

MIEKE BAL. *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*. 2nd edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997. 254 pp. CDN\$ 18.95, paper.

This is a substantially (50%) expanded second edition of Professor Bal's study of the same title (first Dutch edition 1980, first English edition 1985) which has become a classic in the field and widely used in narratology courses in many countries. I use advisedly the word "expanded", rather than the publisher's "complete revision", since very little of the original version has been altered or deleted, while much has been added. The author's aim in the additions has been not to cover everything done in the vast and heterogeneous field of narratology since 1985, but rather to present the progress of her own research in the intervening time period and how this research reflects on the structuralist theory which underlies the first edition. The expansions cover accordingly four areas: Modern and Postmodern works where traditional narrative procedures are often inverted or laid bare; visual narratology, concerned primarily with painting; the semiotic construction of the experiencing subject; and ideological structures and cultural analysis in general. In terms of their textual status, the additions can once again be classified into several groups: meta theoretical considerations on the nature, status and role of narratology and some of its central procedures such as binarism; theoretical claims ranging in size from a short paragraph to an extensive discussion, for example, of levels of embedding in verbal and visual texts; analyses of whole works or of aspects thereof intended to illustrate diverse theoretical claims; and outstanding brief transitional paragraphs at the beginning or end of the discussion of some key aspect, meant to indicate the epistemological status of the following or preceding step of the enquiry and its role in the line of argument as a whole. This review will be devoted entirely to the presentation and critical examination of the new material, since the first edition has already been reviewed in *CRCL* (Vol 16, 1989, pp. 188-192).

Bal, who describes herself as a "compulsive narratologist," feels an urgent need to justify the validity and usefulness of structuralist-based narratology, the foundation of the first edition, against claims that it is nothing but a collection of arid taxonomies, that it cannot do the "really important things," that there is no point to it and that, in any case, it is irrelevant to current theoretical and wider intellectual concerns. Her answer, which frames the text (Preface to the Second Edition, Introduction, and Afterword), consists of the claim that the narratological project is still important and relevant, but requires a recontextualisation in terms of its status, role, and goals. In other words, one

needs to redefine what narratology is, what it can do and what it is for. According to Bal's current view, narratology is not concerned with one particular corpus or class of objects, those defined in current cultural practice as "literary narratives." It is rather a theory of *narrativity*, that is, of the narrative aspect or component of all cultural semiotic products, without privileging any medium or mode (222). Narratology studies the specific nature, relative importance, and effects of the narrative component of any cultural product (222). It is thus defined not by a corpus, but by a specific theoretical slant or set of questions and, like semiotics, is potentially applicable and useful for the study of all semiotic objects in all media. This also implies that narratological considerations are a legitimate or even necessary part of every discipline concerned with the analysis of cultural products of any kind, be it anthropology, art history or meta-history. While hardly any semiotic object is without a narrative component, its relative weight does vary greatly from one type of object to another, and so will the potential contribution of a narratological analysis to the study of this object, as contrasted with other kinds of theory. Furthermore, while narratology is always useful to some degree, it can never claim to constitute the sole adequate approach to any phenomenon, including literary narrative. As for its cognitive status and role, narratology is not aimed at the construction of perfectly reliable descriptive models or objective grids providing certainty (xiii). It provides instead tentative models and concepts which are not their own end, but which serve rather as heuristic tools or instruments of exploration whose application to any phenomenon is always tentative.

Narratological analysis is important, even indispensable, but its ultimate function and justification reside not in itself but in the help it provides for activities of analysis and interpretation undertaken in wider contexts of enquiry concerned with questions of meaning and of the social and historical embeddedness of texts. Narratology is expected to provide reliable models of narrative analysis in the service of other concerns of cultural analysis (13). More specifically, its function is to illuminate the contribution of the narrative (textual) determinants to the production of (textual) meanings in any medium or type of discourse (14). Narratology, which provides a narrative "syntax" on the levels of text, story and fabula, is hierarchically subordinate to other types of enquiry of a semantic nature which, in Bal's opinion, are of greater intellectual importance. Of great significance is also Bal's implied view that narratology should study the functions and functioning of narrative devices or structures in the overall texture of specific texts, rather than stop at a morphological description. Admittedly, functional study is less amenable to exhaustive

that they do not belong to some past and dead stage of structuralist formalism and that they are fruitful for current feminist and ideological critique. It is important to note that while narrative forms or elements as such can be presented in an abstract, general and systematic way (which is exactly what the first edition did), their contribution to the production of textual meanings is context dependent and hence case specific. In this sense they are like stylistic devices. But once again, unless one masters the systematics first, one would not be able to identify the formal elements and examine their semantic role in individual cases. In plain words, even if we are primarily interested in the interpretation of an individual work, knowledge of narratology — a theoretical project — is indispensable.

Bal's theoretical additions are concentrated in three areas: the fate of narratological concepts and models in the study of Postmodernist narratives, verbal or visual; levels and aspects of textual embedding; and the foundations of a narratology of the visual. While numerous examples are provided in each context, there is one central example which occurs in all three and which forms the object of a veritable tour de force by the author. This is a very recent (1996) and very complex painting with text by Ken Apter (66-75). Using examples from literature (Morrison, Acker), film (*Schindler's List*) and painting (Apter), Bal demonstrates how postmodernist artists employ traditional structures, procedures, or even whole texts, while at the same time depriving their underlying mimetic material of its motivation, turning the work as a whole into a self-conscious construct where the acts of painting or story telling are thematised, while illusion, identification and immersion are blocked. The important thing here, though, is not the principles themselves but Bal's demonstration that unless we are able to identify and describe through narratology the underlying traditional structures we will lack the tools to perceive, describe and measure their systematic inversion, negation or dismantling. The supposed irrelevance of narratology to the study of Postmodernism rests therefore on a misunderstanding. Using verbal and visual examples, Bal greatly elaborates her previous discussion of textual embedding (60-75). This section now provides an integrated analysis of a whole range of phenomena which include embedding the same text in different cultural and historical contexts (Borges' Menard re-producing *Don Quixote*); a short story consisting entirely of a dialogue, where the higher level of embedding, representing the author-reader communication, is limited to the one word title; the traditional three tiered author-narrator-character hierarchy; and the different kinds of quotation in the contexts of inter-utterance, intertextual, and interdiscursive dialogue. We are reminded that while Bakhtin's dialogism is of

typologies, but is of greater significance. Narratological concepts, yielding a disciplined description of a text, are an indispensable first step towards a broader interpretation with any claim to intersubjective status. The scholar who undertakes political and ideological criticism and who asks "what is being proposed to us to see or believe in this text" (224) cannot but base his work on insights into the way the text produces such ideological effects, and these insights, in their turn, are to be gained through narratological analysis. Bal's own work on the Old Testament, especially *Death and Dissymmetry* (1988), concerned with the ideological conflicts and transformations underlying the book of Judges, is an eloquent example of this methodological norm in action. If one is interested in reader reception, then here too we ought to remember that only once we know how a text is structured can the reader's share be assessed (11). The concepts of narratology provide a focus for the expectations with which readers process narrative (xv) and help the readers themselves articulate what they understand when processing a narrative artefact (4). This view of narratology as a readerly tool which ought to stay close to the actual process of text comprehension and its stages has led Bal to reverse the traditional pseudo-generative order of fabula, story, text, established already in Aristotle's *Poetics*, and replace it with the receptional order of text, story, and fabula, since fabula is a memory trace, the final product of textual processing.

Bal not only preaches a functional narratology in the service of cultural analysis, but also puts this methodological norm into practice in many of the additions to her book. Let me cite a few examples. On the text level she demonstrates how three different manners of autobiographical narration embody or reflect three types of subject or self: the experiencing, recalling and dissociated (23-5). On the story level we see how a slowdown in Proust (the narrator kissing Albertine for the first time) reflects the narrator's self-conscious vision and analysis of his concurrent action (107-8). Types of space correspond to genre and gender (137) or to types of personality in a film about a woman with multiple personalities (138), and different focalisations influence the ideological aspects of a narrative, for example, viewing or not viewing a certain action as rape (154-6). On the fabula level the author provides an extensive example from her work on the book of Judges (178-82) with multiple methodological lessons: parallels and oppositions of concepts in a fabula should be constructed according to its own internal formal schemes, not according to ours; such formal analysis is a reliable way for reconstructing the text's ideological and axiological system, and this reconstruction in turn links narratological analysis with anthropological description and theorising. Even though these principles have been laid down and practised long ago by Levi-Strauss, it is important for Bal to demonstrate

great value to narrative studies, it becomes operative in actual analysis only if the hierarchy of levels of embedding is taken into account. Several varieties of the mirror text, that is, an embedded text presenting a story that resembles the primary fabula, are also discussed in this context (57).

