comic, the Sacred, and *Placer(es)* in the *Autos Sacramentales* of Calderón de la Barca," Barbara E. Kurtz traces the transformation of the character *Placery* (Pleasure) in the allegorical, quasi-liturgical plays of the seventeenth-century Spanish dramatist, Pedro Calderón de la Barca. As the plays open, *Placery* represents mere sensuous enjoyment, but as the allegory unfolds, he becomes the celebratory joy experienced in the eucharist, in hearing the divine harmony of God's order, or in bearing the good news of salvation. In "The Literary Value of Hope: Péguy's Porche du Mystère de la deuxième vertu," Robert Royal demonstrates how Charles Péguy's 150-page poem on hope combines humor and profound theological reflection to portray an existentially rich God at play with man. Although these provocative essays discuss God's mirth and humankind's hopeful and joyous responses in literature, they do not teach us how play mediates between literature and religion.

Furthermore, some essays in the volume never discuss either mirth or play. In "As It Is Said," Judah Goldin reconstructs the manner of instruction in the earliest schools in which all male Israelites studied Scripture. Although Sanford Budick's fine essay is entitled "Milton 'Ridens': Reinventing the Temporality of Tradition and Faith," it is not about laughter or play. It is a learned and lucid examination of "the redemption of being in tomorrow's-newness-now" achieved at the end of *Lycidas* (78). The final lines of Milton's pastoral elegy, so rich in allusions to its literary past, signal for Budick the "handing on to tomorrow" (93); *tradiitio* is a *handing on*, "an act of bequeathing to an inviolable newness

located in the future" (78). Giuseppe Mazzotta's "The Theology of Mario Luzi's poetry," traces Luzi's "decisive encounter with the work of Teilhard de Chardin," disciple of Henri Bergson. Luzi's poetry images "the self caught in a continuous process of creation, which no mask can ever arrest" (187), and replaces "the idea of creation as hermetically sealed totality with the idea of an open infinite creation, irreducible to the sovereignty of thought" (195-96). Whether or not Mazzotta sees this open creation as ludic remains unexplored.

Sometimes the essays in *Play, Literature, Religion* offer the reader tantalizing glimpses of how these three modes of human expression interanimate. But they do not fulfill their promise to show how play mediates between literature and religion. (ANNA K. NARDO, LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY)

PIERRE BRUNEL. *Mythocritique: Théorie et parcours*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1992. 291 pp. FF 181.00

En intitulant son ouvrage "mythocritique," terme forgé par G. Durand, P. Brunel n'entend pas présenter un traité systématique, mais réunir une série d'études toutes attentives à la présence dans le texte littéraire d'éléments mythiques, qui relèvent le plus souvent mais non exclusivement de la culture antique.

Une première partie théorique permet néanmoins de baliser et d'orienter le "parcours" critique de la seconde partie. A l'instar d'André Jolles dont la théorie des formes simples permet d'éclairer la question du mythe, l'auteur manifeste un souci de précision terminologique et montre comment une définition rigoureuse du mythe pourra servir le travail comparatiste. Après un exposé critique de la *mythanalyse* de Denis de Rougemont et de la *mythocritique* selon Gilbert Durand, Pierre Brunel approfondit son travail définitionnel en montrant comment le mythe précède le texte mais constitue pourtant "l'un des textes qui fonctionnent en lui." Néanmoins le mythe dans le texte reste un "accident particulier toujours nouveau" pour lequel il n'existe pas de règles générales, seulement des catégories: *émergence* quand le mythe affleure plus ou moins explicitement à la surface du texte, *flexibilité*, pour dire la souplesse d'adaptation du mythe, *irradiation* enfin pour exprimer le pouvoir de rayonnement de l'élément mythique, aussi tenu soit-il.

La deuxième partie de l'ouvrage, suite filée de lectures mythocritiques, montre comment le texte réélaboré le mythe, ainsi le sonnet de la triple Diane de Jodelle ou encore les *Méteores* de Tournier où la parodie du mythe des Dioscures conduit à la quête d'un langage mythique. Surtout, l'analyse du mythe de Sisyphe chez Baudelaire, d'Orphée chez Nerval, montre bien comment le mythe "rayonne" dans le texte. La figure d'Orphée qui revient encore à propos d'Hugo, Segalen et Breton scande le parcours critique et permet d'étudier ce rayonnement d'un texte à l'autre, de mieux comprendre par exemple le lien d'Hugo au romantisme allemand. Mais il s'agit moins pourtant d'explorer les

transformations du mythe que d'éclairer par le mythe l'oeuvre singulière: l'on retiendra par exemple la lecture du "Desdichado" de Nerval, éclairé par la figure de Mélusine, nouvelle fée pour "les cris de la fée." La mythocritique sait enfin interroger la littérature contemporaine, qu'elle voie en Prométhée une explicite figure de l'écrivain engagé, ou qu'elle décrypte en termes mythiques les jeux autobiographiques de Marguerite Yourcenar et ceux bien différents mais plus complexes qu'on a pu le croire d'un Robbe-Grillet.

Plus qu'une introduction à la mythocritique, cet ouvrage offre des lectures riches qui travaillent au plus près du texte, et reste donc fidèle à l'exigence de Pierre Brunel: une critique "au service de l'oeuvre." (SOPHIE RABAU, ÉCOLE NORMALE SUPÉRIEURE — ULM)

"PETER GENDOLLA and CARSTEN ZELLE, eds. *Schönheit und Schrecken: Entsetzen, Gewalt und Tod in alten und neuen Medien*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1990. 239 pp. + 11 ill. Cloth DM 75.00; Paper DM 48.00

Unter dem nicht sehr glücklichen Titel *Schönheit und Schrecken: Entsetzen, Gewalt und Tod in alten und neuen Medien* — angesprochen sind die alten und neuen Künste — sind eine Reihe wichtiger Arbeiten versammelt, insgesamt zehn, die auf ein Symposium zurückgehen, das am 25. und 26. November 1988 von der Universität-Gesamthochschule Siegen und dem Literarischen Colloquium Berlin veranstaltet wurde. In den Reflexionsbereichen der Literatur-, Kunst- und neueren Mediengeschichte behandeln sie Aspekte und Gestaltungsweisen jener dunklen Zonen des menschlichen Bewußtseins, deren Wurzeln in den sonderbaren Kombinationen von Sexualität und Grausamkeit, Erotik und Gewalt, Liebe und Tod, Dasein und Zerstörung in die "frühe Geschichte der Libido" (H. Hartwig) zurückreichen.

Die Arbeiten, von den Herausgebern chronologisch geordnet, verstehen sich als Beiträge zur literaturwissenschaftlichen Diskussion über die "Ästhetiken des Häßlichen, des Schreckens, des Bösen oder der Gewalt," die in der letzten Zeit, also gut zwanzig Jahre nach dem Erscheinen des von Hans Robert Jauss herausgegebenen berühmten Sammelbandes *Die nicht mehr schönen Künste: Grenzphänomene des Ästhetischen* (München, 1968) und dem "Erläutern der Aufklärung seit Ende der Studentenbewegung," von den Geisteswissenschaften erneut aufgenommen wurde (8).

Der Sammelband beginnt mit einem Beitrag von Jürgen Wertheimer zum klassischen Drama, "Blutige Humanität. Terror und Gewalt im antiken Mythos." Dabei geht Wertheimer von der interessanten These des 1932 geborenen Pariser Architekten, Ingenieurs und Essayisten Paul Virilio aus, dem "Enfant terrible der postmodernen Theorieszene" (J. Hörisch), in der behauptet wird, daß im "Akt des ... Krieges" das "Delirium einer Gemeinsamkeit" und die "Droge des Blutbrauchs" Freund und Feind, Opfer und Henker gleichgesetzt und "im Kampf Mann gegen Mann nicht nur homosexuelle Lust, sondern eine antagonistische

Einheit des Todeswunsches" hervorgerufen werden (13). Die Gültigkeit dieser These, die sich ursprünglich auf den Medienbereich bezieht, überprüft Wertheimer in den antiken Literaturen. Dabei gelingt ihm der überraschende und deprimierende Nachweis, es könne kein Zweifel daran bestehen, daß der Akt der Tötung in der Perspektive seiner jeweiligen Inszenierung "zum grundlegenden Bestandteil kollektiver ideologischer Selbstbewußtseinsuche" wurde, und zwar in der Vermittlung von Mythos, Ritual, Theater, Zirkus, Gottesdienst und bildhaften Darstellungen (36).

Der "vehementen Destruktionslust" in den Dramen Shakespeares (39) ist der zweite Beitrag Wertheimers gewidmet, "'Im Blutstrom blättern' — zum elisabethanischen Theater der Grausamkeit." In der "Tötung des Individuums von innen her," also in einer dem Tötungsakt vorausgehenden psychischen Zerstörung, wird "eines der zentralen Merkmale der Gewaltästhetik des elisabethanischen Zeitalters" nachgewiesen (48). Mit dem auf diese Weise erfolgten doppelseitigen psychischen und physischen Tötungsvorgang "leiten die Texte Shakespeares eine neue Dimension des Diskurses um Gewalt ein." Aus dem goutierenden "Blättern im Blutstrom" werde nun ein "forschendes, engagiertes Suchen nach nicht wahrgenommenen, gesellschaftlichen Deformationen" und "Bewußtseinsverbiegungen einer an inhumanen Kategorien orientierten Klasse" (52).

Cartens Zelles Versuch "Über den Grund des Vergnügens an schrecklichen Gegenständen in der Ästhetik des achtzehnten Jahrhunderts" — mit einer anschließenden Bibliographie der einschlägigen Texte — folgen Jürgen Klein mit einer Untersuchung der auf der "Wirkungsstrategie der Tragödienpoetik" (10) beruhenden Ästhetik und Semantik der "Gothic Novel" und Klaus Vondung, "'Überall stinkt es nach Leichen.' Über die ästhetische Ambivalenz apokalyptischer Visionen." Neuland im Bereich literarischer Gewaltszenarien betritt Peter Gendolla mit seinem mit einem Kafka Zitat überschriebenen Essay, "'Der übrige Körper ist für Verzierungen bestimmt.'" Über die Kunst der Einschreibung und den Sinn der Nachricht (Raymond Roussel, Franz Kafka, Rainald Goetz). "Sein Gegenstand ist jene 'Art von Literatur,' in der bestimmte Mitteilungen im Medium physischer Verletzungen erfolgen, beispielsweise mit den Schriftzeichen in den Körper des Gefangenen in Kafkas Erzählung "In der Strafkolonie."

Nach Karl Rihass Beitrag "Schreck laß nach! Stilisierter Schock — am Beispiel von Bänkelsang und Reportage-Literatur" untersucht Christoph Schreier das "Phänomen des Destruktiven in der Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts." Der Band schließt ab mit Horst A. Glasers Analyse der Pasolini Verfilmung von de Sades *Les 120 journées de Sodome* und Helmut Hartwigs Beobachtungen zur "Metaphorik des 'Unheimlichen' und 'Grausamen' in der Medien-theorie." Zu dieser Arbeit bemerken die Herausgeber in der Einleitung, daß Helmut Hartwig der Faszination beizukommen versuche, "die sich in den Systematisierungen des

Schreckens doch immer nur schlecht verstecken" (12). Und damit kommen sie auf einen zentralen Punkt zu sprechen, der im literaturwissenschaftlichen Diskurs über Gewaltästhetik immer wieder ausgeklammert wird, und zwar die Frage seiner Ontologie. Dazu die folgende abschließende Bemerkung.

Gewalt und Sexualität gehören zu jenen Motiven, die die Psychoanalyse triebhaft nennt. Die Darstellung dieser Motive umfaßt ein breites Spektrum, von der Gewaltpornographie bis zum legitimen künstlerischen Ausdruck. Die Ökonomie und Frequenz der Gewaltdarstellung in den alten und neuen Medien aber, die wegen ihrer Selbstreferentialität mit ihrem Gegenteil, die Friedfertigkeit, nicht in Verbindung gebracht werden kann, werden von ihren Effekten insofern bestimmt, indem sie im Vorgang der Rezeption von Resonanzen abhängen, die immer nur potentiell vorhanden sind, sozusagen als Programme. Und läßt sich damit vielleicht im angesprochenen Zusammenhang der Gedanken vertreten, daß die Darstellung der Gewalt nicht Mimesis ist, sondern Synthesis, Produktion? Mit anderen Worten, Gewalt erschafft sich selbst? Sollte sich dieser Punkt als gewichtig erweisen, basiert dann nicht die Gewaltästhetik auf einem zirkularen Denkvorgang, weil sie die Modi der eigenen Bereitschaft zu verstehen sucht, ohne sich selbst dabei zu hinterfragen? (HOLGER A. PAUSCH, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*JACQUES BERCHTOLD. *Des Rats et des ratières: Anamorphoses d'un champ métaphorique de saint Augustin à Jean Racine*. Genève: Droz, 1992. 273 pp. + ill. FS 75.00

Definitions of anamorphosis often mention curved mirrors, which in turn evoke the pleasurable ludic slant the well-disposed reader may indeed enjoy in these studies inspired by the author's "mémoire de licence": *Le poète, le rat et la littérature* (Genève, 1985).

Less one study than a collection of five lightly connected essays, *Des rats et des ratières* delights by its eclecticism and by its improbable, yet demonstrably fecund hunt for rats and ratraps and their multifarious metaphorizations. The book is nevertheless as serious as its subtitle, erudite, well researched and documented, and shedding new light on many an old text. Fortunately for some, it does not deliver what its introduction adumbrates: trendy, fanciful playing with rat, rat-ure and lite-rature, or with *mus* and Muse (see p. 17, n. 24), or with Rav[e]lnel (Nerval in *Les Faux Sauteurs*) and rat < art < Artaud (Derrida *fecit*, naturally). At the same time, certain introductory reflections point well beyond the precise topic at hand, and perhaps to a future, more general study not so much of the *dévo-rat-ion* "radicale de l'héritage du savoir livresque" (11), but of the necessary perfo-rat-ion of finitely woven (*texere*) and therefore closed texts which require "blancs ... trous ... [et] béances" to breathe and live and permit an infinite number of entries into and exits from them (17).

In the present book, Berchtold is more narrowly concerned with the possibilities and risks inherent in the use, by both writers and interpreters, of metaphors in general and the rat(trap) metaphor in particular. To wit: language, its experience in the reading of the Psalms, and its use in the writing of the exegete are forever bedeviled by the infernal *muscipulator* who, according to the Psalmist quoted by St. Augustine, sets his traps (*muscipulae*) in the hope that reader and writer, instead of rising from their nests of faith and soaring heavenward, will fall to earth and be caught like rats (*mures*). The most powerful trap is the metaphoricality, the *obscuritas* and the *mysterium* (folk-etymologically linked to *mus* and *muscipula*) of the Bible itself, for they bait arrogant readers into letting themselves be taken in (*prehendere*) by a purely literal *comprehensio* of the text, by a petrified idolatry of the letter (39). True knowledge can only be gained by a progressive and progressively higher understanding of the fundamental incomprehensibility of God and His Word.

Such mistrust of (human) language places St. Augustine the exegete between the extremes of a *vir linguosus* who should be suspicious of the very exegesis he utters, and the ideal orator who can do no more than carry his forever unspeakable sermon within himself. A leap out of this dilemma is suggested by the Psalmist himself whose words, since they are meant as a gift to God, have been offered him, in their divine perfection, by God who inspired them.

A millennium later, the metaphor of the rattrap is resolutely "prise à la lettre" (83) in writing and reified in art. St. Bernard, Odo of Cheriton and the didacticists of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries having prepared the terrain by elaborating on Ecclesiastes (6.26), *muscipula* not only is Eve but figures prominently in fifteenth-century paintings of the Holy Family as a reminder that Mary as *nova Eva* must have retained something of the nature of the *femina-muscipula* in order to magnetize the Verb's desire to incarnate Itself in her (72). Between Eve and Mary stands St. Gertrude of Nivelles (seventh century), depicted in the company of rats in Books of Hours and sixteenth-century devotional texts, who proclaims Mary's negation of Eve's negativity by leading the rats Mary delivered into a new Eden.

Another Gertrude, perhaps better known, is, of course, the spectator and target of "The Mouse-trap" in *Hamlet* (Act III). Oedipal Hamlet seeks to restore in her the Saint's part of Mary by denouncing her *muscipularity*, but in the naming and representation of the Queen and the play-within-the-play, metaphor, once dangerously powerful and reifiable, now fails, because the very moment any act of naming reaches for expression, it loses its pertinence (109), and because accounting for a world which has become too complex and is changing too fast, lies beyond human power (116). The metaphoric act, unable to translate Hamlet's *imaginaire*, makes of the tragic a burlesque travesty.

Moreover, Hamlet is, ultimately, the victim of his own trap metaphor. In his world, which he wants unequivocal, he is such a pathologically single-minded

rat exterminator that he cannot conceive of rats as avengers similar to those devouring the evil King Popiel of *Poland* in sixteenth-century legendary historiography (Julius Obsequens, Conrad Lycosthène, Pierre Boaistuau). Unlike Fortinbras's successful *Polish* campaign of purge and restoration, Hamlet's knee-jerk killing of *Polonius* eliminates not "a rat" (III.4) but a possible future agent of order and justice, and confirms in its debacle Hamlet's refusal or inability to surpass the role of exterminator and assume that of the Avenging Rat.

The rattrap is a prison in Clément Marot's ("[h]om[me]-rat") "Épître à son amy Lyon [read Villon]," both literally (*viz.* the Châtelet in 1526) and figuratively: the poet-rat will gnaw through the ropes of literary traditions that tied Villon to the *Romance of the Rose* as they tie Marot to the Rhétoriciens, and will thus reconstitute the master's truly revolutionary place in poetic history while at the same time reaffirming his own quest for new literary horizons.

On the other hand, the rat has since the Middle Ages been associated with heresy, and the lion even longer with the forces of evil. *Immiscipulated* "pour ... avo[r]ir / Mangé le lard, et la chair toute crue" during Lent, Marot reads in Lefevre d'Étaples that the *muscipula* is the dwelling *par excellence* of those who are persecuted for their faith, and as a disciple of Erasmus (see p. 166, n. 14) he assumes his role of defender of a new Church, purged of its tendency to obscure and control the Bible's message, by reinterpreting the lion, after St. Jerome, as the roaring disseminator of the true Word of God, and by chewing off the bonds in which Holy Scripture has been sequestered. Not unlike Ra[t]-belais ("ratz et blattes," rats and cockroaches), Om-rat writes his militantly unorthodox "Épître" in cipher, not only by exploiting the duplicity and metaphorizability of words, but also by nibbling words away to render signifieds uncertain and shroud the text in doubt (163).

In his *Phèdre*, Jean Ra[t]-cy[g]ne, who will have had the rat taken off his coat-of-arms by 1696, dramatizes his attempt to reconcile that part of himself which had been soiled and made shameful by his exploration of human nature, with his aspiration to rise like Pindar's or Horace's swan on wings of poetry above the human condition. Ra[t] and Phèdre thus oppose Cy[g]ne and Hippolyte, but also Phaëton, Icarus and Pyrénéé, for like them, the dramatist must ineluctably fall, (almost) bringing down with him the "vaste palais ... [et] les couloirs réguliers et plaisants des alexandrins" (195) in which he had tried in vain to hide, neutralize and purify the monstrous onslaught of the language of passion and of Thérémène's report (V.6). Rat and swan having "died" (200) with *Phèdre* (premiered on January 1, 1677), only the swan rises anew, one of the "Messieurs du Sublime," married (on May 30 or June 1, 1677), royal historiographer (October 1677), devout and seeking reconciliation with Port-Royal, and — silent until 1688 (*Esther*).

The book ends with a copious bibliography (203-23), an index (225-29), and forty pages of illustrations. (HANS R. RUNTE, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY)

*ANN E. MOYER. *Musica scientia: Musical Scholarship in the Italian Renaissance*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992. x + 325 pp. US\$ 44.50

More than fifty years ago, D.P. Walker wrote a long, well-known essay on "Musical Humanism": surveying a field of study marked by little more than the paucity of its scholars, and giving some idea of the wealth to be discovered. Five years later, Paul Oskar Kristeller called for research in the area. The responses took some time in coming. Partly they did so for reasons that Ann Moyer suggests: most scholars, musical or otherwise, simply lacked not only the expertise, but even familiarity with the vocabulary. As she points out, we may manage *secant* or *isosceles*, but "*tetrachord* or *diapason* are confusing or meaningless" (12). Humanist musical scholarship began by rediscovering the Greeks, so scholars had to familiarize themselves not just with Renaissance problems, issues, and terms, but with Ancient modes, practice, and philosophical claim. Furthermore, medieval and early modern musical practices were ill known, their relation with theoretical explorations — whatever they might be — even less so. As if this were not enough, musical theory was embedded in the mathematical sciences and it was carried out in or on several languages: Latin and Greek, Italian, French, German, Dutch, English....

Anglophone scholarship is now yielding an ever richer harvest, and showing how vital musical explorations are for understanding humanist work in several areas, poetry and eloquence far from the least of them. Four projects to publish ancient, medieval, and Renaissance texts in translation are ongoing (Claude Palisca's at Yale, Thomas Mathiesen's and Jon Solomon's at Nebraska, the older ones of Colorado College and the American Institute of Musicology). Andrew Barker's huge 2-volume Cambridge anthology of Greek writings is a library in itself. As important have been a series of critical and historical volumes by H.F. Cohen, Palisca, Gary Tomlinson, D.P. Walker, and others. Palisca's work as educator, encyclopedist, editor, translator, and scholar has been central. Thanks chiefly to him, the once received wisdom that the Renaissance in music began mystifyingly in the north (among Flemish and northern French practitioners) has been corrected. We now know that Italian work on theoretical manuscripts — discovery, transcription, translation, analysis, debate — as no less catalytic here than in other areas. (It also explains why the northerners were all working in Italy.)

We now know, too, that musical debate and practice were caught up just as much in the Plato/Aristotle *Sireit* as other disciplines were. Indeed, so are their scholars: Walker and Palisca got into considerable disagreement on the respective sides of the argument. Although this struggle once served to bring much humanist work to light, it now seems increasingly sterile and more is to

be learned from recognizing the coexistence of both "strands," as Moyer gently observes (2 n. 3). The judiciousness of her self-positioning is rewarded. *Musica scientia* takes its own place amid the remarkable scholarship enumerated. Moyer has written a fine history analysing Italian musical discovery and debate from 1480 to 1600. Her signal contribution is probably to have shown in detail how the science of music expanded from its place in the mathematical quadrivium to become a field affecting a very wide group of disciplines indeed.

It is not unfair, I think, to see Moyer's book as building on Palisca's massive *Humanism in Italian Renaissance Musical Thought* of 1985 (as who now does not?). She rightly limits herself to music as science rather than composition or performance, and to these years. The first limitation lets her concentrate on speculations paralleling other humanist debates. The second is set by their own history. Between 1480 and 1600, almost all the ancient manuscripts became available. After a longish hiatus, the last third of the sixteenth century saw the main heads of debate resolved or at least in place. She traces the "redefinition of music, from a subject whose theoretical basis rested among the mathematical disciplines of the quadrivium, to one studied in terms of poetics and taste": more exactly, to a subject that now distinguished a "science of sounding bodies (later known as acoustics) from the art of music" (3). The study of music played a fundamental part in rethinking relations between the "arts" and the "sciences." It suggested the separation was at best delicate, at worst invalid. An expressive art deemed to move the affections and please the senses, music was nonetheless grounded in number.

It is indeed misleading to argue for a passage from quadrivium to trivium, as many have. Humanist and post-humanist disciplinary divisions eventually became wholly different from medieval ones, and this was itself part of a reformulation of knowledge and its foundation. Students of music history have played a major role in teaching us this, and it is odd that so many continue to write as if they have not learned their own lesson. Perhaps it stems from the fact that as an expressive art, its natural allies were grammar, poetry, and eloquence. Perhaps because the main Greek tradition was Platonic/Pythagorean, and because it remained the strongest single element in the Italian debates right up to the end of the sixteenth century, so music was associated with occult philosophy and poetry again: especially as the mathematical sciences themselves moved away from attachment to that Greek tradition. Although mildly torn, and trading on the brink, Moyer finally argues not so much that there was a switch from quadrivium to trivium as that musical speculation helped reorganize knowledge altogether.

She starts, as she must, by presenting the reception of and debates over the Greek tradition (11-35). Through the Middle Ages, Boethius was standard. His transmission of a Pythagorean/Platonic tradition meant that the music of the quadrivium was not (and was not thought to be) derived from the physical

world, but was "a set of supposedly universal principles that also happen to explain physical phenomena. The theory is founded on rational order, not sense perception; the physical objects that produce sound may reproduce the divine order with greater or lesser precision, but they are definitely secondary in status" (17). Behavior that could not be quantified, that was "erratic and qualitative," merely gave evidence that the physical world was "mutable and imperfect" (17). In antiquity this tradition had been disputed by Aristotle's pupil Aristoxenus, who minimized mathematics, saw "aesthetic response as a matter of training," emphasized performance, and ignored issues central to both Plato and Aristotle about music's role in society and the individual's spiritual development (23).

These views were "known" to the Middle Ages only inasmuch as their criticism might be glimpsed in Boethius, who more or less paraphrased Nichomachus and Aristoxenus's chief critic, Ptolemy (although his medieval readers did not know this). Other than this the Middle Ages had only the vague (Pythagorean) texts of Martianus Capellanus, Macrobius, Cassiodorus and Isidore of Seville (and the part of Augustine's *De musica* treating poetic metrics). Writers such as Aristoxenus, Cleonides, Nichomachus, Ptolemy, and Aristides Quintilianus had to await the fifteen and sixteenth centuries. The medieval development of plainchant, and especially analysis of consonance, began to pose difficulties. Early plainchant followed Boethian (Pythagorean) tuning based on the three consonants, diapason, diatessaron, and diapente: octave, fourth, and fifth. By the fourteenth century, not only was polyphony widely explored, but sixths and thirds were in common use as consonants, and by the early fifteenth the fourth was even called a dissonance (sparking a most long-lasting debate). Moyer discusses only some of these developments, enough to show that by the late fifteenth century, the time was ripe for new researches and discoveries.

These begin in Italy around the mid-fifteenth century, with a generation to which Moyer refers as falling between the last era of "active medieval scholarship" and the beginnings of sixteenth century questioning (39). Nicolaus Burtius and his contemporary Bartolomeo Ramos de Pareja are symptomatic: the first taking a rather conservative, Boethian and quadrivial view, the second seeking (and using) new tunings and trying to introduce a new form of solmization in order to speak of it. Most important in these years — and for the sixteenth century — was Franchino Gaffurio (1451-1522). In his early writings, he too tended toward the past, but a series of his works probably written simultaneously, but published apart, became textbooks for the future: *Theorica musica* (1492), *Practica musicae* (1496), *De harmonia musicorum instrumentorum opus* (1518).

The second of these contained the beginnings of what would one day underpin a notable expansion in musical speculation. This was his discussion

concerning a rhythmic notation based on mathematical proportions. On the one hand, this led toward further emphasis on mathematics: it was an effort to apply Boethian pitch proportions to rhythm. On the other, however, it took music toward poetry, and Gaffurio noted the connection between musical rhythm and metrics as applied to poetry (76-78). The connection was an old one, to be sure: Greek poetry had always been thought to originate in song, and the connection was noted, for example, by Isidore (and implied in Augustine's remnant). The point here lay in Gaffurio's attempt scientifically to develop the relation. For its part, Gaffurio's *De harmonia* brought in another dimension destined for an important future. His examination of "the harmonies of musical instruments" was throughout informed by a strong historical sense: later debate would also wonder to what extent music — consonance, tuning, effect, and the rest — depended on local, not universal, conditions.

Any strong claim of this sort contradicts, as Moyer observes, all Gaffurio's arguments about the universal rationality of music and its effects, but it would nonetheless provide fertile ground for future scholars (82). For the moment, it is the case that he himself remained embedded in the Pythagorean tradition, and however potentially rich his arguments in different future directions, he saw them for the most part as extensions of a tradition. Thus, too, did Giorgio Valla see his own work. Trained as a mathematician, he worked extensively on music. In his 1501 encyclopedia *De expetendis ac fugiendis rebus*, he placed music among the quadrivial subjects, the mathematical sciences (in accordance with Aristotle) as both related to and outside material things and said it held "medium quendam locum [a certain middle place]" in the disciplines; he was suggesting that music, as one of those sciences, was also in some sort of median position (98). Valla's view could thus lend further weight to Gaffurio's music/poetry association.

By 1513, Raffaele Brandolini presented a public oration titled "De musica et poetica," arguing similarity in terms not of a Gaffurian mathematical relation, but in those of poetic furor. Both the poet and the musician transmitted divinely inspired truths, civilizing influence, the rewards of virtue and penalties of vice, and moral power. Brandolini's argument depended not so much on a similarity between music and poetry, as on their coincidence: for him poetry and music went together (he was himself a performer of poetry) (107-13). Here we see another influence on the direction music speculation was taking. This concerned the growing debate about the relation between words and music. Only recently was this understood to matter, and it had to do with discussion about the effect of music and poetry on the passions or affections of their listeners. On the one hand, claims about the effect of music on the human soul were familiar through the Middle Ages — they were, after all, a central element in the Pythagorean tradition. On the other, new discoveries had revealed all sorts of ways of

explaining these effects and increasing examples of the almost miraculous nature of such effects.

These elements — rhythm and metrics, mathematization, relation between words and music, effects on the passions, issues therefore of creativity and reception, historicization, and the rest — stayed central to discussion about music and its place both among human activities in general and among the disciplines more particularly through mid-century. Those issues which concerned the relation of music and language did not yet receive much, if any, development, but those that were more mathematical were more productive. Such mathematicians as Niccolò Tartaglia, Luca Pacioli, Girolamo Cardano all wrote more or less extensively on music. One of the earliest was among the most interesting: Lodovico Fogliano (*Musica theorica*, 1529) sought to link mathematics with sense perception. He reasoned that sound was generated by the motion of air, but that it was neither the air, nor the body moving the air, nor the motion as such: it was rather "an emotive quality [*passibilis qualitas*], proceeding from the violent and rapid motions of air, having its being in equal measure with it" (qtd. 144): sound is *not* number, but its motion may be described *by* number.

This, or a very similar view, was taken up by Cardano, who argued that the effect of music on the emotions did not depend on proportions, but rather on the way proportions are achieved (161). Taking Fogliano's views together with Cardano's (although Moyer does not), one could hope to find a way mathematically to describe the perception of proportions. Inasmuch as the proportions might be experimentally measured in the motion of the air, and as the perception in question is Fogliano's *passibilis qualitas*, quality affecting the passions, one might hope to achieve a measurement of emotive affect, as it were. Cardano further justified his claim about proportions by referring directly to Plato's argument that all perception depends on a recognition of order. Because the mind is imprinted with the divine order, it recognizes sounds (in this case) imprinted with the same order: the simpler they are the "better" they are — even the more beautiful — because they are easier to perceive (161-62). One might almost hope, then, to attain a mathematization of beauty.

Moyer certainly does not make any such suggestions as these. But they are logical enough extensions of the directions in which musical researches were being expanded. Still, such speculations were not yet wholly adapted by the last great theorists whose work is examined here. Of these Gioseffo Zarlino (1517-1590) certainly had the most subsequent influence. His *Istitutioni harmoniche* (1558) had four printings during his lifetime, and more after his death. His other two treatises also had several reprintings (202). Moyer sees the work as both the high point of the Pythagorean tradition and its end. He divided music into method and history. Under the first was the study of sounding bodies (using mathematics and ideas of sense perception drawn from Aristotle). This would

eventually be the science of acoustics. Under the second was the use of these principles in the study of music at different times and places, but also the study of the meanings people give to sounds.

Here, then, is the link (again) between sound and language, more particularly, between music and poetry (200). Zarlino, indeed, made an immediate connection between music, language and rhetoric (204), and between music, poetry, and metrics (206). He asserted that full emotional effect (*passibilis qualitas*?) was achieved by a necessary combination of harmony, meter, and proper accompanying text. The precise effect was, however, no less dependent on the listener, since the passions and their movement had to do with the humors. These last elements allowed for some notion of changes in musical style and consequent changes in effect. Zarlino still tried to balance eternal Pythagorean verities against such changes (216-17). As he wrote in 1588 *Sopplementi musicali*, music was still essentially mathematical — still "in" the quadrivium — but "history (good authors, etc.)" had to balance "reason and good method" (223).

The most important writers with whom Moyer concludes, Girolamo Mei (1519-1594), Francesco Patrizi (1529-1597), and Vincenzo Galilei (late 1520s-1591) all emphasized the historical and cultural aspect seen in Zarlino. The first was almost wholly concerned with issues of textual interpretation. As he placed music within the study of history and culture, he also sought to base its actual operation on an Aristotelian theory of mimesis (233): poetry and music, he said, were performed among the Ancients "by the same people, at the same time, for the same goals or ends" (234). The two fields could not be separated — precisely because they were *historically* bound. Patrizi held much the same view, arguing now that music was wholly a part of poetics, and that the text had to be given primacy (240). It was a culture-bound phenomenon to which Pythagorean universality applied no more (241). Galilei did not go quite this far, but he, too, echoed Zarlino's division of historical and cultural arguments on the one hand, and physical behavior and mathematical calculation on the other. By now the Pythagorean tradition had been almost entirely relegated to the margins (263).

Moyer ends with a number of minor writers, whose work confirms the directions in which musical speculation had been brought and the new divisions of the field (263-80): an emphasis on observation and mathematics on the one hand, on textual analysis of historical sources, stylistic criticism of modern performance, and a cultural understanding of effect on the other. With respect to this, I would again go farther, arguing that these speculations led to efforts to establish what one can best think of as a psychology and an aesthetics of reception. These are not Moyer's terms. To be quite fair, they are probably not even her thoughts. They are nonetheless embedded in the history she has so admirably narrated. Indeed, when she concludes by asserting that contrary to

what may be seen in other disciplinary areas, her story about the end of the renaissance debates in music is *not* one of decline, but one of redefinition (291), she suggests some such development, if not this precise one. My own work suggests that what is in question is indeed a wholesale reworking of disciplinary relations and thence, too, a rethinking of models, forms, possibilities, and objects of analysis. One direction is that of a rational aesthetics that will eventually be thought ascribable not to one domain but to all. Moyer's history provides remarkable further grounding for such an argument. It shows, as others have done, just how central a role musical speculation played in renaissance work across a gamut of familiar disciplines. (TIMOTHY J. REISS, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY)

JAMES D. FERNÁNDEZ. *Apology to Apostrophe: Autobiography and the Rhetoric of Self-Representation in Spain*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1992. 182 + viii pp. US\$ 24.95

As a study that draws primarily on a corpus of Spanish texts, ranging from the sixteenth-century *Vida* (1567) of Santa Teresa de Ávila (1515-1582) to the early twentieth-century *Novela de un novelista* (1921) by Armando Palacio Valdés (1853-1938), James Fernández's *Apology to Apostrophe* is addressed initially to Hispanists and, in this capacity, challenges some of their collective platitudes and practices. They are justifiably taken to task both for having subscribed to and helped perpetuate the cliché that Spaniards are disinclined to autobiographical writing, as well as for having ignored autobiographies for their own sake and subordinated those that have obtained some circulation and readership to the role of documents to be consulted for the study of the creative canon. But Fernández's work is not restricted to the narrower interests of Hispanism. The location of his study in "the poststructuralist tendency to deny historical or autobiographical writing any privileged status as metadiscourse" permits him "to view these works as texts — verbal constructs that deploy identifiable and analyzable narrative strategies" (6). Drawing support for his argument from Paul de Man and Eugenio Donato, he claims that "after post-structuralism, the [autobiographical] genre comes to be seen as an arena not for value-neutral self-discovery, but rather for ideologically laden self-invention" (91). The appeal to Hispanists on these grounds to re-assess the canon and, in particular, to re-evaluate the direction taken by writing in Spain between the demise of Calderón in the late seventeenth century and the emergence of Galdós in the second half of the nineteenth, is strongly made, but, at a certain level, the corpus of works in Spanish discussed by Fernández is also the pretext which allows him to engage in discussion of autobiography itself.

The terms "apology" and "apostrophe" that figure in his title refer to the two tropes at the centre of his study. Apology, in Fernández's terms, is historically anchored. The apologist, concerned with the here and now and preoccupied with

the opinions and conduct of contemporaries, indulges in an act of self-justification. *Apostrophe*, however, with its appeal to the listener's sympathy on the basis of some transcendental principle, such as patriotism or poetry, is antihistorical, and is a trope of detachment and unworldliness. However, the movement between apology and *apostrophe*, suggested by the linkage between them in Fernández's title, is not intended to indicate a sequential progression. He is not proposing either that a shift from one to the other is typical of autobiographies or that such a movement is a characteristic of the history of the genre in Spain or elsewhere. The movement between apology and *apostrophe* is defined as a tension between worldliness and transcendence, not necessarily peculiar to Spain, but of particular interest in a country "where there has been an extraordinarily strong tradition, throughout the centuries, of opposing Being to historical existence, Personal Identity to worldly experience, and National Identity to participation in the modern" (8). It is this tradition in particular that is asserted in different ways in each of Fernández's three chapters.