In a dense, brand new section, entitled "Visual Stories" (161-70) Bal presents in brief a research programme for extending the basic narratological categories of narration and focalisation to the analysis of visual images (visual narratology). The interest is not in the fabula portrayed but in the story as seen, processed or represented through a centre of awareness which needs to be identified and described (focalisation), and in the steering perspective on the events (narrator). Now "focalisor" is understood here as much more than a spatial position. It is, as in literary studies, the primary manifestation of the experiencing subject. The author puts forward five principles of focalisation which she claims are common to verbal and visual narrative. They are as follows: what we read or perceive in a work is always a subjectivised content; one can distinguish external and internal focalisors; the reality status of objects represented, in words or on canvas, is contingent upon their respective focalisors; the same object can be differently interpreted by different focalisors; it is possible to conflate (hybridise) external and internal focalisations. The relation of these principles to the notions of narrator and level of embedding is, however, not fully developed and leads to some problems (see below). In the same section the author also discusses the novel-film relation and defines one central question for the comparison of a novel and film(s) based on it: how have the major views, values and attitudes of the novel been preserved or altered in the visual working through, where much of the text is replaced by colours, focus, speed, etc. Obviously, a detailed analysis of the verbal and filmic texts in isolation would have to precede this intersemiotic comparison. Finally, under "vision in language" Bal gives visual narratology the added task of determining which kind of act of seeing and of visuality is at stake in different verbal narratives (e.g., Flaubert vs. Proust). Bal's recent book *The Mottled Screen: Reading Proust visually* (1997) develops this issue in great detail, while her earlier *Reading Rembrandt: Beyond the Word-Image Opposition* (1991, 1994) is centrally concerned with the extension of narratological categories to visual images.

This second edition of *Narratology* aims to give readers an overall view of what narratology is and show them how to do things with narratological categories in different cultural domains. It is this second component which is the main innovation of the new edition and indeed it makes for a book which is much richer than the first edition, and endowed with greater readerly appeal in its mode of presentation. The many examples and analyses added are most

valuable as guidelines how to proceed towards a multifaceted functional analysis of narrative texts. In this respect the book is fully successful and will be of even greater use to students and instructors than its predecessor. The few critical remarks which follow will therefore concentrate not on the overall frame but on details which seem to require further clarification or development.

Theory construction is a dynamic phenomenon influenced by changes in the individual scholar's views or way of thinking, by changes in the theoretical environment and in the domain of objects being studied. Every theoretical study is consequently a snapshot of its author's state of theorising at a given moment in time and not a final statement on the subject at hand. Bal herself says as much in her Foreword and Introduction. If we now apply this view to *Narratology* itself, we can regard it as representing a transitional stage between a purely literary narratology (past stage of theorising) and a pan-semiotic one (future ideal), a stage in which the expansion and modification of verbal categories and issue to other media is being undertaken but not yet completed. To give just two brief examples: on page 5 a text is defined as "a finite, structured whole composed of language signs," while on the very next page we are told that "text" refers to narrative in any medium and will be used interchangeably with "artifact." Similarly, part one, which contains several extended analyses of painting and films, carries the title "Text" and the subtitle "Words." In general, the extension from verbal to visual is not without occasional problems, since it is not clear at times whether a mere functional analogy or a straight transfer are involved. The narrator, "the most central concept in the analysis of narrative texts" (19) is defined as "that agent which utters the linguistic signs which constitute the text or the equivalent in other media" (18). In the context of visual stories, "narrator" is defined as a term which refers to the representation of the story, by acting as "the steering perspective on the events or fabula" (162). Now obviously a painting does not have to portray an event, and often portrays a state of affairs or an object, human or not. Secondly, while I accept Bal's claim that focalisation is equally applicable to verbal narratives and visual images, I do have some difficulty with the notion of narrator with respect to painting. Apteckar's complex painting with its overlain text clearly consists of several layers of hierarchical embedding or container and contained, with each higher level modifying the meaning of the lower ones. One could claim that each of these levels originates with a narrator of its own. But "narrator" here, like "implied author," seems to serve as pure metonymy for level of organisation or containment, and is quite different from the active agent who utters or produces the signs. Similarly, while I agree that in both literature and painting one can distinguish between external and internal focalisations, I do not see how a

To conclude: *Narratology Second Edition* is a rich, highly instructive and eminently readable text which preserves the achievements of the first edition while adding many new valuable dimensions and perspectives. The few difficulties encountered are simply an indication that the theoretical project of narratology is not completed and that the room for further development and elaboration is always there. (URIMARGOLIN, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*DAVID K. DANOW. *Models of Narrative: Theory and Practice*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997. 202 pp. US\$ 39.95, cloth.

In *Models of Narrative: Theory and Practice* David K. Danow argues that "no extensive treatment of literary modeling currently exists" (1). Consequently, in his book he aims to explore "the bare lineaments" of "a highly productive mode of human conceptualization deserving far greater attention" (1). And, in order to establish his model of literary interpretation, he divides his approach in three sections, namely: I. Temporal relations, II. Spatial relations and III. Dialogical relations. However, in the book's opening paragraphs Danow warns the reader that "this book intends to present a series of practical methodologies rather than to set out more dogma related to yet another theory" (2). This is basically the critical approach developed, even though Danow also points out that "in self-reflexive terms, addressing its overall organization, this book own master model may be derived in effect from Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope, which, within its broad theoretical confines, incorporates both temporal and spatial, as well as dialogic relations" (11). Danow's aim, therefore, is "to transform such dimensions from abstract considerations to concrete understanding (...) by analytically treating a series of specific texts in the search for necessarily partial solutions to the challenging issues of temporal, spatial and dialogic relations" (11). In Part I. Temporal relations Danow illustrates his argument through the work of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, Pasternak and García Márquez. Dealing with the issue of time, Danow reminds us of the importance of the past since "everything that happens in the world is rooted in what happened before" (18), and because time is "conceived, (...), in various contrastive of complementary ways" we see that "diverse cultures envision it as 'moving' in either linear, cyclical, or circular fashion, as being inherently dynamic, static and recurrent among numerous other possible conceptions" (18). As Danow carries on his brief sketch of intuitive models of time, he comments about the circular model, reminding us that "it does not recognize the attainment of knowledge through a sudden insight or in any other fashion; mythic time likewise permits no

conflation (hybridisation) of the two, achieved in words through free indirect thought or perception, can be attained in a painting (164), except possibly in Cubism or through visual games with perspective.

When Bal speaks about vision in language, her example from Proust is concerned with the foregrounding of vision, of focalisation as a subjectivising technique, undertaken within the narrative itself on a reflexive, self-conscious meta level. But she also alludes here, and elsewhere in the book, to two much wider phenomena which deserve greater attention than they are accorded in this edition. The first is the construction of the other, or even of one's own self, through the narrator's or character's observation and analysis of visual simulacra—photographs, home videos, portraits and so on — originating from different periods of the subject's life. This technique is wide-spread in Modernism and Postmodernism and ties in beautifully with Bal's thematic concern with the construction of the subject. The second wider issue is the description in many verbal narratives of actual (that is, actual within the world of the story) objects, people and scenes or events as if they were a visual artefact: a painting, theatrical setting, pantomime, a scene from a movie, computer image, video game and the like. This issue too is intimately related to Bal's movement away from primarily realistic examples in this edition, to her rejection of mimetism, illusionism and reader identification and to her insistence that a structural narrative analysis should be sensitive to historical aspects such as period conventions and their sometimes radical transformations.

Moving now to a different issue, I find it hard to reconcile the author's strong anti-mimetic view of characters in literary narrative (they are paper people, verbal constructs rather than real people, and are based on the use and manipulation of cultural stereotypes 116-21) with her impassioned ideological analysis of *The Rape of Shavi* (134-5) for example, where quite clearly the victim is regarded by her as a life-like human being with emotions, values, and a sense of self, someone with whom one could identify or sympathise. I believe this issue can be resolved in at least two different ways. One would be to relativise the status of literary character to historical period, genre and style of writing. The other, more general one, would be to distinguish with Kendall Walton between being inside and outside a game of make-believe. Yes, from a hard nosed realistic point of view literary characters are indeed mere verbal or semiotic constructs, and visual portraits are nothing but lines, surfaces and colours on canvas. But once we place ourselves inside the fictional sphere, then in many cases we can meaningfully and fruitfully regard them as life like, as individuals with an interiority and a value system, as expressing emotions and so on, even though they are not flesh and blood.

intrusions of anything new" (21). In chapter II of the book, a section dedicated to temporal relations, the delicacy and evanescence of time in Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* is explored through examples of "moments of spiritual recognition or epiphany which both hero and reader recognize as such" (39). This happens in Danow's view, and his sensitive comments about the novel confirm his ideas, "because *Doctor Zhivago* presents intricate relations among temporal and spatial elements, interlocked in a fictional universe modelling the real one [and] about for the realization of a work of modern art" (39). Because *Doctor Zhivago* is "a poet's novel about a poet and about how and why poetry is made, Zhivago's feelings about the world around him happen as source of inspiration for making poetry with an endeavor (...) inextricably bound to moments of spiritual recognition or epiphany, which both hero and reader recognize as such" (39). Thus, the visual character of the novel shows that "a series of images attain meaning for its hero and are comprehended in turn by the reader (...) for a poetic instant mystery is subsumed by clarity" (39). Danow calls our attention to the novel's most common visual images, namely instances of aural imagery and the recurrent images of trains and death (40) associated to the fact that "death in the poet-novelist's vision, is symbolic and both a source for understanding life and inspiration for making art" (42).

In my view Danow's analysis of *Doctor Zhivago* is the best part of his book because through the precise examples he selects from the narrative, he manages to rescue through critical reading the visual poetics of Pasternak's novel. Thus he highlights the novel's main concern about showing the existence of death as "a source for understanding life and an inspiration for the making of art" (42). Danow's critical interpretation is illustrated with the following powerful visual passage from *Doctor Zhivago*: "In answer to the desolation brought by death (...) he was drawn, as irresistibly as water funneling downwards, to dream, to think, to work out new forms, to create beauty" (42). In dealing with Márquez, Danow discusses the idea of "time as both circular and repetitious" as it is built up in the narrative of *Love in the time of Cholera* in association to Bergson's view that "the very view of our conscious existence is memory (...) the prolongation of past into the present" (50). Danow reads the notion of time in this novel according to the notion that in it time is dynamic "while love remains static" (6).

The second part of Danow's book centres on spatiality. He refers to Nathaniel Hawthorne's use of the dynamics of time and space in "Wakefield," and Andrei Platonov's "Light of Life," to show that "there can be no story without the author's initial and the critics subsequent taking account of time and space" (75).

Mikhail Bulgakov's *The Master and Margarita*, and Gabriel García Márquez's *The General and his Labyrinth* are the other narratives approached by Danow. In Bulgakov "the problem of space (...) does represent a 'puzzle'" because of "its wondrous capacity to expand and contract" (77), a characteristic that makes it turn into "a seamless book" while "in several places it is 'double stitched'" (79). Showing a world in permanent expansion, *The Master and the Margarita* in Danow's interpretation fits into Bakhtin's idea that sees "the novel as that form that remains open and unfinished rather than philosophically closed and shut down" (81). As for García Márquez's "the figural labyrinth" in *The General in his Labyrinth*, the spatiality of the narrative reveals that "the governing metaphor of the novel, whose passages lead nowhere and with the hopelessness of the book's protagonist" show him as the one who "remained floating in nothingness" (110).

Furthermore, Hawthorne's "The Minister's Black Veil" is taken to exemplify Danow's idea that in some cases "the spacial aspect may on occasion appear dominant as the principal organizational or structural feature of narrative" (91), and, in taking in consideration that "spatial relations establish a sense of boundaries" (97), Danow says that: "The veil, not the visage, is the focus of the tale, in which the Semiotic significance of the veil is that it functions in three interrelated respects: as an integral sign that unifies the text, as the frame that distinguishes a peculiar internal world from the external, and, in result of that basic function, as an independent (sub)text, deserving critical examination, within the greater text" (99).

In the last part of Danow's book, "Dialogical Relations," he states that "our preponderant use of the term dialogue throughout this book is meant to bring into clear focus that decisive moment when the word of one speaker actively engages the utterance of another and is itself engaged by that utterance" (116). In order to develop his viewpoint Danow draws on C. S. Pierce's and Bakhtin's notions of dialogue as he discusses works of F. M. Dostoevsky, Flannery O'Connor, Shusaku Endo and Isaac Babel, and eventually closes the book by returning to Boris Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago*. For Danow, Dostoevsky and Endo provide different and numerous instances of silence that are "rich in extraverbal communication, where neither a word nor a sound is uttered but a great deal of meaning is nevertheless transmitted" (12). Thus, "for both Dostoevsky and O'Connor (...) the eyes many times become the single most important communicative organ of human anatomy" (122). A telling example from O'Connor's "The violent bear it away" illustrates this point: "It was the eyes that got me (...) nothing seemed alive about the boy but his eyes" (122). By the same token, "for Dostoevsky as well the eyes are a determining factor by which his characters attempt either to communicate or dissimulate." Danow then

cites from *The Idiot* a passage we read: "I feel as though I had seen your eyes somewhere" (123). Dostoevsky's and O'Connor's writing are contrasted with that of Endo's, because his engaging work is preoccupied with non-communicative silence that belongs not so much to man but is proper to God (*The Silences of God* [89]) (126). Thus, the silence that is God himself "represents the principal paradox of the book" as it can be seen in a brief passage Danow quotes: "If I consented to this thought" (that God does not exist), ponders Endo's protagonist, "then my whole past to this very day was washed away in silence" (125). In Isaac Babel's *Red Cavalry* the silence in the narrative is classified by Danow as nondialogic because Babel's collection of tales shows that "there is little to support what little human communication exists" (133).

In closing the book Danow returns to Pasternak's *Doctor Zhivago* in order to explore its supradialogic narrative. He points out the novels "dialogic structures in complex interrelation" by firstly referring to the novel's cinematic technique narrative in which "the precisising sixteen prose chapters are themselves further divided into numerous individual scenes, focused on a predominant image" (153). Danow parallels this with "the author's summative accounts, within which are incorporated at times only isolated fragments of his [Pasternak's] characters' speech" (154). In such a way that "it may well be claimed that *Doctor Zhivago* is an implicit work, in which much is left untold, where even more remains unsaid" (155). Danow, however, uses Bakhtin's view that "neither speaker is ever passive, even when silent" (156) in order to stress "the idea of communicative exchange" and "a highly distinctive dialogic poetics" (155) present in the novel. As Danow finishes this chapter, he reaffirms his idea that only in appearance *Doctor Zhivago* is "profoundly monologic" (171): "Pasternak's novel may well be understood to be governed by dialogic poetics (...) the principle that human communication is effected freely by individuals participating in the human drama, on numerous planes, unbounded by time and space, as in life itself" (171).

In the final section of the book Danow reaffirms the need of a descriptive model "designed to evoke the bonds by which the subject is defined" because through it the critic is then better equipped to accomplish his chosen analytical task" (178). He evokes Bakhtin once more to highlight his idea that "language in the novel not only represents, but serves as the object of representation" (*Dialogic* 49). Therefore: "the critic must strive to seek a balance between the application of language-oriented model and the individual linguistic usage of the given writers own specialized idiom. As a result of this endeavour literature is granted first (and as it should be) its special status as a unique semiotic system,

where one code is prominently embedded with another — the literary with the linguistic" (180).