Chapter One is concerned with the addressee and why autobiographies are written. Fernández begins with the confessional mode of Saint Augustine and Santa Teresa, but moves his discussion progressively toward consideration of "An idealized, natural Public Opinion, supposedly free from the pressures of the market and the power struggles of historical existence, [which in the nineteenth century] comes to replace God as the primary addressee of autobiographical writing" (41). The concept is already beginning to emerge in the autobiography of Diego de Torres Villarroel (1693-1770), whose *Vida* (1743-58) is often viewed as a true-life picaresque narrative and is one of the few Spanish autobiographies to have been canonized. But the appeal to public opinion, in both the limited sense of contemporary reactions and the broader sense of posterity or history, emerges more fully in a number of lesser known political autobiographies of the first half of the nineteenth century, texts by figures such as Antonio Alcalá Galiano (1789-1865), Manuel de Godoy (1767-1851), and José de Palafox y Melzi (1776-1847). For these autobiographers, as Fernández remarks, citing an earlier commentator, "It is no longer an issue of rectification before God or conscience, but rather before a public opinion which now manifests itself in patrotic societies, posters, broadsheets, the press and books" (46).

Of the three chapters in Fernández's book, the second is the only one limited to the work of just one author, Joseph Blanco White (Seville, 1775-Liverpool, 1841), whose *Life* was first published in London in 1845. Blanco White was a Catholic priest who emigrated to England during the Napoleonic occupation (1808-14), where he became an Anglican and, subsequently, a Unitarian. Fernández argues that he has been unjustifiably neglected in Spain, given that the quality of his writing and his position in intellectual life in the first part of nineteenth century make him deserving of greater consideration. However, from

the perspective of Spain, Blanco White's heterodoxy, his condition as an exile, and apparent support of independence for Spanish American colonies, not to mention that much of his writing, including his *Life*, was produced in English have evidently lengthened the odds against overcoming the traditional conventions of canon formation. Fernández addresses these questions by approaching the *Life* from two directions. He begins by looking at the relation between the writer and his text (apology) and then turns to the reactions of several readers (apostrophe). The first of these is that of W. E. Gladstone, an Anglican and future Prime Minister of England, who reviewed the autobiography for the *Quarterly Review* in 1845. It is followed by that of Richard Whately, onetime confidant of Blanco White and later Anglican archbishop of Dublin, who sought to prevent the publication of his former friend's autobiography, and then by the opinions of Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo given in his *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* (1880). All three, each an apologist of his own ideology, questions the sincerity and even the sanity of the exiled Spaniard, contributing to what Fernández has aptly called "the black legend of Blanco White" (72). On the other side of the balance — the "White legend," as it were — is Juan Goytisolo's introduction to the Spanish translation of Blanco White's writings in English (Barcelona, 1974). For Goytisolo, a well known iconoclastic novelist, Blanco White represents an alternative tradition of misrepresented expatriates, that would include, among others, the critic Américo Castro, the poet Luis Cernuda, and Goytisolo himself. What he and other readers implicitly confirm, however, is the elusiveness of the autobiographical subject. Just as Blanco White, from his perspective at the moment of writing, conflates the past and the present and offers many versions of himself, his readers also see different versions of him, all projections of themselves.

The final chapter of *Apology to Apostrophe* takes us into the second half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth through consideration of three somewhat better known autobiographers: the *costumbrista* writer and historian of Madrid, Ramón de Mesonero Romanos (1803-1882); the poet and dramatist, José Zorrilla (1817-1893); and the novelist, Armando Palacio Valdés. Each of them records moments of passage or crisis that reflect their stance with respect to modernity. Whether through a desire for a tranquil, unchanging life, or a longing for a lost home or a utopian childhood, each of them raises questions with respect to relations between the past and the present that permit Fernández to confront the nature of autobiographical discourse.

This third chapter therefore introduces further perspectives, but also completes Fernández's triptych in a satisfactory way. His discussion of the rhetoric of self-representation in Spain addresses three moments and conditions in the history of autobiography, but his attention to the theory of the genre provides a continuing thread that combines the components of his study into a well articulated whole. His book is a significant contribution to the literary

history of Spain because of the light is sheds on neglected areas, but readers other than Hispanists will find it useful and very accessible. I found it to be one of the most engaging works of criticism I have recently read. (RICHARD A. YOUNG, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*PATRICIA INGHAM. *Dickens, Women & Language*. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1992. 152 pp. US\$ 19.95

Les personnages féminins de Dickens ont déjà fait couler beaucoup d'encre, mais un seul ouvrage jusqu'ici leur avait été consacré, le *Dickens and Women* de Michael Slater (1983). D'entrée de jeu, par son titre même, avec l'ostensible ajout "& language," puis par ses déclarations liminaires — "The approach here differs radically from ... Slater's" (3) — Patricia Ingham se démarque de son prédécesseur dont elle rejette explicitement l'approche traditionnellement biographique selon laquelle chaque portrait de femme serait inspiré par une femme réelle, mère, soeur, épouse ou maîtresse. Elle reviendra à la charge dans sa dernière partie, "Postscript: rewriting experience," qui est en quelque sorte une réplique à la première section de Slater, "Experience into art," montrant par une habile étude comparative de la correspondance à quel point l'écriture, même épistolaire, est déjà réécriture et donne aux êtres réels une identité fictive, complexe, voire "polyvalent[e]" (138), donc littéraire et non littéraire. Ainsi, "the sequence of letters written after Mary's death allows us to see the literary processes at work: 'Mary Hogarth' is as much a literary construct as Kate Nickleby or Nell Trent" (139). De même "it can be argued that the incompetent, unmaternal and slightly dotty 'Catherine' who appears in the letters of 1858 ... is a literary creation concocted from earlier fiction" (141). La démonstration est parfaitement convaincante, mais il faut dire à la décharge des "biographical critics" (140) que Dickens lui-même encourageait les confusions: "Mrs Nickleby herself, sitting bodily before me in a solid chair, once asked me whether I really believed there ever was such a woman," écrivait-il par exemple à Richard Lane le 2 janvier 1844 et Kathleen Tillotson dans son édition du volume IV des *Pilgrim Letters* (p. 5, n. 12) indique que dans la lettre manuscrite le mot "character" fut rayé et remplacé par "woman," preuve s'il en faut de la fragilité des frontières qui séparent fiction et réalité.

La nouvelle perspective qui est d'offrir "a coherent account of the women in Dickens' novels through an examination of the language in which they are constructed" (3) est au demeurant légitime et séduisante. Ingham se propose de replacer Dickens dans le contexte linguistique de son époque et d'examiner similitudes et variations par rapport aux codes sémantiques émanant aussi bien d'ouvrages sociologiques que de créations romanesques. Pour les premiers, elle se réfère essentiellement aux travaux de Sarah Stickney Ellis et de William Acton, très représentatifs l'un et l'autre, quoique différemment, de l'idéologie victorienne. Pour les seconds, elle nous renvoie aux romans de Dinah Mulock

Craig et de Geraldine Jewsbury, qui est un choix plus contestable: pourquoi seulement des romancières, et pourquoi surtout des romancières aussi conventionnelles, s'il s'agit d'illustrer un propos féministe? Pourquoi ne pas plutôt confronter Dickens à d'autres auteurs masculins? L'absence de réponses à de telles questions et le sentiment de frustration qui en résulte tiennent sans doute à ce que Ingham va un peu trop vite en besogne. Une étude plus approfondie aurait de surcroît évité certaines schématisations, notamment l'opposition réductrice entre "the virtuous and sexless middle-class woman" et "the sexual and outcast fallen woman or prostitute, representative of the working classes" (6) qui est censée résumer les préjugés de l'époque. Rien d'étonnant si, par comparaison, la vision de Dickens apparaît nuancée, contradictoire et même subversive.

Plus intéressante est l'analyse textuelle que nous propose Ingham lorsqu'elle confronte Dickens à Dickens lui-même. La méthode est originale, qui consiste à étudier séparément le champ sémantique et la grammaire des textes avant d'en comparer les implications idéologiques. Le procédé est appliqué successivement à cinq types féminins qui fournissent les titres des cinq chapitres centraux, "Nubile girls," "Fallen girls," "Excessive females," "Passionate women," "True mothers." Il est particulièrement efficace dans le premier et le dernier cas. Les jeunes filles à marier — vocation qui ne détermine pas nécessairement l'avenir du récit — sont présentées de la manière la plus conventionnelle qui soit, "delicately shaped," "slight," "irreproachably virgin, innocent and ignorant" (19), bref assexuées: "the group," écrit Ingham, "tends toward a pre-pubertal look" (18), ce que confirment les métaphores employées à leur sujet, notamment celle de l'ange qui n'est autre qu'un "rewriting of bodiliness" (20). Mais la syntaxe narrative les place dans des situations où elles deviennent objets de concupiscence, "threatened by illicit male desire" (35), personnages d'intrigues justement qualifiées de "subjunctive." C'est le cas de Nell Trent et de Kate Nickleby que le regard de Quilp, le voyeurisme de Master Humphrey, "an obtrusive male narrator" (37), ou de Sir Mulberry Hawk transforment respectivement en "sexual objects" (33): "Under cover of a representation of nubile girls frequently dismissed as merely sentimental, Dickens in fact evolved a narrative syntax that created a ghost pornography" (37). Les "true mothers" — ce qui n'implique pas mais exclut bien au contraire la maternité biologique — ces modèles d'abnégation et de dévouement qui remplacent les mères défaillantes ou absentes, comme Amy Dorrit, Florence Dombey ou Fanny Cleaver, subvertissent quant à elles le discours hagiographique et lénifiant des descriptions du fait des relations équivoques qu'elles entretiennent avec leur père. Paradoxalement, "the very women represented as the social ideal" (112) sont, selon Ingham, à l'origine des plus grands désordres.

D'autres comparaisons font apparaître d'autres subversions. Une fois mariées, les filles nubles deviennent des mégères à apprivoiser, volubiles et castratrices,

"potentially threatening as well as comic" (69), ou pire, des putains respectables, infidèles d'intention seulement. Mais l'amalgame ne se fait que par le biais des signes. Ainsi, la chevelure défilée, "the overt sign of a magdalen" (95), qui dans le code victorien de la représentation est un signe de "sexual accessibility" (45) normalement réservé à la prostituée, dénonce aussi bien le désir coupable d'épouses putativement adultères comme Edith ou Louisa que la condition de Nancy ou d'Alice Marwood et devient de ce fait un signe universel de transgression sexuelle. Les distinctions s'effacent, les repères disparaissent, les catégories sociales ne sont plus significatives. Au terme de son analyse, Ingham est amenée à réfuter la théorie largement admise, et défendue entre autres par Nancy Armstrong dans *Desire and Domestic Fiction* (1987), selon laquelle le roman domestique du siècle dernier n'aurait d'autre objectif que "the winning of the 'middle-class struggle for dominance'" (130). Même s'il est indéniable que "the politics of class and those of gender are tangled together [and] it seems to be the issue of gender that is more basic for Dickens" (131).

Mais, plus que ses conclusions, ce sont les détails de l'analyse textuelle qui font l'intérêt de ce livre dont seule la lecture permettra d'apprécier vraiment les mérites. On y lira notamment des remarques pertinentes sur la réticence, la dénégation, le discours métaphorique. On déplorera aussi certaines négligences d'écriture ou de relecture, une confusion entre Carker et Dombey (51), une parenthèse non réfermée (76), des sauts de ligne injustifiés (42 et 73), un style parfois expéditif qui préfère la barre transversale à une syntaxe élaborée et glisse trop facilement d'un pronom à l'autre au risque de créer parfois des confusions (107). Réservez mesquineries certes, mais d'autant plus regrettables que, tant par son sujet que par son approche, Ingham apporte à la critique dickensienne une contribution stimulante et originale et que son ouvrage devra désormais figurer dans toutes les bonnes bibliothèques. (ANNY SADRI, UNIVERSITÉ DE BOURGOGNE)

*CHRISTOPHER STEN, ed. *Savage Eye: Melville and the Visual Arts*. London-Kent: Kent State University Press, 1991. 352 pp. + ill. US\$ 35.00

When Melville begins Chapter 55 of *Moby Dick* with "I shall ere long paint to you as well as one can without canvas, something like the true form of the whale," this is not an idle statement. For Melville, the word "paint" in the previous quote is a live metaphor for what he sets out to do. Subsequently we find Chapter 55 of *Moby Dick* to be devoted to pictures of whales (and what Ishmael thinks about them), culminating in the final paragraph of that chapter, where it is said that the whale "is that one creature in the world which must remain unpainted to the last." This interrelationship between Melville's literary narration and the visual arts has long been noted, and Christopher Sten's book sums it all up thoroughly and adds new information to it. It is no doubt the most serious attempt at coming to terms with Melville's engagement with the visual

arts, and the articles brought together here range from painting to sculpture and printmaking, from architecture to landscape design and art history.

An issue such as this one has various aspects to it. One is of a biographical kind: what Melville knew about the visual arts, what books on visual arts he read, borrowed or owned, where he travelled and what things he actually saw, what museums and art galleries or private collections he visited, etc. Another aspect is at the psychological level of Melville's involvement with the artworks he knew, saw or studied: what did he like, and what was it in particular that he liked or preferred about them, how did he react to them, and what were the emotional effects of these confrontations with the other arts? Next we are interested in the influence of Melville's involvement with the visual arts on his literary works: what descriptions turn up in his work that are reminiscences of, or were inspired by specific artworks and his engagement with them, how did they influence and determine his novels and stories? Finally, there is the interesting question as to what all this meant in terms of Melville's "art theory": in what sense did his experiences in the visual arts shape his literary views, and vice versa? Did he develop a general view of the arts out of them, and how can his views in this respect be characterized?

Savage Eye has something to say about all of this, and in doing so, offers the most complete statement on the subject so far. The contributors cover a wide field, and are fully equipped to handle the subject. The volume comes also with an excellent index and with two appendices; one of the books on the visual arts, owned by Melville (partly based, of course, on Merton Sealts Jr.'s classical study, *Melville Reading*). The other is a list of studies on Melville and the visual arts.

The book originates in the 1986 meeting of the Melville Society in New York, an event coinciding then with the annual MLA convention. Douglas Robillard sets the tone of the book in his opening essay, by pointing out the variety of experiences Melville had with respect to the visual arts, and by relating these to his "literary pictorialism." In a second essay, later in the book, Robillard, elaborates on this characteristic of Melville's writing, especially in his *Timoleon*. John Bryant similarly contributes to this matter in his analysis of Melville's attitude toward the picturesque. Melville's architectural sources are treated in the chapters by Stanford Marovitz and Bryan Short. Influences of the art of painting are represented in several essays: Dennis Berthold (Dutch genre painting), Hennig Cohen (the "plague" paintings by Antoine-Jean Gros and Nicolas Poussin, and the wax sculptures by Gaetano Zumbo), John Grechko (Cole's *The Notch*), Wyn Kelley (Vanderlyn's *Marius*), and Robert Wallace (especially Turner and Bonington). Helen Trimpi compares the deformation in perspective in both Melville and Daumier. Basem Ra'ad relates Melville's journals of his 1856-57 Near East trip to his experiences of the austere and monochromatic landscapes there. The contribution by Gail Coffier, on classical

iconography in the aesthetics of *Billy Budd*, rounds off the volume. All of this is prefaced by an introduction, in which Christopher Sten links the various papers together and situates them in the on-going debates in the field of Melville studies.

Most of the research presented is of an historical nature and no doubt this is the strength of the approach, and makes up most of the appeal of the book. One may wonder, though, whether such research on one particular aspect of an individual author should not be complemented in some way with more general questions and problems. On this score I found the book rather disappointing; there is hardly any systematic reflection on the interrelationship of the arts in general, let alone an effort to contribute to a general theory of the arts. This is a pity, for the materials brought together by these specialists would probably allow us to come nearer to such a theory. Some of these questions would relate, for instance, to the type of artist who is influenced by other arts. At a more general level, questions pose themselves as to the different contributions by the various arts to culture as a whole. It is evident, on the basis of the essays presented here, that one such function of the arts seems to be the creation of other art, and thus to form a kind of autopoietic drive, at least in many western cultures. Melville, as a literary artist, in his turn, will have become a source to other artists coming after him, who made use of his texts in order to produce new artworks, in film, music, painting, drawing. But do we have to interpret that finding as a symptom of the arts' autonomy, and their distance from other social facts (as proponents of the "l'art pour l'art" view would have us believe), or are there other (and deeper) psychological and sociological reasons for this? As long as we do not know the answers to such questions, we shall need work of the kind presented by Sten and his colleagues; it is to be hoped, however, that gradually they will draw in more general considerations of the kind mentioned here. (WILLIE VAN PEER, UNIVERSITY OF UTRECHT)

MARY ANN CAWS, ed. *City Images: Perspectives from Literature, Philosophy, and Film*. New York, Philadelphia, London, Paris, Montreux, Tokyo, Melbourne: Gordon and Breach, 1991. 278 + vi pp. US\$ 29.95

Mary Ann Caws hat in diesem Buch 19 Beiträge zusammengestellt, die das Thema aus literaturwissenschaftlicher, philosophischer und zum Teil auch anthropologischer Sicht behandeln. Vorangestellt ist eine Einleitung mit dem Titel "The City on Our Mind," die programmatisch die Wirkung der Stadterfahrung vor allem im 19. und im 20. Jahrhundert auf die Mentalität von Künstlern und Philosophen in den Mittelpunkt des Erkenntnisinteresses stellt. In sieben Kapiteln werden Fragen des Stadterfahrung angemessenen Diskurses, der geistigen Orientierung in Städten, der Situation poetischen Schreibens in der Stadt, der Erfahrung und Konstruktion von mehr oder weniger typischen Stadlandschaften, der Typisierung von Stadtbildern, beispielsweise im Paris-

oder New-York-Bild in der Literatur, des poetischen Zugangs zur Stadt und der zeitgenössischen filmischen Verarbeitung des Stadthemas behandelt. Ein "Letztes Manifest" beendet den Band mit einem Ausblick auf die Grenzen der Sprache und der Dichtung angesichts der großen Städte.