David K. Danow's *Models of Narrative: Theory and Practice* relies on a rich variety of theoretical support which includes, amongst others, Bachelard, Bergson, Genette, Lotman and Pierce. However, the main influence in the book are Bakhtin's ideas. Danow manages to provide the reader with a better understanding of literary texts through an extensive treatment of literary modelling by analysing the presence of time, space and dialogism in novels and short-stories. (ANTONIO EDUARDO DE OLIVEIRA, UNIVERSIDADE FEDERAL DO RIO GRANDE DO NORTE)

*JUDITH ROOF. *Reproductions of Reproduction: Imaging Symbolic Change*. New York: Routledge, 1996. 224 pp. CDN \$76.95 (hb). CDN \$23.95 (pb).

Judith Roof's book operates on a very abstract level, contrasting two cultural principles and their figurative representations. One principle is related to the real or imagined father, the omnipotent creator, ceaselessly reproducing himself in off-springs where his name can be heard and repeated and his power clearly recognized. The other is that of anonymous and serial reproduction, related to technologies operating without reference to, let alone celebration of, a master. And the two figurative representations are those, respectively, of metaphor and metonymy. Metaphor, working through similarities and analogies, maintains a relation to the original father through a chain of substitutions. Metonymy, on the other hand, exercises its function through units that are interrelated only by their contiguity or simultaneous presence in the same cultural space. From this outset modern American culture is analyzed with examples from musicals, movies, bodybuilding, artificial insemination and other topics. The essential juncture in modern culture, Roof claims, is a major shift from metaphorical to metonymical practices, the former being repetitive and imitative, the latter performative and innovative.

At this level of abstraction, of course, anything can be claimed concerning the main trends of cultural development. No one can really confirm it or not. It is free floating speculation. If a similar analysis was used in order to understand, say, the conflict in the former Yugoslavia, it would go like this: The patriarchal figure, Tito, secured his position in a series of strong nationalistic metaphors throughout the Republic (the army, federal and local bodies, curricula in schools, mass media, flag, ceremonies and events, etc.). He died and so did this substitutional logic. The metonymical principle of relations between neighbors

then prevailed without overall cohesive metaphors to guide the process. Hence, a space was opened for clever ad hoc interventions from parties who know how to perform. So, in their own folkish way, the ex-Yugoslavs simply conform to a general trend in modern culture.

On an abstract surface level this is not at all an incorrect description of a tiny segment of selected features from the breakdown in the Balkans. But at the same time it is completely deprived of meaning, because it does not explain anything and it does not lead you anywhere beyond the fortuitous abstractions themselves. Such an analysis does not, implicitly nor explicitly, suggest where to turn to or how to proceed in order to obtain gradually a more detailed and substantiated understanding.

Abstract or not, to some readers this discourse may not seem unfamiliar. After having read a couple of pages with relevant quotations and references to the well known names of intellectual fathers and mothers, at least I could easily set up a list of names I expected to be confronted with later on in my reading. They were all there, except Julia Kristeva and Paul de Man (Jacques Derrida was only mentioned in an aside and François Lyotard came in surprisingly late).

But they are all quoted in a way that is strange for a scholarly publication: "X or Y or Z states, observes or suggests A or B." And then it is taken for granted that the statement, observation or suggestion is both correct and immediately understandable. Quotations are never analyzed, discussed, criticised or given a new perspective. They are simply used to underpin the ruminations of the author. Also the words of the much quoted Jacques Lacan, who normally, also among devoted lacanians, is subject to detailed analyses and reinterpretations in order for his difficult thought to be put in a relevant perspective in a given context, are here just taken at face value.

Therefore, this way of proceeding in cultural analysis is doomed to stay imprisoned in its own abstraction. I mean, how is one to go about in relation to nationalism and family values after having read a passage like this: "Family values, finally, are themselves a metonymy; contiguous to the larger paternalism of nation (read, transnational corporation) and establishing the nation as paternal entity, their dispersed and illogical operations try to return metonymies to the Name-of-the-Father in the guise of a flag that stands for an organisation (a metaphor) that has already fallen victim to the larger exigencies of highly metonymical transnational corporations to which nations have given birth" (194).

As can be seen from this quotation, the key analytical elements are supposed to be metaphor and metonymy. Unfortunately the author only relies on Roman Jakobson's reformulations of these terms. This is not a bad reference,

indeed, but it is too narrow considering the very wide use she makes of the terms. Astutely, Jakobson gave them new definitions on the ground of structural linguistics, especially in order to facilitate a cooperation between linguistics and poetics, two topics almost absent in Roof's book. Instead, she refers to a mixture of mostly non-verbal cultural phenomena in which she detects a Jakobson-like mechanism at work. Jakobson himself never underestimated the amount of analysis and precaution that was required before suggesting analogies between different semiotics systems of expression, especially between verbal and non-verbal media.

He would never, as Roof, describe metaphor in this way: "It's something-for-nothing substitutive practice engineers a Law whose nominal control of the ineffable translates into the Ineffable's control of the nominal, a system with divine beginnings and a heavenly end" (187). In Roof's presentation, however, Jakobson is simply applied always and everywhere without any theoretical reflection or reference to broader concepts (semiotic, cognitive or other) of metaphor, in spite of the fact that such reflections are abundant right now. I would advise the reader to go elsewhere to understand the role of metaphor in modern culture. (SVEND ERIK LARSEN, ÅARHUS UNIVERSITY)

*BEATE MÜLLER, ed. *Parody: Dimensions and Perspectives*. Perspectives on Modern Literature, 19. Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1997. 313pp. DFL 150 / US\$ 83, cloth; DFL 45 / US\$ 25, paper.

La parodie est un phénomène littéraire qui a une fonction diachronique. Elle peut avoir lieu dans n'importe quelle littérature, à n'importe quelle période, sur n'importe quel genre littéraire. En fait il s'agit d'un discours qui peut être produit par tout texte littéraire, indépendamment de son appartenance à une littérature nationale ou à un courant littéraire.

Le discours parodique crée à son tour un autre genre littéraire qui est en dépendance avec le genre parodié. Cela retrécit bien entendu son champ sémantique et limite son autonomie. Par ailleurs, la parodie est associée à d'autres formes humoristiques telles que le travestissement burlesque ou la satire, afin de produire l'effet escompté qu'est la réécriture ludique d'un genre sérieux.

Pour toutes ces raisons la parodie présente un intérêt constant pour la recherche littéraire. Dans les vingt dernières années elle a fait l'objet de plusieurs colloques et études, parmi lesquelles les plus célèbres restent celles de Gérard Genette, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris: Seuil, 1982) et de Linda

Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (New York: Routledge, 1988).

Le présent volume contient douze communications faites lors du colloque interdisciplinaire et international "Parody: Dimensions and Perspectives" qui s'est tenu à Sydney Sussex College, de Cambridge, en septembre 1995 et dont la responsable scientifique a été madame le Professeur Beate Miller. Il s'agit d'une approche qui utilise la problématique moderne, déjà élaborée par la théorie littéraire; c'est pourquoi elle met en évidence l'existence de certains problèmes qui ont trait soit à la forme du genre parodié, soit à son contenu. C'est ainsi qu'il est question des particularités de "Parody and Quotation: A Case-Study of E.T.A. Hoffman's *Kater Murr*" (Andreas Höfle) ou de la "Parody in Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*" (Andreas Höfle), alors que Gabrielle Bersier, Wolfgang Karrer et Rebecca E. Sammel mettent l'accent sur des aspects particuliers du phénomène parodique concernant ou bien sa propre nature ou bien ses rapports avec d'autres formes humoristiques, ainsi qu'il est question dans leurs contributions respectives: "A Metamorphic Mode of Literary Reflexivity: Parody in Early German Romanticism," "Cross-Dressing between Travesty and Parody," "Carnival Confession: The Archpoet and Chaucer's Pardoner."