Die differenzierten Autorenbeiträge lassen im ganzen gesehen eine klare Linie erkennen. Sicherlich mag die breite Auswahl verschiedener Dichter und Philosophen, von Filmen im Filmkapitel, manchen Leser und manche Leserin verwirren, doch fundiert gerade der Bogen von Baudelaire über Blake, Borges, Calvino, Cingria, Dickens, Eco, Whitman, Woolf bis zu Wordsworth eindrucksvoll die grundlegende anthropologische These des Buches, durch das sich Zitate aus Calvinos *Le città invisibili* wie ein roter Faden ziehen. Zwei seien kurz zitiert: "Jede Stadt — so Calvino — erhält ihre Form durch die Wüste, der sie entgegengestellt ist" und "Nicht die Beschreibung einzelner Städte, sondern die Präsenz der eigenen Stadt — hier Marco Polos Venedig — prägt den poetisch-philosophischen Diskurs von der Stadt." Damit wird keineswegs einer voluntaristischen Philosophie das Wort geredet. Im Gegenteil: Die originale, individuelle Erfahrung der Stadt durch den jeweiligen Dichter oder Philosophen wird zum den modernen (städtischen) Diskurs bestimmenden Faktor. Der moderne Stadtdichter des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts rückt in die Nähe neokonstruktivistischer Theorie eines Deleuze oder Guattari in "Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?" Dichter und Philosophen werden zu zentralen Figuren in der Stadt. Sie erhalten eine neue Legitimität.

Die erlebten Spannungsfelder der Stadt lassen sich in der Typologie von Himmel und Hölle zusammenfassen. Die verschiedenen vermittelnden Bilder des Labyrinths, der Bibliothek, der Straßen, der Gewalt, des Fensters, der Straßenbeleuchtung, des Marktes, der Theater, der blinden Bettler spiegeln nur scheinbar eine Form orientierungslosen Tastens nach einer wie auch immer erhofften mythischen Einheit des Denkens und Sprechens. Sie belegen die pluralistisch-antagonistische Struktur des Denkens von Menschen, die ihre Sprache mühsam an die moderne Welt anpassen müssen. In den Gegensätzen der geordneten (imaginären und realen) Bibliotheken und der im Bewußtsein chaotischen Straßenlabyrinth finden Dichter und Philosophen Alternativen und sogar neue, zumindest innere Paradiese ("interior paradise").

Das Paradies der Erzählung ("paradise of narrative") liegt jenseits der Zeit. Raum und Zeit ordnen sich in der poetisch und philosophisch konstruierten idealen Stadt. So wie Arkadien als literarisches Motiv ein typischer städtischer Mythos ist, der seine Berechtigung gerade aus der scheinbar chaotischen Struktur der Städte ableitet, werden Augenblicke und Spannungsmomente tragendes Element des Stadtgedichts. Der Poet wird zum elegischen Zeugen ("the poet as witness, elegiacally") der Diskontinuität der städtisch-modernen Mobilität. Letztlich ist in jeder Stadtdichtung vom Dichter selbst die Rede:

Baudelaires "Le cygne" ("Der Schwan") erscheint als Prototyp dieser Literaturform: "les vers souvenirs demeurent, plus forts que des airs."

Stadt ist politische wie ontologische Einheit, gerade weil sie die Vielfalt menschlicher Möglichkeiten in sich umfaßt. Dies gilt für politische wie für religiöse Träume, und Harmonievisionen, wie es sie in der Geschichte der Menschheit immer wieder gab und geben wird, brechen sich in nostalgischer Mnemotechnik. Der Dichter wird in der Tat zum "nostalgic mnemotec technician." Das Filmkapitel bringt die dem Buch eigene anthropologische These in einem Satz von Morris Lapidus auf den Begriff: In ihrer Suche nach Illusionen entweichen die Menschen in die Scheinwelt der Filme. Dort konstruieren sie den neuen, modernen, wenn auch nicht dauerhaften, so doch immer wieder in sich kohärenten Mythos einer in sich geschlossenen Welt. Dies gilt für Baudelaires Prosagedichte ebenso wie für die zwischen Musikvideo und Seifenoper angesiedelte Fernsehserie "Miami Vice." Das Spiel der Lichter suggeriert Aufklärung. (NORBERT REICHEL, BONN)

"MASAYUKI AKIYAMA. *A Comparative Study of Henry James and Major Japanese Writers*. Tokyo: Nan'un-do, 1991. 179 pp. ¥6,000.00

Comparative endeavors are a risky business. They embrace not only the danger of invidious assessments which may provoke antipathy and dissatisfaction (*viz.* the fourteenth-century adage *comparisons ben odious*, but also the double difficulty of initially making the comparison plausible and, having done so, justifying the need for such a comparison to have been undertaken at all. Too often though those of us who are comparatists conflate the plausibility of a comparison with the insight garnered from it; as with all interpretive strategies, we must measure the success of such a venture by the degree of illumination it can afford us ultimately.

In this brief and ambitious work, Professor Akiyama juxtaposes various works of Henry James with those of a number of Japanese authors from the pre-modern and modern periods, making reference as well to several Chinese texts, in order as he boldly says to "pursue universality by surmounting the differences between countries and societies ... [and also to] search for the unique qualities of the works and authors of different countries" (171). The book consists of five chapters, as follows: 1) "Yasunari Kawabata's *The Sound of the Mountain* and Henry James' *The Ambassadors*"; 2) "Point of View in Yasunari Kawabata and Henry James"; 3) "The American Image in Kafu Nagai and Henry James"; 4) "Henry James and Nanboku Tsuruya"; and 5) "Ch'ü Yu, Enchō Sanyūtei and Henry James"; preceded by a foreword by Akiyama's mentor, A. Owen Aldridge. There is a conclusion and, in addition, a somewhat perfunctory index and bibliography.

Akiyama utilizes a number of different structural fulcra, including character, setting, motif, and point-of-view in order to weigh the similarities and

differences in these various literary works. Through close textual examination, he isolates intriguing correspondences and analogues at various points in his book. Hence, we see the impotence and ambivalence of Strether from James's *Ambassadors* contrasted with the diffidence and despondency of Shingo from Kawabata's *Sound of the Mountain*. The parallels between these two characters are at times remarkable, but the ensuing discussion leaves us wondering whether it is sufficient to note the commonalities and differences and conclude that the puritan ethic of one cannot be reconciled with the quasi-Confucian perspective of the other. What has been gleaned from such a contrast? Did we not already intuit this schism without the explicit comparison? Similarly, while the use of the supernatural by James and Tsuruya Nanboku offers grounds for yet another kind of provocative comparison, Akiyama offers only an enumeration of different instances of the supernatural manifesting itself and the rather reductive conclusion that "We find a didactic element in such stories of the supernatural which warns us against selfishness, egoism, avariciousness, cruelty, carnal desire, and jealousy" (169). Surely a comparison of the implications of the supernatural in both canons must yield greater understanding than this in order to warrant such an extended discussion.

Professor Aldridge explains Akiyama's methodology of *rapprochement* as "the bringing together of two or more works from separate national literatures in order to point out analogies, similarities and differences, or common elements of any kind with emphasis upon artistic connections" (8). Though not explicitly discussed by either Akiyama or Aldridge, *rapprochement* is no mere synchronic approach in that it suggests an encounter between elements which were formerly conjoined and subsequently severed. Implicit in the term is an assumption of fundamental universality, that beneath the skin of culture and language, human impulses, responses and perspective are indeed the same. In the conclusion of the work, Akiyama acknowledges that for him "A study of comparative literature consists in seeking for universal meaning and universal value by overcoming our cultural limitations without losing our sense of our own culture.... Therefore, the ultimate object of comparative literature is to overcome ethnocentrism and to pursue the spirit of humanism" (171-72).

To overcome ethnocentrism is without doubt a noble aim but does not the *a priori* assumption of universality blind us at times in our examinations to singular aspects of these texts, not to mention cultures? Further, in reading this work, a number of other questions arise as well. For example, how defensible is it to "read" individual literary characters as self-evident emblems of "cultures," in other words, to read literature as a kind of essentializing anthropology (*i.e.*, Japanese people are this kind of people, New Englanders are that kind)? Akiyama asserts that "A culture can sometimes be best understood by comparing it with other cultures. In particular, the merits and demerits of one culture can be clearly seen when it comes in contact with a different culture"

(169). From what vantage point outside of culture can we determine the "merits and demerits" of individual cultures? Is it not possible to conceive of cultural understanding which resists invidious evaluation?

Professor Akiyama's study raises a number of question, both methodological and ideological, which are central to the practice of the discipline. He has no doubt anticipated the reservations noted by this comparatist and will look forward to the manner in which he confronts these issues as he continues his pursuit of the universal in future endeavors. (MEERA VISWANATHAN, BROWN UNIVERSITY)

"ELLY HAGENAAR. *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*. Leiden: Centre of Non-Western Studies, Leiden University, 1992. 213 pp. DFL 29.50

The study of FID (Free Indirect Discourse) has become a well-established and highly specialized field of research in twentieth-century occidental poetics and linguistics. But up to now, studies of FID have almost exclusively been devoted to Indo-European languages. This situation has certainly changed with the publication of Elly Hagenaar's *Stream of Consciousness and Free Indirect Discourse in Modern Chinese Literature*, the first systematic study of FID in contemporary Chinese fiction.

Since scholarly works on the subject of FID appeared in French and German as early as the beginning of this century and works in English began to appear in large numbers in recent decades, it is quite appropriate that Hagenaar began her study by reviewing those studies. Summarising the theoretical insights as expressed in these English, French, and German works, she came up with a theoretical framework which she used to analyze FID in Chinese texts. These theoretical insights, however, are based upon texts written in European languages and Hagenaar is well aware that the linguistic particularities of Chinese may influence the form of FID in that language. It is probably her sensitivity to the linguistic differences between Chinese and European languages that made her choose Lubomír Doležel's theory, elaborated in his *Narrative Modes in Czech Literature* (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1973), as the guide to identify and describe the discriminative features of FID in Chinese texts. In this respect it is interesting to note that Doležel's theory of FID has been commonly adopted by these sinologists who pioneered the study of FID in Chinese literature: Jaroslav Prušek (*Three Sketches of Chinese Literature*, Prague: The Oriental Institute in Academia, 1969), Jarmila Kalousková and Zbigniew Slupski ("Some Problems of Typological Analysis in Modern Chinese Fiction," in *Études d'histoire et de littérature chinoises: offertes au professeur Jaroslav Prušek*, Bibliothèque de L'Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, XXIV. Paris, 1976, pp. 143-53), and Michael Egan ("Characterization in *Sea of Woe*," in

Milena Doleželová-Velingerová, ed. *The Chinese Novel at the Turn of the Century*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1980. 165-76).

Hagenaar's most original contribution to our knowledge of FID in Chinese literature lies in her detailed description of the linguistic features of FID as found in the Chinese texts of her selection (six short stories and one short novel from the late 1970s and early 1980s were chosen for analysis) and in her subsequent conclusions concerning the form and function of FID in contemporary Chinese fiction. The strongest point she has made is about the form of FID in Chinese texts. According to Hagenaar, nearly all the identifying features of FID in her classification can be found in FID passages in Chinese fiction. Therefore, this classification of signals of FID, a slightly modified version of Doležel's classification, "may be used, with minor adjustments, to recognize FID in Chinese" (160). And this serves as her proof that FID "as a concept of poetics is not restricted to western literatures but may also usefully be applied to the analysis and interpretation of Chinese narrative" (160). Hagenaar also correctly points out that the particularities of Chinese, especially the invariability of the Chinese verb and the tendency to suppress personal and possessive pronouns, present some special problems for identifying FID in Chinese.

While Hagenaar is successful in her treatment of FID as it appeared in Chinese fiction in the late 1970s and early 1980s, she is less successful when she tries to describe the historical development of FID in Chinese literature. Her conclusions concerning the early development of FID in Chinese are not firmly established, since they are only generalisations based upon the relevant findings made by other scholars. Speaking of the origins of FID in Chinese, she concludes that "FID gradually took shape at the time when ID [indirect discourse] began to be generally used: at the turn of the century" (41). But in fact FID appeared in Chinese literature several hundred years earlier. For example, in "The Pearl-sewn Shirt," a short story written in the early seventeenth-century, there is such a passage: "He sat and sighed. But then suddenly he thought of the jewel-vendor, Dame Hsueh, in the alley off the east side of Market Street. He had done business with her in the past. This old woman was skilled in the arts of persuasion. Moreover she spent every day tramping the streets and alleys and knew every household. *He must talk things over with her, she'd be sure to have some suggestion*" (*Gujin xiaoshuo* [Stories Old and New], ca. 1620-1624; Beijing: Renmin wenxue chubanshe, 1958. 7. The English translation is Cyril Birch's, in *Stories from a Ming Collection*, Cyril Birch, trans. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1958. 55. Emphasis added). The italicized part in the above passage possesses enough features to be regarded as FID. On another occasion, Hagenaar states that in Chinese literature "indirect discourse was not fully developed until around 1900" (2), but examples of indirect discourse can be found in earlier texts. For the sake of convenience, we

may quote another passage from "The Pearl-Sewn Shirt," the italicized part of which exemplifies the use of indirect discourse: "The magistrate heard the evidence of all the witnesses. *Some said the old man had been knocked to the ground; others said that he had stumbled after receiving a push*" (*Gujin xiaoshuo*, 32. *Stories from a Ming Collection*, 92. Emphasis added). Although there is a general preference to direct discourse over indirect discourse in the Chinese literature produced before the twentieth century, it is invalid to conclude from this fact that indirect discourse was not fully developed until the beginning of this century.

On the whole, Hagenaar deserves high praise for her contribution to the poetics of modern Chinese fiction and to the study of FID in general. Her book can serve as a starting point for further research on the development of FID in Chinese fiction. (LJUN FU, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO)

*CHRISTINE KIEBUZINSKA. *Revolutionaries in the Theater: Meyerhold, Brecht, and Witkiewicz*. Ann Arbor-London: UMI Research Press, 1988. 182 pp. US\$ 51.90

Christine Kiebuszinska's book on revolutionaries in the theater consists of six main parts: an "Introduction," Chapter One entitled as "Semiotics in the Theater: The Prague School Contributions," Chapter Two on "Meyerhold: The Aesthetics of Presentation," Chapter Three, "Brecht: The Aesthetics of Reception," Chapter Four, "Witkiewicz: The Aesthetics of Pure Form," and a "Conclusion," followed by notes to each chapter, a Selected Bibliography and an Index. As this list suggests, of the six main parts three are dedicated to what the title promises to give us: the three revolutionary figures of the theater in the first half of the twentieth century. Unfortunately, the Introduction does not make it clear why these three particular figures were chosen — and why not, let us say, Gordon Craig, Luigi Pirandello, and Garcia Lorca. Instead, Kiebuszinska begins with Roland Barthes's distinction between work and text. What she finds in common among the three figures she has chosen for analysis is that they "opened up the dramatic work to theatrical experimentation by focusing on the plurality if signifieds, the simultaneity of theatrical enunciators, and the intertextual use of codes and conventions drawn from theatrical heritage" (2).

My problem is, that — even if the above statement is valid — it contains restrictions and lacks important aspects. It should be made clear right at the beginning that these are *three of the many* outstanding theatrical experiments of the given period; and that these three have very significant differences: Meyerhold was a director, Brecht a playwright, director, and author of theatre theory, while Witkiewicz was a playwright. The three of them, therefore, had a different approach to theatre. Besides this, both Meyerhold and Brecht spent several decades working for the theatre: during this period — mainly because both of them were devotees of experimentation — they themselves had different

viewpoints and their own views very often modified (or even contradicted) their own previous standpoints. In the book, however, there is no mention of Brecht's different periods while in the case of Meyerhold we may only guess by some inferences.

The Introduction and Chapter One very often overlap and the author appears to have scanned only the papers of the main representatives of the Prague School of linguists. More, the author obviously consulted only the papers *published in English*, adding some observations on a selection of contemporary theories, such as those of Keir Elam, Julia Kristeva, and others. Often, the quotations come from a secondary source, mostly from and exclusively in English. Unfortunately and irritatingly, most of the quotations stand by themselves without comments which would prompt the reader towards further connotations, associations, or considerations of an argument that is only implied by the placement of the quotations in the text. The Introduction also gives a list and short summary of the main "-isms" of the last hundred years. This part of the book is often on the verge of commonplaces (such as the one on naturalism, the two paragraphs on symbolist drama, etc.).

Chapter One is devoted to the works of the Russian formalists and to the Prague structuralists since their work "still remains the best systematic study of signs in the theatre" (16). With this statement we may or may not agree, but instead of a discussion about and argument for it, we can only find a review of some of the more important papers by Shklovsky, Mukarovsky, Zich, Bogatyrev, and others. In comparison, there is only one mention of Brecht: "Although the Russian formalists themselves did not apply the concept of defamiliarization to the study of a theatrical work of art, later developments in the theater, as for instance Brecht's theory of *Verfremdungseffekt*, took over this concept" (24). It is not clear whether Kiebuszinska considers the early Brecht of the late 1920s or whether we should think of his notes concerning *Mahagonny*, or whether those about the *Lehrstücke*? Similarly, the author's method of neglecting sources is unusual in academic works. For example: "According to Brecht, the very sort of complicated montage with which the film maker creates his text also takes place on stage when scenes are juxtaposed to other scenes" (79); or later, "In his writings on theater, and in his theatrical practice, Brecht repeatedly examined the processes by which the extratheatrical world influences that of the theatre and vice versa ... Brecht ... developed and exaggerated the belief that theatrical and extratheatrical space are separated by so sharp a divergence that, at best, they can only refer to each other" (86); in neither case is a reference given.

The Meyerhold chapter of the book follows the director's most remarkable stagings in a more-or-less chronological order, devoting several pages to his collaboration with Mayakovsky, and some relevant remarks to Meyerhold's opposition to Stanislavsky's method and the work of the Moscow Art Theatre.

The author also underlines the close relationship of Meyerhold the theatre-maker with other artists, like Malevich and Golovin, and points out how some of Meyerhold's shows coincided with historical turning points. This chapter gives a generally correct summary of Meyerhold's best-known theatrical achievements — what I missed, though, was a clearer explanation of his theory of bio-mechanics, and it is hard to imagine Meyerhold's stage innovations without a single picture of a stage design.

It is the chapter on Brecht that I found lacking the most. One of the reasons for this may be that Brecht worked three decades for the theatre as director, playwright, and theoretician and it may indeed be an insurmountable task to write about Brecht without at least a reading ability of German, so as to consult seminal secondary sources in German. As good the English translations may be, they do not encompass the whole Brechtian oeuvre and at least well-known works such as those by Werner Mittenzwei and Ernst Schumacher should be consulted.

In the second part of the Brecht chapter, Kiebuszinska deals with Brecht's reception, stating that "the problem of the reception of Brecht's plays in socialist countries had to do with his refusal to impose ideological norms and values on the spectator" (91). The discussion does not clarify which countries she means — is it Czechoslovakia or Bulgaria, and when? Two paragraphs later she writes that "because Brecht's theatrical aesthetics are concerned not only with signifying but also with a close-up reflexive discourse about the very process by which it signifies," actors function in his plays both at the level of theatrical discourse and at that of metadiscourse (76). This way of handling the topic is typical of the book: no order in the treatment of problems, quotations which are taken second hand, and the liberal use of fashionable terms.