Un autre ensemble de communications est consacré à des textes de grands écrivains et à l'aspect parodique qu'ils revêtent. Ces rapports, très subtils, éclairent bien les travaux de Heike Bartel "Dimensions of Parody in the Poems of Paul Celan," de Rumjana Kiefer "Leonard Bast's Umbrella in Howard Kirk's Plot of History: Malcolm Bradbury's Parody of Howards End in the History Man," de Beate Müller "Hamlet at the Dentist's: Parodies of Shakespeare," de Tore Rem "Sentimental Parody? Thoughts on the Quality of Parody in Dickens," de Gerlinde Ulm Sanford "A Preliminary Approach to Werner Schwab's Faust: Mein Brustkorb: Mein Helm," de Gerd K. Schneider "Sexual Freedom and Political Repression: An Early Parody of Arthur Schnitzler's Reigen," alors que Martin J. Schubert nous propose une vue large et détaillée sur "Parody in Thirteenth-Century German Poetry."

Bien que limité aux littératures anglo-saxonnes, ce volume présente un intérêt multiple: D'une part il assemble des études originales qui portent sur les problèmes spécifiques du phénomène parodique et, d'autre part, il entre en discussion avec les approches théorétiques, les plus importantes, faites sur cette question. C'est pourquoi il s'adresse non seulement à un nombre limité de spécialistes, mais à tout enseignant ou chercheur intéressé par ce sujet. A cela contribuent également une bibliographie sélective sur la parodie, un index thématique et surtout une introduction, faite par Beate Müller, qui pose de manière pertinente le phénomène parodique dans ses principales dimensions.

L'option essentielle sur le plan méthodologique concerne l'usage du terme intertextualité parodique, qui semble couvrir l'éventail des fonctions et des rapports entre deux textes, liés par ce mécanisme. En outre il permet d'y rassembler des textes à caractère ludique comme sérieux, et de mettre en évidence les rapports littéraires et esthétiques qui caractérisent la fonction parodique. Du reste, le choix méthodologique est propre à chacun des participants. La plurivocité de leur démarche montre bien la nécessité d'une approche plurielle à un phénomène complexe. L'initiative de l'organisation, du colloque d'abord et la constitution du volume des actes ensuite, montre bien le souci de l'éditrice d'aborder un sujet complexe dans une perspective interdisciplinaire. La sélection et la présentation d'un ensemble de communications de haut niveau scientifique prouvent que l'étude du phénomène de la parodie nécessite une approche comparative qui puisse mettre en évidence les nuances et les jeux expressifs du langage dans plusieurs œuvres littéraires. La parodie, plus que toute autre forme d'expression littéraire, est aux prises avec le problème de l'autre, d'un autre très souvent transformé, à des fins esthétiques. Ce livre, sans prétendre à la solution définitive des problèmes abordés, constitue une importante contribution à l'étude du phénomène parodique. (Z.I. SIAFLEKIS, UNIVERSITÉ ARISTOTE DE THESSALONIQUE, GRÈCE)

*DOUGLAS ROBINSON. *Translation & Taboo*. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996. 232 + xix pp. US\$ 35 cloth; US\$ 18.50 paper.

Why is it, so this "visceral," first-person narrative of a "somatic anxiety's" genesis launches itself with the question of moment, that "any Christian, or just about any atheist who was raised a Christian, or just about anyone raised in a Christian society" will shun the invitation "to throw a copy of the Bible on the floor and jump on it, or rip out its pages, or spit inside it, or urinate on it"? (xii, xvi). "Iconoclastic" Douglas Robinson's answer, for himself as for these others ("I say radical heretical things about the Bible, too, but I probably couldn't bring myself to destroy one"), is that such an instance of anxious demurring bespeaks the survival of "the deep ideomatic alignments of taboo," the "deep ideomatic nexus that runs all through the history of translation theory" in the West, from the time of the earliest sacred texts to the present (xvii, xvi). It is his contention that even the most enlightened of contemporary theorists of linguistic/cultural interchange, by foreignists, postcolonialists, and polysystems people alike, remain blocked (in) as a result of their repressive, exclusionary deference to "the old dualisms and dogmatisms" (x). If virtually all others before him have

succumbed to the taboo against translating/translation, have fed too much, if not exclusively, on "that old staple of dualistic thinking, the *non distributio mediæ*," he will do otherwise: intent on "exploding the excluded middle," and "sticking with the anecdotal, the experiential, the excursive, the contrifugal" method practised in his *The Translator's Turn* (1991), he would "quest" for "a way through the blockages [of taboo] to truth" (xi, xvii). Softened though it is by virtue of its will to truth, Robinson's excursive, diffidently aggressive text does achieve a Nietzsche-like verisimilitude in its representation of a mind's feeding on the "in-betweenness . . . the muddledness . . . or the muddledness that rationalist thought has always suppressed" (214).

Chapter 1 ("The Translations of Lucius") opens with an account of the conversion ritual imaged in Book 11 of Apuleius's *The Golden Ass*, in which Mithras translates parts of the Egyptian Book of the Dead into Greek for the benefit of a Lucius on the threshold of mystery and priesthood. What Robinson's reflections on his own response to his reading of *The Golden Ass* and the Egyptian Book of the Dead in translation lead him (however inconclusively) to conclude is that "mystery . . . is a by-product of the alienation of language from ordinary everyday use" (16). To be enveloped "in mystery" is to be enveloped "in taboo" (17). Cases from ancient to contemporary times (including an account of certain acts of translation by Robinson's children) are adduced to indicate not only that mystery and taboo are pretty much one and the same thing, but that "the ideosomatics of taboo are intensely contagious" (25). To be anxious about anything is to defer to taboo, which fact from experience belies the principle of "identity in difference . . . the rationalist ideal for translation," according to Robinson (43). There is, in other words, something of self-spoofing going on in this chapter, since (at least for any rationalist worthy of the name) *simile non est idem*. Nor does the universalism of Robinson's speculative observations — e.g., "these days we are always already spoken by the Other-as-reason" (38) — seem designed to win agreement from contemporary students of translation respectful of the manifold limitations imposed by the traditional formal logic. Quite aptly, the first chapter of *Translation & Taboo* ends on a note of self-effacing self-parody: "Feels like I'm paddling a pogue in a storm with a popsicle stick" (45). No doubt, but that Robinson in the first chapter of this book has made pretty heavy weather of the disposition of some translators and comparatists not to confound similitude with identity.

Chapter 2, "The Divided Self," which takes up half the volume, reads the entanglements of rationalism with mystery and taboo within the context of an "abbreviated . . . intellectual history of the Platonic-Christian-scientific West" (47). The "birth of reason" is retold, and the growth of that offspring as

recounted in a somewhat anachronistic history of Bible translation involving Aelfric, Thomas More, Augustine, and Jerome, among others, signs a continuity in dread. Again, as in Chapter 2, Robinson's discourse is not constrained by the excluded middle. He writes, for example, of Aelfric's experience of "vernacularising" part of the Bible: "doing the translation at his lord's [his bishop's] command relieves him of accountability (as Hitler's command relieved the Nazis of responsibilities for the Holocaust — or so they were led to believe by nearly two millennia of ecclesiastical hegemony in the West)" (84). If such is the translator's perennial anxiety, how then to overcome it? Robinson's answer: schizophrenia ("if schizophrenia is the breakdown of rationalist regimes which . . . those regimes themselves always inevitably drive, then perhaps the only escape is *through* schizophrenia") (142). Such cases as Louis Wolfson's *Le Schizo et les langues* and Sherry Simon's translations of *journal* indicate (to Robinson, at least) that "surrender to schizophrenia . . . may be the only way out of our current (post)colonial impasse" (159). Like the first, this second chapter ends self-effacingly, with a duly self-conscious admission of somatic anxiety: "the mystical ideal of surrender I've been peddling in these last few pages" (169).

Chapter 3, "Magical Doubles," proceeds in quest of some "middle ground" between the "metempsychotic" theories considered in chapter 2 and the "magical" (post)romantic theories of translation advanced by Friedrich Schlegelmacher and Walter Benjamin. What middle ground Robinson finds himself sadly finding between these two sets of theories is in the willingness "to sire *Blendinge*, bastards, mongrels, half-breeds, the monstrous births by which a foreignizing translator, or *any* translator, reproduces or doubles himself or herself" (212). "Utopian romantic thinker" that he is, though, Robinson is able to end his autobiography as translator on a note of some optimism: "I feel, to put it in the rather melodramatic terms I've used throughout, that I've been doing battle with dark forces from the underworld, forces of repression and constraint, stifling protection against the deadly contagions of mana and taboo — which are also, if we can learn to channel those energies rather than let them kill us outright, vast resources of vitality and strength — and have been depleted by my struggles" (215). As Robinson himself invites the recognition, his earnest story impelled by an aggressively "hesitant anecdotal openness to the muddles and middles of new experience" ends not unhumorously, with something of an upbeat "whine fest" (215). All in all, *Translation & Taboo* is a funny book. Like *The Golden Ass*, the more serious this whimsical text from Robinson is in what it does, the funnier it gets. In absence of reason, anything goes. (CAMILLE R. LA BOSSIÈRE, UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA)

*ROBERT B. DENHAM, ed., *Northrop Frye's Student Essays, 1932-1938*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997. 557 + xxix pp. CDN\$ 95.

Subscribers to the *Northrop Frye Newsletter* have been fortunate enough to see ample excerpts from Frye's late diaries, edited by Robert Denham, which reveal reaches of Frye's intellect not visible to those who have only read *The Great Code* or *Anatomy of Criticism*. Now, Denham turns to the opposite end of Frye's career, the essays he produced in the mid-1930's as a graduate student, primarily at the University of Toronto. But *Northrop Frye's Student Essays* are no mere academic exercises, nor are they of importance solely to students of Frye. Provocative, original, and anticipating future developments (and avoiding future pitfalls) in the fields they address, they reveal Frye's intellect as both exhilarating in its breadth and assured in its literary style, which is already felicitous as well as encyclopedic. Indeed, those who are suspicious of systems may prefer the early essays of Frye to his mature work, much as is true of some aficionados of the early manuscripts of Marx.

Unlike Marx, though, who stood on the shoulders of Hegel, Frye's early writings show a scholar trying to create his own system virtually from scratch. Critics of the next generation stood on the shoulders of Frye and the New Critics, if only to dissent from them, but Frye had no such predecessors. This is especially true in the field of literary criticism (even in the 1930's, only one of Frye's many fields). The final piece of the book, a reconsideration of Chaucer, is an urbane, poised essay which concludes that Chaucer's synthesis is "a Catholicism arrived at by what is almost a Protestant route" (467). This nimbly avoids the pitfalls of thirty years of Chaucer criticism, from the philological burrowers of the 1920's to the patristic disciplinarians of the 1950's. Frye was attempting to define what genuine Chaucer criticism could or should be, against the dreariness with which it was then practiced.

Frye's task is a bit easier when writing about modern writers, where he takes as his point of departure the 1930's climate of opinion about T.S. Eliot and Wyndham Lewis. Frye is admiring of Eliot, although as poet, not as cultural critic; Frye can label Eliot's Christianity as a form of "group consciousness" (426) on a par with Communism precisely because Frye's own committed Christian standpoint is so much more ecumenical. Frye anticipates developments in the Eliot criticism of the 1990's by speculating on what the poet has in common with popular culture, and even going so far as to note the "genius" (427) of Walt Disney and Charlie Chaplin. Frye is a shade less approving of Wyndham Lewis, finding untenable his anti-organicism and anti-temporality, his exaltation of

contour, surface, and the plastic ideal of the spatial arts. Yet Frye recognizes that Lewis, when on-target, is more provocateur than sage, and, though finding his doctrines inadequate, is willing to incorporate Lewis into an overall perspective, thus signalling one of the hallmarks of Frye's career, a willingness to recognize flawed writers for what they can contribute to his thought, whatever their native shortcomings as systemic thinkers themselves. So often figures, especially mythographic figures (Sir James Frazer comes to mind) supposed to have been crucially influential on Frye are in fact only sampled by him piecemeal, for what he can usefully derive from them in order to "get at the truth" (380). Those who accuse Frye of being magisterially above history will be surprised at how receptive Frye is to the ephemeral literary currents of the 1930's, even to the point of including the French proletarian writer Robert Briffault, a figure hard to find today even in standard reference works, as exemplifying "the central medium of twentieth-century prose" (397).

Denham notes that much of the youthful Frye's conjectures about music are inaccurate (470); doubtless so, but they do help him in his long essay on Romanticism. Frye's musical references enable him to see beyond the five or six canonical English Romantic poets and see the Romantic movement as continent-wide and extending in certain important respects into modernity. In this mode, Frye is influenced by Oswald Spengler, though he never was or became a total disciple. Frye was interested in Spengler's organic view of the rise and decline of cultures, but only as an explanatory device, not as a Hegelian historical ground. He seems to have particularly valued the poetry and relativism in Spengler's sweeping vision which rendered his work, unlike Hegel's, a dubious template for nation-building (to which, though, as a Canadian, Frye had a very different perspective than the normative). Frye is generally approving of Romanticism (and his championing of temporal as against spatial modes shows that he once again has High Modernists such as Eliot and Lewis in mind) yet he unsparingly chronicles how Romantic organicism can degenerate into fascism when made into too literal an instrument of national feeling. Any tendency towards advocacy on Frye's part is always secondary to description and what might be termed an affective contextualization, that classifies but does so emotionally and empathetically, as if Frye had adapted the Spenglerian capacity for overview to a more reflective, less polemical mode.

Unlike in literary criticism, Frye had a solid base to build on in the areas of Protestant hermeneutic and history of religion, and his essays on St. Paul and Calvin testify to the high quality of his professors and of the Canadian theological academy in the early 20th century. The most ambitious of these pieces is on "The Augustinian Interpretation of History." In its emphasis on the

singularity of Augustine's thought to the neglect of the many other theologians and Christian historians who preceded and succeeded him, this essay takes a more "Spenglerian" than strictly ecclesiastical approach to theological historiography, but transcends this "Great Man" theory of Church history to demonstrate how the history of Christian thought is hardly of interest to scholars of Christian thought alone. Frye's sense of Augustine as "the greatest transitional thinker who ever lived" (215) parallels the thought of his future Toronto colleague, Charles Norris. Cochrane, in his book *Christianity and Classical Culture* (1944), discusses Augustine and Frye and tacitly argues for the mid-twentieth century as a similar age of transition. If this were so, we were fortunate to have such putative Augustines as Frye and Cochrane. The importance of this material to the young Frye is captured in a letter he wrote to Helen Kemp, his future wife, where he states "there are two things that are absolutely unique to the Christian religion and which guarantee its truth — one is music, the other a philosophy of history..." (528). This is the kind of audacious, sweeping statement, whatever one's opinion of its accuracy, which shows the reader they are in the presence of a profoundly first-rate critical mind. Frye elsewhere refers to the philosophy of history as the highest form of theoretical reflection, a statement that not only reveals the influence of Hegel and Spengler but gives the lie to postmodernist (de-) canonisations of Frye as an ahistorical mythographer.

Two long essays towards the back of the book display the mixture of literary analysis, religious speculation, and cultural synopticon that was to become characteristic of Frye's later work. "An Enquiry into the Art Forms of Prose Fiction" is virtually an *Anatomy of Criticism* in miniature. Frye's sense of the novel as an anatomy, a mixed form that is at once multiple and potentially comprehensive and is continually eddying into forms carved out by nonfiction prose is tantalizingly similar (even in its citation of Dostoyevsky) to what Mikhail Bakhtin was writing in Russia at the same time, both thinkers of course being totally unaware of the other. But the most pleasingly symptomatic essay in the book is "A Study of the Impact of Cultural Movements upon the Church of England in the Nineteenth Century", an overview of religion in Victorian culture, chronicling the efforts of social thinkers such as Newman, Arnold, and Carlyle on how to make the spiritual relevant in an increasingly secular age. After surveying the advantages and limitations of each approach, Frye suddenly turns to someone not at all a social thinker, Gerard Manley Hopkins, "the most profoundly original genius of the century" (301), and quotes "The Windhover", without comment, as at once summing up and transcending the entire Victorian debate about religion and culture. After parading through so many Victorian

sages, this unexpected move of providing an aesthetic solution to a cultural problem sees Frye well on the road to his later greatness. (NICHOLAS BIRNS, THE NEW SCHOOL FOR SOCIAL RESEARCH)

'D. N. RODOWICK. *Gilles Deleuze's Time Machine*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1997. 280 pp. US\$ 49.95, cloth; US\$ 17.95, paper.