The author returns to Brecht's reception six pages later, just to condemn him again, as on page 98: "the reception of Brecht's plays was problematic on all fronts, whether reactionary or far left." This may be true — oppressive regimes usually do not favour experimental art. But apparently there was an audience and a literary group who were ready to listen to what Brecht had to say: the Berliner Ensemble's performance in London in 1956 became a milestone for British theatre. John Elsom in *Post-War British Theatre* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976) underlines that "Brecht influenced many British dramatists of the 1960s ... Brecht's theoretical works, such as the *Messingkauf Dialogues* (1963) illustrated the importance of general debate" (123). Elsom goes on stating that "Brecht influenced Peter Brook, John Dexter and William Gaskill" (124).

The chapter on Witkiewicz has similar flaws: it contains mainly the contents of plays and again we are confronted by quotations without sources. Still, studies in the original Polish give us some interesting information, even if some of the statements about theatre in the mid-1920s and the following years sound rather restrictive. She states, for example, that "In his vision of the

mechanization of life, Witkacy demonstrates that modern drama can no longer be written according to the precepts for a well-made play" (133). I would like to refer the author to such as Strindberg, Jarry, Pirandello, etc., with whose writing she would be able to place Polish theatre in an international context thus according it a more deserved perspective.

My last observation is about the intended readership of this book. Obviously, it was not written for the general public: it is too dry for that purpose. It was not written for experts of theatre because there is nothing new in it. It can hardly be used as a college or university textbook: students might think that a scholarly text may be written without using original sources, let alone reading plays in the language they were originally written. (KATALIN KÜRTÖSI, ATTILA JÓZSEF UNIVERSITY — UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL)

MICHAEL ISSACHAROFF. *Discourse As Performance*. Michael Issacharoff, trans. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989. 162 + viii pp. US\$ 29.50

This book is a revised version of *Le Spectacle du discours*, which appeared in Paris in 1985, and, translated by the author himself, is now presented to English-speaking readers. As the author admits in his translated version, "translating one's own prose is an odd enterprise" (v). One must admit that this fact may puzzle some readers while others may be interested in seeing whether Issacharoff has indeed found a "new voice" in the English translation of the same work. After all, any translation may be treated as a different utterance, particularly if there are some changes involved in the rendering in another language. Thus, one may treat Issacharoff's book as a new work, and let us assume it is.

The first chapter entitled "From Script to Performance" begins with the problematics of theatrical performance in the light of the familiar speaker-text-addressee model; the author begins on a controversial note, "Who is the addressee? Obviously not the audience, since it is not allowed to respond — at least not through the same verbal channel. The other characters on stage? They are merely sham addressees who pretend to be listening" (9). Despite the fact that numerous readers may dispute this statement, they are, nonetheless, challenged by this introduction and Issacharoff's way of understanding theatre and discourse.

The author then deals with the problem of script, staged and unstaged discourse, and provides the most illuminating analysis of *didascalia* as a part of the dramatic text. This section of the book may be regarded by some readers as a significant contribution to the modern theory of drama. Later, Issacharoff tackles the problem of intertextuality in a modern play and focuses specifically upon such traces of other texts as titles, name distortions and the interrelationship between *hypotext* and *intertext*. He seems to be most successful when he deals with titles and names and less convincing, if not problematic,

when he analyzes the intertextual play. It is quite puzzling that according to the author: "In French tradition, Greek mythology has served as crucible for many a playwright from Racine to Sartre. But for Western drama, the Bible and Shakespeare have held equal importance as intertexts" (46). The opposition of French *vis-à-vis* Western tradition is rather odd, and (one would like to believe) unintentional since it is in conflict with acceptable notions of the West, Western culture and history not only in the West but in the East as well. Nonetheless, the chapter ends on a more promising note with a very helpful comparison between a radio drama and traditional theatrical performance, focussing on the role of gesture.

The second chapter is devoted to the problems of space and space as a sign and trace of another text. This section, undoubtedly the most informative and original part of the book, may be of particular interest to scholars and even stage directors. Scholars may be especially interested in the politics of space, but this matter may be of no lesser interest to the actual performance-makers as well.

The third and the last chapter deals with comedy from the semiotic perspective, demonstrating the most relevant applications of semiotic theory and semiosis to theatre. The author himself finds and appropriate semiotic formula for the part of his own analysis phrasing it as a "comic sign or comic mode of sign production" (93). On the whole, the work may be classified as an original approach to modern drama within the current semiotic space. The English translation of the study originally written in French has widened the readers' circle having made *Le Spectacle du discours* more visible and spectacular. (ANNA MAKOLKIN, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO — YORK UNIVERSITY)

*D.A. MILLER. *Bringing Out Roland Barthes*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992. 55 pp. US\$ 12.00

Packaged, in a clever marketing ploy, with the English translation of Roland Barthes's posthumously published and most "out" text, *Incidents*, D.A. Miller envisions in his theoretical/autobiographical essay an imaginary sexual/textual encounter with the Barthesian persona. Drawing upon a wide range of Barthes's texts, including, but not limited to, *S/Z*, *Soirées de Paris*, *A Lover's Discourse*, and *Empire of Signs*, Miller powerfully argues that despite the illustrious Frenchman's phobic reluctance during his lifetime to commit himself to a specification of his desires in print, the idiosyncrasy, influence, and power of his writing may only be attributed to their discreet yet key gayness. Therefore, any reading of Barthes which skillfully skirts a circuitous path around his being *comme ça* betrays a phobically posed ignorance that is no more tolerable than the consistent and devastating discursive pathologisation which has historically been the rule, rather than the exception, of literary treatments of male (as well as, of course, female) homosexuality.

Through his project to "stage," to "fashion" a homotextual encounter with Barthes, Miller wants to clear a space in which to place a strategically defined and politically motivated "gay writing position" (all 7): a specifically gay literary-cultural agenda which would rescue from the darkness, bring out of the closet, and clearly articulate the specificity and diversity of male homosexual desire. His principal textual strategy revolves around an analysis of the attribution of gender characteristics to the desiring gay male body in Barthes's reading of Balzac's "Sarrasine" appearing in *S/Z*, in the other Barthesian texts, as well as in the more general dominant patriarchal and heterosexist discourses. For Miller, and I would agree strongly with this point, the gay man occupies an impossible space within conventional culture. Persistently linked with the attributes of the "feminine," we are nevertheless refused the right of "laying the slightest legitimate claim" to this position. The gay man "must be, can't be, a man; he must be, can't be, a woman" (11).

While emphasising the inherent value of Barthes's implicit identification of this discursive prison-house, Miller takes his mentor to task for his insistence upon "higher" concerns. He criticises Barthes's refusal, in his valuation of the writerly, of the textual, of the free play of signifiers, to explicitly treat in *S/Z* what he views as the underlying "gayness" of "Sarrasine." The continual and formidable abstraction of this former text, its "prematurely sophisticated allegorization" (14), functions to discredit extrapolation upon the textual signified that, inevitably occluded though it may be, points with insistent clarity to the general confusion instated by the narrativisation of same-sex desire. Miller goes on to detect in Barthes's deployment of the neuter, the category ostensibly without gender, a desire to isolate an impossible third term from within the inescapable polarisation of genderal definition. This impracticable third term, rather than suggesting or implying a discursive space, a subjectivity without gender attributes, specifies instead the typically male, and typically gay, cultural experience of being "caught between genders," of being generally homeless. Although Miller praises the constitutive subversiveness, the libidinal liberation made possible by the polysematicity of this "tactic" (16), he laments, the fundamental point being something like "I am more out than Barthes was," the apparently necessary ambivalence, unspecificity, and "discretion by which this tactic passes" (16). Ultimately then, Miller's most admirable design is to specify this "gayness" in Barthes's analysis, for "to refuse to bring Barthes out" is to consent to "a homophobic reception of his work" (17).

From among his various ambivalences toward Barthes, Miller seems to get most upset by what he views as the Frenchman's naïve and utopian belief in the possibility to elide, through a dramatic refusal to succumb to the signifying economy of the (*gros* "O") Other, the incontrovertible force of the attribution of social meaning, the categorical and irrevocable fixation of discursive placement. Barthes's valorisation of Letter over Name, of signifier over

signified, the glorification of empty and pure script untainted by the poisonous stain of reference, while all these may indeed allow for a certain space for the free-play, for the euphoric (orgasmic?) non-specificity of desire, they also function to "raise a smoke-screen against ... a certain name, perhaps, that the imprudence of divulging it consigns, like many another love letter, to the fire" (read "homophobic attack") (17). At no time is one, a speaking subject, more fixed, more vulnerable to the gaze (which, as we learnt from Lacan, always originates in the field of the Other), more labelled by dominant discourses, than when one pretends, stoically but vaingloriously, than one is not obliged to be so.

One cannot overemphasise how Miller's militant insistence upon queer readings of Barthes is a courageous, crucial, timely, and infinitely valuable one. However, the chain of tropes deployed by the author to accord to Barthes's sickly, effeminate, Proustian (not just) textual body the virility and sexiness of gay muscle ultimately sabotages the very subversively gendered foundation upon which Miller's project finds its ground. His binary conceptualisation of gay male embodiment (one must either have a body arrayed, displayed, in "tanks and polos, purchased when necessary in the boys' department, in Spandex, in preshrunk, reshrunk, and, with artisanal care, perhaps even sandpapered 501s" (30), or instead, the closeted, de- or pre-sexualised, unmasculine, weak, "body-that-never-fucks" of the mother-clinging Barthes) is unfounded and probably dangerous. If "only those who can't tell elbow from ass will confuse the different priorities of the macho straight male body and the so-called gym-body of gay male culture" (31), why does it seem that Miller's identificatory cathexis of stereotyped, phallicised images of male machismo, rather than offering a liberatory model for gay embodiment, prescribes the very genderal prison-house, in its utter lack of effective ironic and camp inflection or subversive performativity, from which queer literary production should at all costs, and for its very survival, be trying to escape? After all, it is not just gay men that we should be concerned about here, but (heterosexual) women, lesbians, and bisexuals of both "sexes" as well.

As Miller himself admits, "the so-called gym body of gay male culture" is "still the body that can fuck you" (31). In other words, this ideal of male homosexual embodiment betrays a phallically aggressive and conventionally "masculine" libidinal economy that, while it may reflect the identificatory trajectory of a subculture-within-a-subculture, represents a generationally and geographically (more American than North American) manifestation of gay subjectivity, and by no means should be propagandised as the trope-ic ground for the deployment of (what should be) a de-phallicised and as culturally unspecific as possible literary-erotic discourse. Miller's perhaps unconscious investment in an ultimately and easily re-heterosexualisable phallic economy subverts, at the very discursive base upon which he wants to figure his oppositional cultural strategy, the gender deconfiguration that is this strategy's condition of possibility. Miller's identification with a conventionally phallic

economy, the very antithesis of any queer literary-cultural project, is perhaps nowhere more glaring than in his shame-invoking criticism of the photograph of a schoolboy Barthes clinging to the body of his mother. Evidencing this image as a metonymic term for the Barthesian textual corpus, Miller insists that Barthes's sexuality refuses here "the desirability, even the possibility, of the male body's autonomy" (33). If the sexed body may not, as I believe it cannot, ever be divorced from its spectral figuration in the imaginary, what body could ever be, in this day and age, autonomous from either the discourse through which it is always already articulated, or the maternal body from which it comes to the world? Miller quite simply falls for what Kaja Silverman brilliantly uncovers as the masquerade of conventional masculinity, predicated as it is, and always has been, upon the impossible autonomy of a self-identified subjectivity, the self-deluding disavowal of symbolic castration, and the illusory equation of the phallus with the male organ (cf. *Male Subjectivity at the Margins*, New York and London: Routledge, 1992. 15-51). Ultimately, Miller's essay works infinitely better as an effectively antihomophobic, postponed gay obituary for Barthes than as any supposedly useful and militant queer-literary manifesto. (JAMES D. PENNEY, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

RAYLENE L. RAMSAY. *Robbe-Grillet and Modernity: Science, Sexuality, and Subversion*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1992. 301 pp. US\$ 39.95

In this post-authorial age, it strikes one as odd to find a continued stream of monographs on the oeuvres of single authors. Alain Robbe-Grillet has, in the past year, been the object of at least two such publications: one, a German-language compilation of essays by and on Robbe-Grillet entitled *Robbe-Grillet zwischen Moderne und Postmoderne* (Karl Alfred Bühner, ed. Tübingen: Gunter Narr), and Raylene Ramsay's study *Robbe-Grillet and Modernity: Science, Sexuality and Subversion*, promising a focus very similar to that of Bühner's compilation and similarly featuring Robbe-Grillet's own remarks on his work in an appended interview.

Ramsay acknowledges this possibly problematic (or at least unfashionable) aspect of her approach and explicitly advocates a return from the notion of pure textuality to a repersonalizing, psycho-biographical reading. In the introduction, she argues for the notion of a subject that breaks through the surface of culture and discourse, a notion she finds particularly relevant in the case of Robbe-Grillet, which, as she writes, is a "very special one": "Robbe-Grillet's staging of the hidden monsters in ... modern mythologies is ultimately a mise en scène of his own battle with the (young) sirens and with the angel of death" (3). It is the insistent sexualizing of the text that qualifies his work, in Ramsay's view, for a personal rather than purely textual approach.

Ramsay frames her study by a consideration of the relation (or indebtedness) of Robbe-Grillet's work to modern science that is inspired by Katherine Hayles's

The Cosmic Web: Scientific Field Models and Literary Strategies in the 20th Century (1984). Relativity, Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, chaos theory, quantum physics, and the limitation of epistemological claims grounded in, among other things, Gödel's incompleteness theorem, serve as metaphors for the modern condition, and show, in Ramsay's reading, profound affinities to Robbe-Grillet's work. Insightful (and fashionable) though such an approach may be, its usefulness for the study of an individual author remains debatable in the light of the obvious links between such developments in science and (post)modern literature and philosophy in general, links that undermine Ramsay's claims for the specificity of Robbe-Grillet's work in this regard. Her admission that "the influence of chaos theory may be direct but seems more probably to have been indirect, diffused through the general cultural and intellectual climate" (77) acknowledges the problem but approaches it from the wrong angle, missing the point that certainly, chaos theory and other aspects of modern science provide a useful set of *metaphorical reading strategies*, rather than the origin or influence that becomes a property of the text itself. Despite such confusion, Ramsay's is a competent and informative reading of the structure of Robbe-Grillet's literary and filmic texts in the light of these metaphors.

From the suggestion of a subversive character of chaotic structures and complementarity on the formal level, Ramsay's focus then shifts to a consideration of the possible subversiveness in Robbe-Grillet's use of images of women, which she identifies as belonging to the realm of contemporary (and ancient) myth. More precisely, is there (or can there be, as I would rather pose the question) a subversive character to Robbe-Grillet's recurring imagery of violation and torture of female bodies? This is a question that in fact dominates the remainder of the book, and which Ramsay situates competently within a wide field of inquiry including feminism, psychoanalysis, the pornography debate and postmodernist theory.

One of the most fascinating aspects of this study is probably Ramsay's struggle with the politics of representation and her experience as a female (and academic feminist) reader of what she perceives to be the pervasive "sado-erotic" character of Robbe-Grillet's texts. As Ramsay writes in her introduction to the appended interview with Robbe-Grillet:

This portrait is colored also by the mirror of my own mind, academic and female, by the attempt to understand intellectually, without foreclosure, the insistent, deliberately excessive stories of domination, humiliation, fragmentation, and suppression of the externally young and beautiful female body, naked for the most part, fragile and consenting; stories that proliferate in the later text and films. By the disquiet as would-be female subject that this demonstration of the violence latent in the sexually based "objectivation" of young women on our culture provokes within me. (243-44)

In this regard, especially the question of referentiality vs. self-reflexive textuality becomes a troubling one for her: can there be a subversive, ironic, non-complicit use of such "cultural" images of the degradation of women? This is an intriguing question, and one that is a part of the much larger question of the sexual politics of postmodernism. Ramsay is torn between what she characterizes as a "transparent, or pragmatic North American feminist reading with its ethical question of the ultimate good of women, and the opaque, textual, French 'postfeminist reading,'" in short between a "feminist (political)" and an "academic (critical)" reading (168). Despite her appeals that "both must be possible" (168), she ultimately does not grant her sense of disquiet any space in her academic self and quiets this (other) self by the academic/postfeminist declaration that "it seems timely to seek understanding of the significant and strong hidden presence, in our culture, of the powers of desire, the desire for power, phantasies of sexual domination and subjugation in male and female alike" — a declaration that does not convincingly suppress the doubt and problems of the previous chapters and that misses the point insisted on earlier that sexual power and domination are in fact, in our culture, not the same for men and women, and that the images of torture and violation in Robbe-Grillet's work are indeed not "of men and women alike" but quite insistently and disturbingly of women only. This somewhat forced solution leaves one with the uneasy question: does one really have to throw feminist political concerns out the window to be sophisticated and academic? Ramsay's appeal to an "integration" of the two that will enable her to locate a redeeming subversiveness in the "chaotic and complementary structure" of Robbe-Grillet's sexual imagery remains ultimately unconvincing. (KERSTIN HASSLÖCHER, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA).

*OKADA, H. RICHARD. *Figures of Resistance: Language, Poetry, and Narrating in the Tale of Genji and Other Mid-Heian Texts*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1991. 400 pp. US\$ 49.95

The proverb of the forest and the trees comes to mind. In Western scholarship of classical Japanese literature, so much effort is spent in the domain of discerning particular trees. In this work, by means of Western contemporary critical perspectives, feminist, linguistic, narratological, deconstructionist, and post-modern combined with an encyclopedic review of Japanese scholarship, Richard Okada provides a satellite photo view of this especially lush forest, mid-Heian literature. At the same time, Okada's close readings of selected texts reveal extraordinary specific detail. It is like having the satellite photo magnified so that you can see the veins on the leaves.

With this powerful range of perception, Okada explores a body of mid-Heian texts that are original for classical Japanese literature. Here is a list of the texts

and some of the issues explored in connection with them — the *Taketori Monogatari* (Tale of the Bamboo Cutter) — the issue of Chinese writing/Japanese discourse in the creation of a vernacular prose style, the *Kokinshū*, (Anthology of Modern and Ancient Verse) — creation of a communal body of imagery and the importance of an incantatory quality in classical Japanese poetry, the *Ise Shū*, (Poetry Anthology of Lady Ise) — conflation of life and fiction in personal poetry anthologies and *Ise Monogatari*, (Tales of Ise) — mapping of the sexual/textual politics underlying this literature. The larger part of the book is given over to engagement with the *Genji Monogatari* or Tale of Genji in which all the previous lines of inquiry as well as new ones are threaded through and amplified. Okada writes in a self-acknowledged revisionist mode.

My purpose ... is twofold: to question ... previous readings of Heian period texts performed in the context of the institutionalized discipline of Japanese literature, or "Japanology," which has both sanctioned and maintained practices fully complicit with both patriarchal and colonialist discourse, and to reread and rewrite Heian period texts in order to trace the contours of resistance they present to the employment of Western canonical terms of appropriation (novel, lyric, hero/heroine, [fully rounded] character, plot, first/third-person narration, and so on) deployed in unquestioned and only ironically unmasked strategies of reading. (6)

The question is what does his re-vision allow us to see? I would present his treatment of the *Ise Monogatari* as an example. The *Ise Monogatari* is typical of many classical Japanese texts in that it does not fit traditional Western literary categories. It is indeterminate in genre — half poetry anthology, half a collection of narrative vignettes. It intimates a biographical connection with one poet, Ariwara Narihira, but is inconsistent in maintaining that biographical line. A plethora of variant texts offer different beginnings. The text confounds us with its non-linearity.

Truly, it is a text that, as Okada remarks, "effectively resists recuperation by any and all totalizing and unifying maneuvers" (131). Consequently, from a traditional Western perspective it tends to appear insubstantial and its honored place in the canon of Japanese literature seems frankly baffling.

Okada begins by doing a brilliant close reading of the opening sequence of the *Ise Monogatari* that displays the full complexity of the text. As Okada spins out the threads of intertextuality and genealogy, the *Ise Monogatari* comes to life; we see the interwoven worlds of the text. The relation between poetry and prose in the *Ise Monogatari* has up until now in Western scholarship been cast in terms of the prose providing the context and the poems being the crystallization of the emotion evoked in that setting. Okada's attention to intertextuality yields a radically different interpretation: "By laying bare its mechanisms, the *Ise* intertextuality openly denies diegetic movement. Rather than "culminating" points as is commonly thought, poems represent a denial of teleology and a

dispersal of signification. Waka are constituted by signifying networks that always enable further textual moments" (138). When one views the Japanese classical poetry tradition from this perspective, it is no longer so puzzling why poets found ample space to create even though they kept to short forms and a narrow range of topics and treatments. In short, one feels as though a new door of perception into this literature has opened up. What Okada does for the *Ise*, he also does for the *Genji* and other texts as well.

This work is the first attempt in English to convey the specificity of the language used in the Heian texts. Okada describes in some detail the function of the modal narrative suffixes *ki* and *keri* in classical Japanese in order to explain the phenomenon of "tenselessness" in Heian narratives. Here is a place where he recapitulates his description:

the tenseless narrative does not mean "present-tense" narrative. The narrating easily refers to prior moments, but they are always anchored to the spatiotemporal coordinates of the particular moment in question. What happened once has relevance not as an always already reified, abstractable past point in linear time, but as the narrating moment continually represents it in a deictically determinate now. (179)

This discussion may not be easy to follow for those unfamiliar with classical Japanese but his descriptions themselves should intrigue and his translations of excerpts do give some sense of how this can be modeled in English. Here is an example of Okada's version of the opening of the *Genji*:

In which/whose reign [might it be/have been]? Among the many senior consorts (nyougo) and junior consorts (kauti) in attendance stands one not from the highest ranks and blessed far more than the others with the emperor's affection. The various women who have harbored high hopes for themselves from the beginning of their tenure at court look down upon the amazing upstart with feelings of resentment; even more restless are those junior consorts equal in rank to her or lower. (183)

Compare this with the translation of the same passage by Edward Seidensticker: "In a certain reign there was a lady not of the first rank whom the emperor loved more than any of the others. The grand ladies with high ambitions thought her a presumptuous upstart, and lesser ladies were still more resentful" (qtd. in Okada 184-85).

I trust this suffices to show that we are missing something quite critical in the narrative style when the story is reconstructed into the simple past. Indeed, Okada's renderings — although one might not want to emulate the thickets of brackets — suggest fruitful paths for experimental ways of translating Heian Japanese.

Okada also throws light onto the issue of female authorship in the Heian period. His first chapter on the *Genji* is entitled, "Situating the Female Hand" and in it he emphasizes the importance of *zuryo* "provincial governor" class background to the author of the *Genji* and her audience. He picks up the thread of genealogical connections first introduced in the chapter on the *Ise Monogatari* and suggests how the women of the *zuryo* class were connected in sympathies with members of aristocratic families and who had been persecuted by the Fujiwara clan. These women may be seen as resisting the Fujiwara hegemony even as they served it. Okada brings out the salon atmosphere in which the *Genji* was produced, drawing on the works of the Japanese scholar, Tamagami Takuya, to emphasize the oral quality of the tale literature in the Heian period. The fact that the tale was read aloud may explain why there are so many variant texts of the *Genji*, since the readers may have added exegesis or comments that in time worked their way into the text. Thinking outside the traditional Western notion of the sole author/creator enables us to picture a much livelier literary scene than previously imagined. Throughout this section on the female hand, Okada avoids treating the author and her cohort either anachronistically as proto-feminists or describing them stereotypically as oppressed. Rather, he attends carefully to the very specificity of their situation and that is refreshing.

As the title of the work indicates, Okada's key point of focus is the notion of resistance. He states in his introduction,

I find in the three texts a position of "resistance," a term that I employ as a multivalent emblem for many of the issues with which I deal throughout the present study. In one urgent sense of the term, the Heian texts themselves have almost always presented resistances to their appropriation by both Japanese and non-Japanese readers; the issue becomes even more timely now in the context of cross cultural readings, interdisciplinary questionings, and postmodern, poststructuralist problematics. In another obvious sense the texts represent or situate figures who openly resist, who assume (or are made to assume) positions of resistance, or who participate in resisting configurations that govern their narrative constructions. (14)

The point about the texts representing figures who resist is well substantiated by Okada's study. I take issue however with the statement that the Heian texts presented resistance to their appropriation by Japanese and non-Japanese readers. First, to deal with appropriation by Japanese readers, it can be said be that the *Ise Monogatari*, for example, has been appropriated by Japanese readers for centuries. It is woven into the *Genji* in many places. Moreover, it has provided material for waka poets and screen painters, even gardeners, right up to the present. I suppose what is in question here is the relation between intertextuality and appropriation.

Then, looking at the case of resistance to appropriation by non-Japanese readers, where is the resistance actually located? I would say the resistance is

in the Western reader as a result of a culturally set way of viewing the world. In another place, Okada says that "The *Ise monogatari* text also enacted resistance to commonly accepted ways of collecting poems (public and private): it created and moved within an eccentric poetic space that self-consciously destabilized such notions as biography, history and fiction, and poetic authorship." Okada does not make specific the source of these "notions" but they must be the Western ones. Does not presenting the texts as resisting our Western notions still hint of valorizing the Western positions? It is also somehow anachronistic to think of the texts resisting Western notions, because at the time of their composition they unfolded into a universe where those clearly defined categories did not exist.

Something else that is a little disturbing is the equation of appropriation with colonization; this usage risks making any interpretive move the equivalent of an act of violence. What of Okada's own elucidations? I feel they open these texts up so we get a sense of their infinite plenitude and wondrous "difference." Does this too become the slippery path down to "colonizing" them? On the other hand, perhaps it is Okada's intention to have his work occasion just this sort of inquiry. Engagement with this notion of resistance keeps us questioning and does not allow us to come to comfortable closure.

There is much more that could be said about this study. To borrow Okada's own key term, it *resists* easy summation. The back jacket quotes Edward Fowler as saying this is "one of the two or three most important studies of Japanese literature ever written" and I would agree. However, it is not a book one would blithely recommend to one's undergraduate students. Scholars of comparative literature who are familiar with the theoretical approaches informing the book but unfamiliar with Japanese literature will find that the study gives them tantalizing views of a literature that is quite "other" and yet seemingly in synch with the post modern situation. Scholars of classical Japanese literature, on the other hand, may find themselves being opened up to theoretical approaches they might have been resisting or simply not have explored yet. In this way, the book lays down a solid brick in the bridge between cultures. (SONJA ARNTZEN, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*STEVE MACDONOGH, in association with Article 19, eds. *The Rushdie Letters: Freedom to Speak, Freedom to Write*. Dingle, Ireland: Brandon Book Publishers and Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993. 190 pp. US\$ 11.95

A speculative traveller from a distant land tells the following tale. Did you know, he asks, that the people of QueAng-QueAng drink the eyeballs of living animals using a slender metal straw? The trick, that only practice can teach, is to pierce the eyeball through the iris to the exact centre and then drink the vitreous gel in many tiny sips. In QueAng-QueAng, they also execute blasphemers in a similar manner. The community kneels and angrily pierce the

condemned person's body with their metal straws. When the execution has been finished nothing much is left but skin and bones. These dry in the desert air until, withered and empty, they blow away into the bleached horizon. The condemned, like husks, are soon forgotten. One hardly knows how to respond. The people of QueAng-QueAng may exist beyond understanding. One tries to remember Montaigne, but he offers insufficient help. Finally, one may only decide that, no matter what, QueAng-QueAng is not a place to visit. The traveller only advises that one should leave the people of QueAng-QueAng to their private intensities.

The question of Salman Rushdie seems so deeply disturbing precisely because the people of QueAng-QueAng have decided to force their intensities upon the entire world. It is as if they had boarded an Airbus and flown to London (but really to all places in the world), carrying their slender metal straws in their flight bags, and sought out Rushdie for execution according to their custom, but piously ignoring London's. The question of Rushdie focuses the opposed claims of censorship and freedom of expression with rare clarity: should writers be executed for having given offense? should the offense count more sternly if it has been given to members of a world religion? should it count for less (or perhaps for nothing at all) if it is given in the form of fiction? should the offended citizens of one country be able to condemn the offender even as he lives, a free person, the citizen of another country? how should the inhabitants of a (largely) secular world understand the crime of blasphemy? These are only some of the difficult issues, as slippery as they are impassioned, that surround the Rushdie question. Anyone who thinks about such matters as literature, free expression, the nature (or the scope) of liberty and the requirements of justice should take an interest in Salman Rushdie.

For this reason the publication, in Ireland and the United States, of *The Rushdie Letters* is welcome. It adds depth to the discussion of the Rushdie question. The idea behind *The Rushdie Letters* developed in early 1992 when the German newspaper *Die Tageszeitung* published a series of letters from important writers in several countries to Rushdie. (The book does not make it clear whether it reprints this series as first published or with additions and deletions.) The letters are intended to express solidarity with Rushdie, but they do so from dissimilar backgrounds, in terms of different assumptions and with a fascinating variety of perspectives. Rushdie's 1991 *apologia pro obra sua*, "One Thousand Days in a Balloon," is printed first and the letters follow as replies or as independent reflections upon his predicament. Rushdie responds to the letters, noting how the case of *The Satanic Verses* has become "the symbol and the archetype of all the other cases of repression" in the world which several of the writers had mentioned (122). Finally, Carmel Bedford, of Article 19 and Secretary of the International Committee for the Defence of Salman Rushdie contributes "Fiction, fact and the *farwa*," a sixty page chronology of events

between February 14, 1989, the day upon which Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini pronounced the religious edict, the *farwa*, in which he sentenced to death both Rushdie and all others who had been "involved in its publication who were aware of its content" (130), and November 27, 1992 (Day 1372) at which time "Salman Rushdie remains in deep hiding, under armed guard" (183). The chronology, as a record of smarmy, pompous and plain murderous nastiness in the name of religion, makes grim, but enlightening, reading. Bedford's chronology is not, and probably could not be, complete. It indicates the major statements, on both sides, the erratic efforts by various European governments to influence Iran and numerous Iranian statements, both reasserting the *farwa* and appearing to back away from it. It includes numerous pronouncements from members of the United Kingdom's Islamic community which would be rather funny if the occasion were not so macabre. Bedford manages to suggest some of the outrage that has arisen in the West as well as the indifference, back-to-business-as-usual attitude that infects politicians. Determined demonstrations of solidarity with Rushdie occurred in many places throughout the world, though Bedford only mentions a few. In March, 1989, my colleague Greg Hollingshead, novelist and writer of short stories, and I organized a public reading of *The Satanic Verses* at the University of Alberta in which both academics and writers shared the reading of the novel throughout the day. Arriving at 7:00 a.m. to begin the reading, we found the lecture hall crowded with students and members of the community. Along the back of the hall television cameras were lined up to record my early death but they were to be disappointed. Throughout the day, great interest was shown in the reading. Radio stations called in and television crews interviewed different readers as well as members of the local Muslim community. No violence occurred (though the following day there were bomb threats), but angry voices were heard on both sides of the issue. One handsome young man, who might well have been a university student, was filmed saying that he hoped Rushdie would be "hung by his tongue" until dead. In the end there had been interest shown and local bookshops sold out their copies of *The Satanic Verses*, but there was no meeting of minds.

Not only are different Muslim spokesmen revealed making inflammatory statements, speaking with stunning disrespect for the laws of the nations where they live, or speaking equivocally in uncertain future tenses, but western spiritual leaders, such as the Archbishop of Canterbury, are overheard uttering foolish propositions. "Tolerance is achieved," the Archbishop says, "when people hold their religion as so important that to part from it is to die," ignoring, as one English newspaper pointed out editorially, that it was the Ayatollah who had condemned Rushdie to death, not the other way round. "If the Archbishop lacks the intellect to distinguish between freedom of conscience and freedom to commit crimes he should keep quiet" (167-68). Other leaders,

such as the Pope and former U.S. president Jimmy Carter, are observed, in their passion to defend religion, falling into similar confusions.

The twenty-six letters from different writers constitute the body of *The Rushdie Letters*, and it is for these that most people would buy the book. Some of the authors, such as Günter Grass, Mario Vargas Llosa, Paul Theroux, and Arnold Wesker, write in outrage and sharp anger. The *farwa*, Wesker remarks, "offends us deeply in some corner of our being that is terrified by dormant childhood fears named Certitude, Bigotry, and Irrationality" (36). Vargas Llosa sees Rushdie's predicament as marking a line that "divides the rational from the irrational, the just from the unjust, the barbarous from the civilized" (96). Any fool, Theroux writes, "can see that the Ayatollah's *farwa* is barbarous and ignorant." And, reflecting upon the failure of Western nations to influence Iran, he comments, "How disgusting to see that so far the intimidation of fanatics has worked" (32). Other authors write to Rushdie as fellow writers and as readers who have actually read *The Satanic Verses*. Kazuo Ishiguro writes movingly of "the exuberance and noise, [and the] profound sense of loneliness" at the heart of the novel and concludes telling Rushdie that "novels like yours have helped me learn a little more of what it means to be human" (79-80). Nadine Gordimer and Margaret Atwood approach the question from the perspective of trying to place *The Satanic Verses* back into the context of literature, beyond international politics and religious harshness. Gordimer writes to Rushdie that his novel "is an innovative exploration of one of the most intense experiences we share, the individual personality in transition between two cultures brought together in [the] post-colonial world" (44-5). Atwood argues (picking up hints from Northrop Frye) that offended Muslims have simply misread the novel mistaking "demonic parodies," or anti-types, for direct representation. "Literary niceties," she writes, "had simply been pulverized" (41). (Rushdie, understandably, makes this point eloquently: "I explained that writers do not agree with every word spoken by every character they create — a truism in the world of books, but a continuing mystery to *The Satanic Verses*' opponents" [22-23].) Gordimer urges the reconsideration of Rushdie's novel for ideal reasons: "May we begin to write to each other from within the world of the imagination, the lovely struggle with capturing the word, where we attempt to make sense of *life*, for ourselves and those who read our books" (45). Yet, as Bedford's chronology makes unmistakable, the questions that Rushdie has raised in the world frighteningly exceed textual problems. If it were only a problem of reading, or misreading, then one might feel some hope.

Other authors take more personal positions, occasionally, like Avraham B. Yehoshua and Dermot Bolger, linking the question of Salman Rushdie to other issues that concern them more immediately. Thus William Styron uses the opportunity of writing to Rushdie as an occasion to reflect upon the divisive issue of abortion in the United States and the dangers that "blind orthodoxy" (as

exemplified in "protestant fundamentalists and Catholics of the far right") poses to "men and women everywhere" (66-67). Dragan Velikić, a Serbian writer, movingly observes that he writes to Rushdie from a country divided into hostile sides that are "separated by a zone of death in which arrows assert the name of God" (109). Ralph Giordano and Andrzej Szczypiorski both compare Rushdie's case to their own personal experience of intolerance and barbarity. However, the most gripping statement of this kind comes from the Iranian writer (now living in exile in Germany), Fahimeh Farsaie. Farsaie experiences some difficulty with the question of Rushdie because she knows other writers in Iran who have actually been executed "and buried in mass graves together with other political prisoners," or who have disappeared into some "bitter fate" or other. "That's what bothered me: that you push your own problem so much into the foreground and overlook the others who have the same problem" (56). She continues, reminding Rushdie of all the other writers (PEN cites 739 in 75 countries) in the world who have suffered persecution such as he had, or worse. (It is interesting to note how diffidently Rushdie responds to Farsaie in his reply [121] and how, to answer her, he advances the proposition, no doubt valid, that his case is "the archetype of all the other cases of repression.") Rushdie, as even Farsaie sees things, is linked to all writers who are persecuted, perhaps archetypalizing their painful personal destinies, but certainly helping to focus the struggle "to bring this obscene injustice [all persecution of free expression] and this unequal fight to an end" (58). Dragan Velikić, quoting from Danilo Kiš's novel, *The Hourglass*, offers the most moving flourish to the task of tracing the resonances of Rushdie's case: "It is better to belong to the persecuted than to the persecutors" (110).