This new book by D. N. Rodowick is the first attempt ever at presenting Gilles Deleuze's concept of cinema which had been elaborated on by the French philosopher in a two-volume work entitled *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*. Deleuze's books, published in 1983 and 1985 respectively, were received with modest enthusiasm on the part of film theorists mainly because the author challenged the foundations of contemporary film studies, i.e. de Saussure's linguistics and Lacan's psychoanalysis. Besides, Deleuze's concepts could hardly be inscribed within American film theory, which was dominated by feminist approach on the one hand and by cognitivism on the other. According to Rodowick, Deleuze's work is particularly significant because he returns to neglected and so far undecided issues which have been purposely omitted and forgotten in recent film theory.

Although *Cinema* is Deleuze's first and only work on film, it should be regarded as a continuation of his previous philosophic considerations; thus, as suggests Rodowick, it is essential to know his earlier books on Bergson, Nietzsche, Kant and Spinoza. What is more, Deleuze's concepts should be analyzed within the frames of French film theory which cannot be limited to the ideas suggested by the theorists grouped at *Cahiers du cinéma*, but should also comprise the works by Mitry, Bazin, and early Metz. Therefore, Deleuze's work is a particular introduction to the philosophy of cinema, and if we think of philosophy, it is mainly the philosophy of time. Rodowick starts by asking two crucial questions: "why does Deleuze turn to cinema to address questions of image, movement, and time raised in his earlier books?" and "in what ways do *The Movement-Image* and *The Time-Image* help us see the history of film theory in a new light?" (xiii).

At the same time Rodowick notices the deficiencies of Deleuze's concepts: the discrepancy between philosophical assumptions and their reflection in film analyses; the ambiguous attitude toward the concepts of author and author's policy; close relations to modern aesthetics (which apparently is an anachronism); the lack of the concept of the subject, and, as a result, the absence of the idea of difference in spectatorship in his work (one should note that apart

from Derrida, Deleuze was the most important philosopher of difference). Following Deleuze's intentions, Rodowick presents the fundamental concepts of his philosophy of cinema in the context of Bergson's *Matter and Memory* and Ch. S. Peirce's logic and his theory of signs. However, Deleuze's aim was not to create a new film theory, but to understand "how aesthetic, philosophical, and scientific modes of understanding converge in producing cultural strategies for imagining and imaging the world" (Rodowick 5). According to the author of *The Movement-Image*, cinema enables us to grasp the changes in the modes of thinking, imaging and signification.

Deleuze suggests "pure semiotics" of two types: one refers to the film movement-image, the other to the time-image. Therefore, one should begin with explaining the relationship between time and movement: in traditional narrative film time was submitted to movement — this changed with neo-realism and then, the French New Wave. Trying to define the notion of image, Deleuze refers to Bergson, for whom the image of thought was a constant movement in memory understood as pure duration. Image is not a unified, limited entity, but rather a set of logical relations undergoing constant transformation. Another source for understanding Deleuze's notion of image is Peirce's theory of signs, according to which, images were "spiritual automata" of some kind. In *Cinema 2* image is defined as follows:

The image itself is the system of relationships between its elements, that is, a set of relationships of time from which the variable present only flows... What is specific to image ... is to make perceptible, to make visible, relationships if time which cannot be seen in the represented object and do not allow themselves to be reduced to the present (Deleuze:1989, xii).

As we can see, image cannot be reduced to simple entity, pure presence.

The principal difference between movement-image and time-image consists in the fact that the movement-image does not offer a direct image of time. Following Deleuze's suggestions, Rodowick links the problem of time and image to Benjamin's concept of aura, Vertov's idea of montage and to Eisenstein, whose theory became the crucial explanation of the functioning of movement-image, and the foundation for an organic concept of cinema. The concept of image changed after WW II with Rosellini's films based on elliptic narration filled with gaps and ambiguities. Neo-realism brought to film the direct image of time, which was noticed by Andre Bazin himself. Thus emerged a new crystalline dimension of time-image.

The concept of crystalline is another key notion in Deleuze's writing, and, as proved by Rodowick, was inspired by a German art historian, Wilhelm Worringer, who had contrasted two strategies of composition: organic and crystalline. A characteristic feature of crystalline image is indiscernibility, which makes it impossible to distinguish between fiction and reality: "time-image is crystalline because it is multifaceted. Like an image produced in a mirror, it always has two poles: actual and virtual" (Rodowick 92). Indiscernibility is not a product of the mind, but an objective feature of existing images. For Deleuze, the films by Alain Resnais are the embodiment of the crystalline concept of narration. Eisenstein's and Resnais' films are different because of their different attitudes to time and relationships between shots; in the French New Wave an interval between images becomes an autonomous quality: each interval may be a "point of bifurcation." At the same time, a new method of montage appeared and it was based on irrational interval lapses. Describing Deleuze's model of cinema, Rodowick refers to the idea of entropy and the notion of undecidability as crucial categories which govern the new film world.

Here, we should concentrate more on Deleuze's understanding of the film image as the image of thought. His idea is not entirely original; Rodowick draws our attention to a pioneering book by Hugo Münsterberg, for whom film was a reflection of human psychic activity. However, if Deleuze considers the character of film perception, he does not refer to the model suggested by Gestalt psychology, nor does he accept phenomenological modelling of human consciousness based on natural perception. It is Bergson's philosophy which becomes his main source of inspiration. In Chapter 2 of his book, Rodowick tries to explain Deleuze's film theory with reference to principal problems of Henri Bergson's philosophy: the relationship between image and matter, the role of light, the phenomenon of memory, the function of consciousness. Deleuze defines the movement-image according to the spirit of Bergson's philosophy as "mobile section of duration." What are the image's qualities in relation to movement, asks Rodowick? Deleuze assumes three plausible points of view: a frame may be treated (1) as a closed system, (2) in relation to the movement which it expresses and (3) as a sign of change itself. However, a frame is never closed, it always implies off-screen space. Rodowick emphasizes the way Deleuze understands basic film concepts: shot, scene and, above all, montage, which makes composition logical and shapes time. "Montage," writes Rodowick, "gives particular images of time by defining in what ways the whole can be conceived as open" (53).

The problem of film language was a fundamental issue for film theorists in the sixties and seventies. Deleuze also touches this subject by criticizing French

semiology, structuralism and Metz's theory of film narration. Instead of de Saussure's understanding of a sign as a relation between *signifiant* and *signifié*, he suggests adopting Peirce's definition of a sign as "an image which stands for another image (its objects), through the relation of third image which constitutes 'its interpretant'" (Deleuze: 1989, 30). In spite of the references to Peirce, Rodowick claims that Deleuze's concept of sign is in fact closer to Bergson's views: contrary to Peirce, Deleuze is convinced of a potentially unlimited taxonomy of images and signs.

In Rodowick's opinion, Deleuze does not ask what cinema is, but what philosophy is. Film theory is then a part of philosophy: it does not address cinema as such, but rather concepts created in the history of images. The fate of philosophy in times of late capitalism in a way resembles that of cinema — both face the audiovisual dimension of contemporary culture. Philosophy of cinema is not aesthetics either, even though Deleuze often refers to the cinema of authors. The French philosopher points out that the essence of art and philosophy is in fact common: "philosophy creates concepts just as art creates percepts and affects," writes Rodowick. Cinema combines nearly philosophical analysis of time, image and thought. "Throughout the volume on *The Time-Image*, Deleuze poses an intimate relation between image and thought expressed as mental cartographies, no-signs, and spiritual automata. ... Time always divides thought from the signs that express or represent it" (Rodowick 177). The change of movement-image into time-image is accompanied by re-defining movement and the relation between images and thoughts. In traditional cinema, movement of thoughts is defined by relative transformations in space. The relation is governed by commensurability of intervals and the whole. With the time-image, commensurability vanishes, and instead an autonomous interval appears. There is no movement in image any more, nor is there perception in space. "Time is always outside the image" (179). According to Rodowick, replacing the movement-image by the time-image was the expression of "original will to art, and at the same time, a transformation of a characteristic material of film. Here, Deleuze recalls the Nietzschean concept of time as the eternal return — time which is no longer linear and chronological.