The Rushdie Letters frames many of the problems surrounding the Rushdie case and does so in a number of personal perspectives. It is an important book for this reason alone. However, even more importantly it shows that it is possible to combat intolerance and terror even if the outcome is inconclusive, success only distantly foreseen. Tom Stoppard puts clearly what is perhaps the central issue: that "Islamic law prevails over all other law in all other countries." It would be a curiously arranged society, Stoppard concludes, in which "fellow writers were expected to do the job which the world's statesmen exist to do" (120). Yet this may be all, statesmanship and international law impotent before an international terrorism made acceptable because, as Gordimer remarks, "it is invoked by a great and respected religion" (43), that works: articulate voices calling out to the people of QueAng-QueAng that their juridical customs are not acceptable in the world, that their practices are simply wrong. Language, as Rushdie brilliantly writes, "is courage: the ability to conceive a thought, to speak it, and by doing so to make it true" (*The Satanic Verses* 281). It is, despite Stoppard's thoughtful reservations, the available weapon of defense and counter-attack, both what there is to do and what can be done. Finally, *The*

Rushdie Letters, in the face of hopelessness, makes plain how possible it is to show solidarity with others, even if one cannot talk to them personally. One can try to read what they have written. One might even try, the voices of Atwood, Gordimer and Ishiguro sounding in the mind's-ear, to read, taking understanding as a legitimate end, *The Satanic Verses*. That would be the best way to show Salman Rushdie that, as Peter Carey claims, he has "neighbours" he will not meet (52). (ROBERT RAWDON WILSON, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*SANDER L. GILMAN. *Inscribing the Other*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991. 372 pp. US\$ 30.00

A cursory look at the contents of this book by Sander Gilman might give the impression that it contains odd pieces of reflexion, intellectual shavings left over from the crafting of his recent books. There would be nothing dishonourable to report if such were the case: Gilman's interests are wide-ranging and his productivity stunning, as the following list of his recent titles attests: *Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness* (1985), *Jewish Self-Hatred: Anti-Semitism and the Hidden Languages of the Jews* (1986), *Conversations with Nietzsche* (1988), *Oscar Wilde's London* (1988), *Disease and Representation* (1988) and *Sexuality, An Illustrated History* (1989).

But in fact the essays on Goethe, Broch, Heine, Nietzsche and others which are published here do make up a coherent and unified work. The essays are remarkably focused around a strong argument: that it is through analysis of its relationship to some "other" that the meaning of German culture can come to be known. The nature of this other is surprisingly diverse: it can be, in the case of studying Goethe, the sense of touch; for Heine, the daguerrotype; for Nietzsche, the Jew. Informed by a complex vision of the construction of the self, derived from literature, cultural history and psychoanalysis, Gilman's work brings to the study of constructions of race, gender and madness an essential historical perspective.

The essay on Karl Kraus is an appropriate example. Kraus's identities as both a "self-hating Jew" and defender of homosexuality are given form through readings of a 1903 article on Oscar Wilde. Gilman focuses on Kraus's defense of a performance of Oscar Wilde's *Salome* in which Jews are portrayed in a derogatory manner (the chorus of Pharisees speaks in a Yiddish-accented German (*Gemauschel*); Kraus downplays this negative representation of the Jews in order to give a positive account of the play and implicitly to defend the homosexuality of Wilde. Gilman sees in this article an expression of Kraus's contradictions as a "self-hating Jew": Kraus rejects the "Jewish" characterizations of Wilde as an anti-Semite to defend his sexual difference. At the same time, his obsession with the critique of language (as expressed in his

articles in *Die Fackel*) is to be seen in the context of the omnipresent characterization of the Eastern Jew as speaking an "impure jargon."

A remarkable essay on Heine's "Photographs" traces out four variations on the theme of photography in Heine's writing, each of these configuring Heine's changing perceptions both of the functions of artistic representation and the nature of his own self-image. Gilman begins his article with a discussion of the "startle effect" of photography as used in the treatment of the mentally ill in the mid-nineteenth century. Presentation of a "realistic" image of themselves — as demented — to patients would, it was said, startle them into a recognition of their madness. (Gilman has edited a book on this topic as well, *The Fact of Madness: Hugh W. Diamond and the Origin of Psychiatric Photography*, 1976). Photography radically modified the image of self, Gilman argues, but especially within those groups which were lacking established and valued patterns of aesthetic response. Heine apparently refused to have himself photographed. Ill and crippled, he refused the eye of the camera, taking refuge instead in the idea of the photograph as offering idealized images of past and future.

Other examples of revealing "others" in this collection are the work of Heine as interpreted by Nietzsche, Freud as revealed through the English-language Strachey edition, Hermann Broch's correspondence in which he unfolds his theory of mass psychology, the Jewishness of Jewish writers in contemporary Germany. Despite the variety of themes covered here, most of Gilman's essays involve similar overlappings of high and low culture, and the confrontation of official, public works of art with private performances of self. Through this dialogue, Gilman brings into constant interplay fictions of the self as they are played out in non-official arenas, and public displays of the self as they are written into works of art.

Gilman's book is predicated on the assumption that all individuals constantly construct for themselves "fictions of identity"; creative artists transpose this process into their work and mark their cultural artifacts with these fictions. These artists are by no means free from the powerful stereotypes of race, gender and madness which have run through all cultures over the last centuries. The task of the analyst is to try to understand "how stereotypes are generated, how they are embedded in cultural artifacts (texts, in the widest sense of the word), and, most important, how once sanctioned in this arena they form the basis for action" (11).

As a student of German culture, Gilman ties literature to "action" in the most explicit manner possible. He insists, contrary to many, that Nazism was not an aberration of an otherwise sublime tradition. "The Holocaust remains for me — and must remain for me and, I hope, for my students — the central event of modern German culture, the event toward which every text, every moment in German history and, yes, culture, inexorably moved" (17). Most significant of expressions of literary anti-Semitism for Gilman is the theme of the "hidden" or

"impure" language of the Jews, a traditional motif through which Jewish writers were "exposed" as aliens, and which he unearths in many of the cultural artifacts considered in this collection. On the other hand, a provocative essay on Jewish writers in contemporary Germany argues, in contrast, that in order to avoid suspicions of racism, contemporary critics have destroyed the idea of the "difference" of the Jewish writer. Rather than plague the Jewish writer with a specificity which can only be interpreted as negative, German critics have "denied identity" to German-Jewish writers dealing with the complexities of German Jewry. Such contradictions with regard to the difference of Judaism in German culture are perhaps not so much opposites as polar options on a continuum. The Western world, Gilman suggests, has yet to see a real paradigm shift in its attitudes towards racial and sexual difference. (SHERRY SIMON, CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY)

*AJIAZ AHMAD. *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures*. New York: Verso, 1992. 358 pp. US\$ 29.95

*SARA SULERI. *The Rhetoric of English India*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992. 230 pp. US\$ 10.95

*GAURI VISWANATHAN. *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*. [1st ed. 1989] New York: Columbia, 1992. 206 pp. US\$ 14.50

Surely, I am not the only comparatist who has felt, at least on occasion, that the burgeoning field of postcolonial theory ("poco" for short) is not only enmeshed in self-verifying jargon, but singularly lacking in the cross-linguistic dimension that its very topic, the tumultuous effects of European cultural expansion since the Renaissance, ought to have as pre-requisite.

The institutional pursuit of Commonwealth Literary Studies by another name — perhaps in the sense that war is a continuation of diplomacy — postcolonial theory has been almost exclusively confined to an anglophone frame of reference, with an occasional bow in the direction of the francophone writers of Africa and the Caribbean. There are, nonetheless, some encouraging signs of progress on this front: to wit, the three texts lumped together above, though their scope and arguments can only be sketchily reproduced in the narrow confines of a book review.

Sara Suleri's *The Rhetoric of English India*, a study that spans texts as diverse as Edmund Burke's parliamentary tirades (1788), Fanny Parks's *Wanderings of a Pilgrim in Search of the Picturesque* (1850), Kipling's *Kim* (1901), Forster's imperially "erotic" *Passage to India* (1924), much of V.S. Naipaul's oeuvre, as well as Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, focuses exclusively on English language writing, though in ways, I would argue, that are intrinsically comparatist.

For example, the first precept Suleri sets forth is that "colonial cultural studies" must disrupt the "emplotment" that conjoins culture and nation in a

single quest for salutary origins. A second postulate is that the "rhetoric of binarism that informs contemporary critiques of alterity in colonial discourse" (3) must be also dispelled. Implicit in this injunction is the premise that the postcolonial subject is not only largely a projection of English language discourse, but that the (post-)colonized Other is heterogeneous, and partakes of his or her own multiple linguistic traditions. Suleri, accordingly, inveighs against the tendency she dubs "alteritism": the reification of the colonized Other and the continual inscription of its essence into discourse on literature sited, in whatever way, within the colonial, imperial or postcolonial spheres. If, as she suggests, the "language of alterity can be read as a postmodern variant of the obsolescent idiom of romance" (11), its logic will then inevitably lack the nuance necessary to seize the "diverse ironies of empire" (9) and to render the "economy of complicity and guilt ... in operation between each actor on the colonial stage" (3), but will merely serve to reiterate the "academy's continuing fear of its own cultural ignorance" (12) — and here Suleri is correct, in my opinion, that however deconstructionist academics become, their sole institutional justification is the dissipation of ignorance.

What is encouraging about *The Rhetoric of English India*, then, is that the discursive strategies she depicts are portrayed as the end product of a collusion between English and Indian "idioms." Suleri herself would be the ideal scholar to push the terms of this discussion a step further and to show how those figures are idiomatic not only within a given language, but across discrete languages. She is the author of a well received autobiographical work on postcolonial existence, *Meatless Days*, and the dedicatory epigraph to her father is a doubtless well chosen couplet from the Urdu. This reader, in other words, feels brimming beneath the surface of her text, especially in her concluding chapter on Salman Rushdie, another linguistic universe in terms of which this anglocentric academic study is itself a worthy but relative achievement.

Though Sara Suleri mentions Gauri Viswanathan's *Masks of Conquest* only three times, her debt and the affinity between the two books is manifest, the principal dissimilarity in their intellectual strategies being that whereas Suleri is first and foremost concerned with tropes and figures, Viswanathan treats rhetoric as an institutional, ideological and even ideational construct best read against the "continual modifications of British educational goals and the strategic maneuvering that produced English studies in India" (169). In her introduction, Viswanathan offers thanks to Edward Said. In my own opinion her work marks a considerable advance on the legacy Said has left us, given her appetite for detail and nuance *in situ*. As she explains it, Orientalism, the current of learning and colonial policy that advocated the inclusion of Sanscrit, Arabic and Persian within the British educational apparatus in India, can only be understood as one among other colonial strategies, especially Anglicism, the school of thought that English studies alone could convey the religious values allegedly immanent in

Shakespeare and Milton but that could not otherwise be inculcated for practical political reasons. Hindus as much as Muslims took offense at the introduction of Christian discourse into India, and official British policy remained one of religious neutrality.

Gauri Viswanathan's proposition, however, is an even more powerful one, and has direct implications for anglocentric postcolonial theory, since she holds that English literary studies in India predated and in fact shaped and moulded the institution of same in Britain. This is no mere matter of chronology. It is historically patent that English literature entered Indian educational systems with the passing of the Charter Act in 1813, whereas in the metropolis English literary studies were not imposed in the classroom until 1871. Viswanathan's argument goes much further: India, she insists, served "as an experimental laboratory for testing educational ideas that had either been abandoned in England or fallen victim to insuperable opposition from entrenched traditions and orthodoxes" (8). In India these controversies were couched in terms of debate between Orientalists, Anglicists and utilitarians but, as Viswanathan persuades us, the nineteenth English literary canon was devised with prime reference to the needs of imperial overseas education. It follows that English literary culture of the imperial period must be thought of not as expressing an internally coherent English nation, rather as derivative of a transnational project that, if I may borrow Gayatri Spivak's expression, "messed with" *English* identity too. This characteristic of colonial cultural practice has specific implications for postcolonial theory, since a case could be made that the cultural agenda at the centre, in the metropolis, is currently and similarly being set by peripheral, that is postcolonial, writers and thinkers. Admittedly, for the time being this hypothesis is hard to prove. A cover article in *Time* (No. 30, 1993) can be a pretty epiphenomenal event. Moreover, in an age of racist reaction to the internal consequences of migration induced by empire, imperialism and, now, fully mature transnational capitalism, it is perhaps more plausible to think the opposite. Let us remember, though, that at the apogee of the British empire and during the periods Viswanathan discusses, English cultural chauvinism was widespread — which did not keep the colonial stub, as it were, from wagging the imperial pit-bull.

Another cautionary note: this ostensible potential of the postcolonial agenda may not be quite as progressive as it may seem. Late in her book Viswanathan also reminds us that "even the most inclusionary curriculum can itself be part of the processes of control ... as the history of Orientalist education [in nineteenth-century India] demonstrates" (167).

This brings us to the third work: Aijaz Ahmad's *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literature*, a text so Marxist as to appear, at first, anachronistic. I do not mean that remark to be dismissive, since Ahmad may turn out to be right, or at least to be as right as anyone — if I may be allowed a postmodern *boutade* — since

the rise and fall of Marxism itself should be a reminder of how relative intellectual fashions are among the North American and European cognoscenti. There is moreover an undeniable elegance in Aijaz Ahmad's critiques of Frederic Jameson, Edward Said, Ranahit Guha, or Homi Bhabha; and veterans of past ideological wars will immediately recognize both their manner and their matter: high Marxist argumentation of a Trotskyist persuasion. Ahmad's take on Rushdie's *Shame* should, accordingly, be read against Suleri's chapter on the same classic "poco" locus as an exemplary statement of divergent political orientations. In the same way, the "clarification" of Marx's supposedly pejorative portrayal of India as "despotic" belongs to a polemic genre those trained in the ideological battles of the sixties and seventies will recognize in their sleep.

For comparatists who find these political quibbles tedious, Ahmad's historiographical passages will be the most congenial, especially the chapter entitled "'Indian Literature'" — around which both single and double quotes must dance. And though this chapter too is predicated upon class analysis, it does expose in detail the methodological and epistemological challenges confronting literary history on the subcontinent, and from a position that will warm the cockles of a comparatist's heart.

Let me therefore squeeze in an excerpt from that chapter, one which impinges directly upon the constituency of postcolonial theory as presently construed:

Literary study in our time and our place [late twentieth-century India, Pakistan and Bangladesh], more than ever and more than elsewhere, needs to be transgressive, and the very first transgressions need to be, in the most obvious and literal senses, against "English" and against "Literature." No solid scholarship of an "Indian Literature" is possible unless we recoup, in active and viscerally felt ways, as much for reading and writing as for speech, our bi- and multilingualities. Nor is a full reappropriation of our old literatures, classical or medieval, possible unless we are willing to wander across all sorts of boundaries that are said to separate History from Philosophy, Anthropology from Linguistics, Religion from Economics, and "Literature" from all these and much else besides. (281)

The interdisciplinary imperative in the last sentence will ring familiar to many North American and increasingly to European academics. But for Aijaz Ahmad "interdisciplinarity" in India must be accompanied by multilingualism. And that, of course, is *our* problem, at least if we intend to situate ourselves *vis-à-vis* South Asia.

It is common among "poco" theorists to vituperate against "Orientalism," but Orientalists were the first and are virtually still the only Western scholars to recognize the need to learn at least one Indian language before pontificating upon India. Above I suggested that postcolonial studies in English might have

an influence upon contemporary postcolonial studies analogous to that Gauri Viswanathan sketched out for English studies in the nineteenth century and, it would follow, postcolonial cultural studies are proactively reshaping the English language canon at the metropolitan centre. What postcolonial studies do not do — and about this we must be frank — is shape or even understand and explain what happens outside of that centre, at least beyond the ken of English. In this respect, Gauri Viswanathan's *Masks of Conquest* is exemplary. Her concluding sentence defines her swoop, and that of a properly modest monolingual postcolonial theory: "I am hopeful that with sustained cross-referencing between the histories of England and its colonies the relations between Western culture and imperialism will be progressively illuminated" (169).

A somewhat more precise fix on how we might study the comparative literary histories of England and its colonies is provided by Aijaz Ahmad, who does not hesitate to praise the attractions of English as *langue d'appoint*, an international vehicle with its own advantages, and drawbacks. Ahmad does insist, however, that English be contextualized in India, at least as a matter of "literary study":

Only by submitting the teaching of English Literature to the more crucial and comparatist discipline of Historical and Cultural Studies, and by connecting the knowledge of that literature with literatures of our own, [can] we begin to break [the] colonial grid and to liberate the teacher of English from a colonially determined, subordinated and parasitic existence. (283)

It would seem that until they learn to connect knowledge of English literature with Indian language literatures, those who have embraced postcolonial theory are destined to remain part of the problem, not the solution. (GEORGE LANG, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

JÁNOS RIESZ and ALAIN RICARD, eds. *Semper aliquid novi: Littérature Comparée et Littératures d'Afrique. Mélanges offerts à Albert Gérard*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1990. 404 pp. + xi. DM 198.00

The *Festschrift* as a genre is in itself a *mélange*; articles written in honour of a person may or may not have any interconnection; they may or may not have a theme in common. The editors of this particular *Festschrift* have, however, been able to bring together articles that, by and large, focus on a few common areas. This is achieved by making Albert Gérard the center point.

The opening articles place Gérard's research in the history of scholarship and systematize it into three categories: Renaissance and Baroque literature, comparative literature, and African literature. Common to these fields are "questions de genèse et de développement des genres." Here, the editors have laid the structural foundations of the *Festschrift*. Theories in comparative literature, then, provide the thread connecting most of the articles, and since

several articles take Gérard's work as a starting point, a unity is achieved that is unusual for a work in a genre, the *Festschrift*, normally characterized by fragmentation. The articles pay tribute to Gérard by demonstrating his immense importance to comparative literature and to African literature. The best articles combine these two fields.

Thirty-five articles, presented in three languages (French, English and German), are distributed over four sections, of which the sections on "Théorie et méthodologie de la littérature comparée" and "Littérature d'Afrique" are the most substantial in more than one sense. Articles in the former section often choose African material as a point of departure for a theoretical discussion, and, similarly, the articles in the latter section often explicitly relate their comparisons to general theory. Thus, the unity of the book is further enhanced and makes reading from the first page to the last worthwhile, not only for a reviewer.

In the section on "Théorie et méthodologie de la littérature comparée" the contributions range over a vast area, from basic concepts and strategies of interpretation to handy quantitative charts for evaluating the *reputation* of individual authors. The issue of language is discussed from different angles. The notion of national literature rests on the assumption of a monolingual nation state with a written literature. Some articles, such as James Arnold's "Caribbean Literature/Comparative Literature" and José Lambert's "À la recherche de cartes mondiales des littératures," amply demonstrate, however, that certain literatures cannot be seen as national in the sense used by a Eurocentric body of theory. As long as the present Western notion of national literatures is upheld, many literatures and oratures are evaluated by irrelevant standards or simply brushed aside by literary comparatists.

Language is central also to another problem addressed. Priscilla P. Ferguson's "Littérature comparée et francophonie" and Michel Hauser's "Rabearivelo critique" show that French as a colonial language is above all the language of the army, the administration and education, and that it forces users stemming from other national literatures to work with and reflect attitudes, values and cultural forms particular to this type of language. Even against their explicit will, francophone African writers are forced to succumb to the French national identity advocating "l'universalité de la culture française." It seems, then, that an Amos Tutuola would not be possible in French.

Several articles can be understood as addressing questions like "What is comparable to what? And what does it take to make comparisons?," to the point that gradually the articles that do not address these questions come to do so, at least to this reader. As could be expected, various answers are suggested, but already the scepticism expressed by the authors towards their chosen methods is gratifying, and so a clear answer is not always to be preferred to a tentative

one, or to leaving the issue open, which would make the reader, too, question his or her own assumptions.

A reading of the entire section on theory and methodology makes obvious the shortcomings of general — read Eurocentric — comparative methods when applied to non-European material. Euro-centrism comes across — and is made to come across — clearly.

In the section on "Littératures d'Afrique," I have read two articles with special interest; one is Jean Derive's "L'oralité africaine ou 'La littérature en kit'." Derive joins the scholars who question the notion that the only difference between orature and literature is the act of writing. Derive's studies show that it is not possible to deduce the genre to which the text belongs from the properties inherent in the discourse alone; context is equally important. This context is often not verbal at all but expressed entirely in non-verbal, social codes. In such cases it is then the understanding of the listeners that helps establish the genre, and understanding is generated by the event as a whole. As a result, Derive can explain why certain phrases or even whole stanzas recur in texts belonging to different genres, where the genres have been established internally by the audience. Markers indicating a genre are found not at the semantic level of the text, as in Western literature, but in the social event generating the text.

In his "Orality, Literacy and African Literature" Abiola Irele, too, discusses similarities and differences between orature and literature. Do the different ways of communicating the texts — orally and in writing — reflect different modes of thought or modes of culture as well? Like Derive, Irele concludes that literature is defined in relation to a context, not in relation to its form of communication alone. He concludes that "orality proposes a dynamic conception of literature, one which envisages literature as *text in situation*." It is the communal event as a whole that defines orature (according to Derive, it is this whole that establishes the genre), and orature is no less valuable than literature, though it operates according to a quite different set of rules. Therefore, literature and orature cannot be compared like apples and oranges. But, adds Irele, a new and creative tension is generated when African authors try to make literature communicate the same message as orature, not only as a coded message but also as an event.

It is a pity that the section on theatre does not address this kind of problem. We lose sight of Albert Gérard, and, as a consequence, the connecting thread is lost too. The articles strive in all directions, and we are left with the typical *mélange* of the *Festschrift* genre.

In the theatre section Erika Fischer-Lichte's article is the only one of interest from a theoretical point of view, and Jeanne N. Dingomé's from an African point of view.

Fischer-Lichte analyses the internal needs which have informed the *mise en scène* of plays from other cultures, whether they be Ibsen's plays in Japan or Japanese plays in Germany. Her interest is not focused on the transition from oral to written communication, or from written to oral, as in a staging process, within the same culture, but on the transition occasioned by importation from an alien culture to one's own. Even so, her neat distinction between cultures and her needs-based analysis could be used far outside her chosen scope.

Dingomé's article "Ritual and Modern Expression in Cameroon: The Plays of Werewere Liking" touches upon the negative effects stemming from the reliance on European models. Again, it is pointed out that French conventions embedded in the French language make writers "adopt an outsider's perspective." In Werewere Liking's work Dingomé finds an outstanding exception. Liking's frequent use of rituals in her dramas is seen as an African hallmark, a means to promote a national identity, and a main contrast to the present-day European theatre striving towards realism. In her enthusiasm, however, Dingomé tends to over-emphasize the differences between Liking's ritual dramas and European theatre, which makes the reader reluctant to agree with her at times. The concept of ritual as related to theatre and drama is frequently discussed by scholars in different fields, but in Dingomé's article there are no traces of these discussions. This entire field is, however, highly interesting and promising, and much remains to be done on a larger scale.

It is areas such as basic comparative strategies, relations between orature and literature, and transitions from oral to written or from written to oral communication, treated in many of the articles, that lend a unity to the *Festschrift* to Albert Gérard and make reading it worthwhile. (KACKE GÖTRICK, UNIVERSITÄT I OSLO)

*CHANTAL ZABUS. *The African Palimpsest: Indigenization of Language in the West African Europhone Novel*. Amsterdam, Atlanta: Rodopi, 1991. 224 pp. DFL 70.00

Indigenization, writes Chantal Zabus, "belongs to a tradition of literary and linguistic revanchism that is as old as conquest itself and is inscribed in violence" (8). Indeed, the post-colonial Europhone African novel is the living theatre of an unfolding linguistic drama that is steeped in violence. West African creative writers have elaborated strategies in their texts that seek to subvert the discursive hegemony of European languages by indigenizing them, and thus have scripturally waged war against those languages.

Many works have been written before on the thematics of protest in the African novel. Never before, however, has protest been systematically located within the very linguistic texture of the Europhone African novel. Chantal Zabus has provided a great variety of case studies documenting such subversive strategies as "pidginization," and "relexification." Using as a guiding metaphor,

the palimpsest, Zabus argues that the apparent linguistic correctness of postcolonial African novels cannot dissimulate the fact that such texts are composite forms beneath whose scriptural surface can be "detected traces of the earlier, imperfectly erased remnants of the African language" (3).

In the course of her analysis Zabus explores the numerous paradoxes of the practice of linguistic indigenization and asks salient questions regarding the future of the African novel. What is the future of the Europhone African novel? Will the process of "othering" the exolects result in a future of African language writing? What is the future of Pidgin as a literary medium?

After explaining her project in the first chapter, Zabus spins out her study over five chapters. Chapter two discusses the ambiguous and paradoxical situation of the African novelist who seeks to subvert the dominance of the European language in which he/she writes. The chapter delves into the historical origins of that dominance. She attacks views such as Senghor's and the earlier Ngugi's belief in the inherent lexical superiority of European languages. To this Zabus responds that the sociopolitical, hegemonic importance of the European language does not exist *in esse* in that the European language does not have in its morphology an innate ability to dominate. "Its dominance is conferred by colonial history, cultured *in vitro* and perpetuated by statebound language policies" (16). French glottopolitics is lengthily discussed because of the particularly repressive language policies of French colonial rule. Chapter three discusses the indigenization of the Europhone text by two of the auxiliary languages resulting from the language contact situation "Pidgin English" and "Pitnig." Zabus concentrates on Nigerian "Pidgin English" and documents the evolution in the representation of this pidgin from Joyce Cary's *Mister Johnson* to its status as "rotten English" in Saro Wiwa's experimental novel, *Sozaboy*. She provides a detailed discussion of the phenomenon of codeswitching and analyses the scriptural problems of representing codeswitching in the Europhone text. From *Mister Johnson* to *Sozaboy*, Zabus observes a shift in the functions of "pidgin English." Without altogether losing its association with levity or jocularity and with the illiterati of urban Nigeria, codeswitching between the European, the African language and the languages in contact is discussed as "acts of identity" and "illocutionary" speech acts. The underrepresentation of French texts of this nature in the study is due to the hegemonic colonial language policies of France which did not allow the full development of "Pitnig" to the status of a pidgin.

Chapter four examines "relexification," another method of indigenization involving the indigenous African languages. The case studies reveal the mechanism of relexification involving such African languages as Igbo, Ijo, Maninka, Wolof and Yoruba. Chantal Zabus takes pains to distinguish relexification from interpretive translation, auto-translation or calquing resulting from poor or approximate second language acquisition. The relexified text is the

result of the deliberate glottopolitical resolve of the writer to misuse and abuse the European language, to decolonize and liberate the language of literature from the vast colonial discourse in which writing was previously rooted. To make the distinction clear, Zabus sets calquing from Yoruba in Amos Tutuola's *The Palm Wine Drinkard* in contrast with lexico-semantic relexification and its resulting textual violence in the novels of Gabriel Okara and Ahmadou Kourouma.

Pidginization and relexification are indeed decolonizing strategies. Zabus hints, however, at the possible counterproductiveness of these methods. The enforced proximity of foreign and indigenous elements may very well result in what the author refers to as "mutual cannibalism," which invalidates the premise of indigenization, the rehabilitation of the African languages.

Chapter five examines two methods of indigenization, "cushioning" and "contextualization" with reference to Igbo for the anglophone novel and Diula, Wolof, Maninka and Ndút for the francophone novel. These methods aim at naming and identifying the gap between the European language and the African language without necessarily bridging it. "Cushioning" is the fact of tagging a European language explanation onto an African word, while "contextualization" involves the provision of immediate context for the purpose of making the African word intelligible without resorting to translation. In this context, *Sozaboy* is a paradigmatic experiment, embodying as it does the move towards a potential *tertium quid*. The author sees the uniqueness of this novel in terms of its distinctness from texts which attempt to name the gap by hosting the visible traces of the mother tongue, and also from relexified texts which leave quasi-invisible traces of the mother tongue. *Sozaboy*, aims at closing the gap between mother tongue and other tongue by replacing both of them with a pidgin of a sort.

In her conclusion, Chantal Zabus explores new outlets for the expression of African culture outside of the Europhone text, such as film. She also investigates the possibilities of a move towards African-language writing paralleling the glotto-political trend of "othering" the European language in West African nation-states. The author argues convincingly that "the ultimate 'othering' takes place in the practice of auto-translation," already undertaken by such writers as Ngugi.

The probity of Zabus's study cannot be overemphasized. There is nonetheless a significant oversight in her analysis that must be pointed out. Her constant use of the dichotomy — "African words-European language" (157) or the use of the concept "African culture" in the singular (44) betrays a failure to fully reckon with the heterogeneity and linguistic complexity of African culture(s). One cannot ignore the fact that some pre-colonial African societies are thoroughly multicultural. Reference could be made by way of example to cultures that became hybridized by the profound influence of Islam. Senegalese culture, for example, hosts within it practices and attendant linguistic concepts that are

directly related to the life of a Muslim. Such Islamo-Arabic concepts have been integrated into and remained untranslated within the ecology of the Senegalese logos. Aminata Sow-Fall renders in Wolof many culturally bound events, ceremonies, rituals as well as clothes, tools, animals, seasons and other formulae with or without the techniques of cushioning or contextualization. On the other hand she translates into French virtually all concepts and practices related to the culture of Islam. Zabus's analysis fails to notice this discrepancy and probe into its possible ideological significance.

This observation should not divert our attention from the importance of Zabus's book. Apart from its great documentary value, the *African Palimpsest* provides many theoretical concepts that will be useful to scholars of African literatures and linguists in general. As well, the phenomenon of indigenization which Zabus describes is bound to interest Comparatists who want to gain fresh insights into the processes by which Vulgar Latin once gave birth to the Romance languages. (AHMED SHEIKH BANGURA, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA)

ERIC de DAMPIERRE, éd. *Les satires de Lamadani*. Paris: Armand Colin, 1987. 155 pp. et une cassette. FF 280.00

La collection des Classiques africains offre des transcriptions de récits ou poèmes de tradition orale, dont l'ensemble vise à constituer un corpus des textes les plus représentatifs des "littératures" vernaculaires africaines: ainsi, *La Geste de Ham-Bôdédio*, éditée et traduite par Christiane Seydou, ou le *Bagré* de Jack Goody. Ces volumes sont fabriqués avec soin: joli papier teinté, belle typographie, jaquette agréable à voir et à toucher — qualités qui contribuent au plaisir du lecteur. *Les satires de Lamadani* comportent deux tomes, le second (de même format que le premier) étant un élégant coffret qui contient la cassette des enregistrements, cassette acoustiquement excellente.

Pour moi, non africaniste mais intéressé depuis quinze ans par tout ce qui concerne la poésie vocale, cet ouvrage est particulièrement riche et suggestif. Une traduction-juxta, d'une grande simplicité en même temps que poétiquement dense, permet de suivre "verset" par "verset" (tel est le terme employé par Eric de Dampierre). Un très petit nombre de notes éclairent les allusions trop obscures. Cependant, la cassette fait entendre la voix de l'auteur; et, grâce à une dizaine de photos, on en perçoit l'aspect physique et l'expression. Ainsi se trouvent exposés devant les sens du lecteur les principaux éléments constitutifs de la performance. Quelques annotations jointes au texte signalent des facteurs accessoires (par ailleurs, audibles sur la cassette): prélude musical; interruptions pendant lesquelles le chanteur accorde la harpe dont il s'accompagne; échanges de remarques entre auditeurs à propos de ce qu'ils viennent d'entendre; au début de la pièce XV, par un effet peut-être voulu, le chant d'un coq sert de contrepoint sonore à plusieurs phrases...

De Dampierre est, on le sait, le meilleur connaisseur des ethnies occupant la région de l'Oubangui, en République Centre-africaine. Outre son histoire du royaume bandia, ses *Poètes nzakara*, dont le second volume est annoncé, sont une source indispensable à l'étude des cultures correspondantes. Les *Poètes* constituent le toile de fond sur laquelle se détachent les *Satires*: Nzouka, surnommé Lamadani, était un poète du même peuple nzakara, ancien chanteur de la cour royale, né sans doute vers 1900. Au cours de plusieurs rencontres, entre 1967 et 1972, de Dampierre, l'ayant fortuitement découvert (il avait échappé à ses recherches antérieures), l'interview et obtint de lui (considéré en pays nzakara comme "le plus grand") l'exécution d'un certain nombre de chants. Mort presque octogénaire en 1972, Nzouka-Lamadani emporta dans sa tombe à la fois la mémoire vivante des rois pour lesquels il avait chanté, et le secret d'un art poétique étonnamment subtil. L'enregistrement se heurta à diverses difficultés, événementielles (allusion à des faits oubliés de tous) et linguistiques (emploi d'archaïsmes lexicaux et syntaxiques) sur lesquelles de Dampierre s'étend peu, mais qui exigèrent un long travail d'éclaircissement et d'interprétation, auquel du reste collabora Lamadani lui-même (voir pp. 24-25). Un appareil très léger (quinze pages d'introduction, court index, quelques notes) éclaire l'ensemble des problèmes ainsi posés.

Les chants publiés sont au nombre de dix-sept, couvrant (dans le texte original) une soixantaine de pages et représentant au total un peu plus d'une heure de performance. Il s'agit de pièces brèves, allusives, dépourvues de développements narratifs, illustrées parfois de passages "lyriques," mais par leur fond essentiellement polémiques, allant de la raillerie à l'insulte à peine voilée. Poésie difficile, évidemment destinée à un auditoire d'amateurs initiés à son fonctionnement. D'un point de vue externe, on peut distinguer les chants composés par Lamadani lui-même, à propos d'événements publics ou privés, et ses remaniements (re-créations) de chants traditionnels. D'un point de vue interne, toutefois, cette distinction ne paraît faire peu de sens: les deux groupes se rangent également au sein d'une tradition qui, comme telle, leur confère leur portée sociale et leur signification. L'enchaînement "expérience de l'événement-chant-répétition-imitation" est circulaire; il constitue une unité dont les diverses phrases fournissent les éléments constitutifs, et dont chacune est apte en principe à faire, si je puis dire, démarrer le circuit. Selon de Dampierre la tradition à quoi se rattache l'oeuvre de Lamadani pourrait être d'origine peu antérieure à la fin du XIX^e siècle (20). Produite (sur la base de quelles coutumes anciennes?) par le choc culturel résultant des premiers contacts avec les Blancs? La question se pose. La nature foncièrement traditionnelle de cette poésie (et donc la relative antiquité de ses racines) se manifeste formellement à la fois aux niveaux langagier et musical. Je renvoie sur ce point aux remarques de Dampierre (21-23). C'est là un art de cour étroitement lié aux structures de commandement des anciennes sociétés indigènes.

Sur le plan textuel (indépendamment des thèmes et des effets de sens, dans une langue dont je n'ai que les plus vagues notions) je constate, à la vue (par la lecture) et à l'ouïe, une assez grande variété au sein d'un style très homogène. La faible durée des pièces (la plus longue fait cinq minutes neuf secondes; la plus courte, une minute cinquante-trois) valorise fortement les effets rythmiques. L'unité de diction se définit au sein d'un ordre musical réglé par le son clair et quasi-métallique de la harpe soutenant une cantillation aux cadences très clairement marquées. Des phrases rythmiques aux contours nets découpent ainsi l'exposé: ces "versets," de longueur inégale mais rarement de plus de vingt à trente syllabes, construisent le texte selon les techniques (souvent décrites par ailleurs) de la répétition et, plus spécialement, du "tuilage," combinant réitération et variantes d'une manière qui fait avancer le discours, non pas en ligne continue mais selon une sorte de pas de danse. Chaque mouvement de ce pas constitue une unité sémantique, que la voix du chanteur lie aux précédentes et aux suivantes sur un débit rapide, progressant avec une parfaite fluidité vocale. Le poète joue parfois de cette précipitation, obtenant un tempo de marche hâtive ou de moquerie bavarde et joyeuse: son style comporte ainsi, sous son unité de façade et son apparent dépouillement, une remarquable richesse expressive. Autant que j'en puis juger, le plan rythmico-musical a son équivalent au niveau des formes linguistiques, dans la multiplication — parfois jusqu'à créer une figure obsessive — des échos sonores, allitérations, correspondances de timbres, tissent un réseau où l'ensemble du texte se trouve pris, au sein duquel il devient significatif. (PAUL ZUMTHOR, UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL)

Literature and Political Change in Peru

MARIO D. FENYO

PRELIMINARY REMARKS

It behooves the historian, I would argue, to reveal her or his motives for selecting a topic, for adopting a particular perspective: I have recently completed, after almost a decade, a study of the relationship between politics and literature in the East European context, around the turn of the twentieth century (Fenyo). Whether or not history be subject to natural laws, it was certainly not possible to formulate general, universally applicable principles on the basis of that single case study. Hence I thought it may prove worthwhile to examine an altogether different cultural milieu, the relationship of politics and literature in the Peruvian context.

Critics and literary historians have the tendency to deal with Latin American literatures as a unit, one exception being Augusto Salazar Bondy's *Historia de las ideas en el Perú contemporáneo*. In Peru in this century, as in Eastern Europe during the nineteenth, literature was about the only way to circumvent the censor, and reveal the true social conditions to the world. Granted, it is a giant leap from Eastern Europe to South America; but the distance is more geographic than social, economic, or psychological.

For one thing, Eastern Europe and the Andes are and were economically peripheral areas. It is hardly necessary to demonstrate that present-day Peru has yet to undergo a process of modernization. It makes little or no sense to talk about stages of economic development in Peru, or to compare cultural conditions in Peru at a certain stage with cultural conditions in Eastern Europe during a similar stage; for the past hundred years Peru has experienced but one stage — the stage of stagnation. It is also clear that most of East-Central Europe was underdeveloped at the beginning of this century, that it was little more than the "periphery" of an already industrialized West, and that the recent political changes there still do not augur well for modernization, development, or democracy.

The areas also resemble each other as regards literacy. Suspect as statistical indices pertaining to Peru may be, the literacy rate for Peru is estimated at slightly below or slightly above 80%; more significant, however, than this national average are the striking regional and gender differences in Peru, and the