Finally, one must mention the issue of particular importance to the author of *The Time-Image*; namely, the chance of surviving for philosophy in the era of electronic technologies. This is, according to Rodowick one of the reasons for Deleuze's interest in cinema. One may find the answer already in *Difference and Repetition*, when he wrote that the only task of philosophy is to explain the

relation between art and everyday life; undoubtedly contemporary life is ruled by audiovisuality, therefore one should turn to cinema. Thus, as Deleuze claims, it is cinema that may save philosophy. (KRZYSZTOF LOSKA, JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY)

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ALEXANDRA BUSCH AND DIRCK LINCK, eds. *Frauenliebe — Männerliebe: Eine lesbisch-schwule Literaturgeschichte in Porträts*. Stuttgart: Metzler, 1997. 520 pp. DM 78, cloth.

The rather catchy title of this impressive volume draws attention to the three main features of this work: firstly, to its structure; secondly, to its dual theme; and thirdly, to the editors' purpose of paying tribute to the amount and breadth, the variety and endurance, the aesthetic and cultural value of the ageless expression of same-sex love in literature. Listed in strict alphabetical order, 113 four-page "portraits" introduce the reader to the life and artistic production of roughly 200 writers from Asia, Africa, Australia, the Pacific Isles, North America, and Europe. The significance (and attraction) of each portrait lies in its unique depiction of a writer, which betrays the distinct view (and involvement) of the contributor. Indeed, without ever hiding the contributor's individual perspective, most essays in the present volume focus exclusively either on lesbian or on gay themes and issues, in an attempt to raise the reader's awareness of the similarities and differences between male gay and lesbian experiences and interests. On the whole, the scope of the volume extends synchronically as much as diachronically in that the intended cross-cultural overview is matched by the historical perspective of the over twenty articles devoted to cultural eras and the literary legacy of bygone centuries.

The richness of the volume lies in its broad variety, in every sense of the word. Without being comprehensive or authoritative, it not only treats individual authors and their works, but also features sections on genre (lesbian crime, lesbian erotica), historical and cultural periods (Antiquity, Middle Ages, Persian Mysticism), countries (Australia, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Spain), and geographic regions (Black Africa, Latin America, Pacific Isles). The

book is equally rich in stylistic forms, diverse in critical and personal perspectives, and, in several cases (such as Wolfgang Jöhling's portrait of Péter Nádas), inclusive of the contributor's personal experiences. Among the seventy-eight contributors are writers, journalists, editors, translators, teachers, academics, who share an obvious passion for reading and a remarkable talent for writing. Not surprisingly, then, only a few articles could be deemed superfluous (Karl Philipp Moritz) or inadequate (if one takes a purely scholastic stance, the portraits on "Nadeschda Durowa und Rußland" and "Gerd Brantenberg und Norwegen" seem a bit thin); most are simply excellent (noteworthy are the ones on "Háfis und die persische Mystik," "Die Antike," and "Mittelalter"), and reading them will undoubtedly be an eye-opening experience for many.

As one would expect, the volume covers plenty of the traditional queer icons of Western civilization, that is, those famous artists who have been and continue to be claimed by gays and lesbians to serve as forerunners, identifiers, role models, and martyrs—including, among others, Sappho, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Winckelmann, and Byron; Genet, Gide, Proust, Rimbaud, and Verlaine; Stefan George, Count von Platen, and Thomas Mann; Radclyffe Hall, Sackville-West, Gertrude Stein, and Virginia Woolf. But this book offers more than the usual *Who is Who* in the history of homosexuality. It distinguishes itself from other queer anthologies and histories primarily in terms of quality and focus. For one, most portraits are superbly researched, well-balanced accounts (though, unfortunately, poorly annotated), similar in length, tone, and style to the high-caliber articles one expects to find in the Feuilleton of *Die Zeit* or the Sunday's Arts section of the *New York Times*. For two, all portraits are sensitive to shifting theoretical premises, particularly to the evolution of the hetero/homo dualism and its recent deconstruction, and acutely aware of the current social, academic, and political concerns surrounding controversial and divisive issues, such as lesbian pornography and lesbian sexual violence, cultural colonialism and resistance to Western identity models. Even those portraits that, arguably, do not seem to belong, be it for lack of evidence of the author's queerness (Moritz) or be it for lack of relevance to the history of gay and lesbian literature (Michelangelo Buonarroti), are properly situated in the wider context of a (Western) discourse on homosexuality. They, too, reclaim that which had been denied, negated, censored, or hidden away and thus further enrich the résumé of the historical twists and turns of lesbian and gay literary emancipation.

The present collection — not the first, but certainly the most significant of its kind to appear in German — is refreshingly nonpolitical in regards to the debate on sexual identities, and the editors lay no claim to any particular definition of what constitutes a gay or lesbian text, author, literature, or canon.

Texts are "lesbian" or "gay" if they have been labeled so by their authors or been identified as such by lesbian and gay readers. Accordingly, the sole criteria for being included in the anthology were a writer's focus on themes surrounding same-sex love or sexuality and a writer's relative fame (or canonical status) as a lesbian/gay author in her/his particular country, ethnic group, or language. With this, all subjectivity is cleverly thrown into the camp of an imagined selective readership, with whom the book remains connected throughout. After all, the editors' intent is to deliver "eine Sammlung von Geschichten über die lesbisch-schwule Literatur und ihre Produzentinnen, für die das Schreiben über ihr Begehren und über die gleichgeschlechtliche Praxis ... oft genug dieselben oder ähnliche Funktionen hatte wie das Lesen für den schwulen Mann und die lesbische Frau" (v).

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, women have complained about the lack of a uniquely female literary tradition and the absence of a distinctly lesbian voice. Furthermore, in the past twenty years, there has been a growing interest to hear from (lesbian) women from African and Asian cultures, Moslem societies, and communist economies, in other words, from countries in which women continue to remain largely excluded from literary production. Here, too, the editors have been listening and worked diligently to fill painful gaps. The more than fifty portraits tracing lesbian productivity and creativity form a lively and multi-faceted history. While the affinities (for example, between early twentieth-century writers, such as Djuna Barnes, Natalie Clifford Barney, Marina Cvetaeva, Renée Vivien, and Christa Winsloe) are obvious and indicative of the fact that the expression of lesbianism is ultimately connected to the fundamental questions concerning the rights of women everywhere, the cross-cultural comparison also reveals striking differences in lesbian attitudes, perspectives, and needs. The articles on "Autorinnen in Schwarzafrika" and on the Jamaican-born writer Michelle Cliff are only two examples of the various responses to Western concepts of lesbian identity, which are challenging the social and political legitimization of what in (some) Western societies have become accepted alternative lifestyles. The final accomplishment of the volume is thus that it makes so abundantly clear that contemporary North-American queer identity models are by no means universal. Behind the notion of an emerging world community of lesbians and gays lurk the gaps caused by gender, race, class, and geographic divisions, which, despite all other similarities, do set the writers under discussion apart.

The book is unquestionably a treasure for comparatists, and certainly indispensable for anyone interested in lesbian/gay literature and history, gender and sexuality, and women's studies. Given the high quality of each article and

the enlightening, sensitizing thrust of the volume, inviting us to sample and taste from a multitude of international literatures, one can only hope that it will find plenty of readers and that it will soon be made available to non-German-speaking audiences as well. [CHRISTOPH LOREY, UNIVERSITY OF NEW BRUNSWICK]

*MABEL LEE and MENG HUA, eds., *Cultural Dialogue and Misreading*. University of Sydney World Literature Series Number 1. Canberra: Wild Peony, 1997. 422 pp. US\$ 35, paper.

This is a rich and thought-provoking volume of brief essays by fifty contributors, which were selected from papers presented at the International Conference on Cultural Dialogue and Cultural Misreading, held in Beijing October 1995. The authors of the essays come from many parts of the world: from Europe, Asia, North and South America and Australia. Their essays (most are in English and some in French) range from 7-8 pages in length, and one wishes some of them were longer so that the insights suggested in them could have been more fully developed. The book is divided into three parts: "Dialogue," "Misreading," and "Identity." These are useful divisions which help guide the reader and supply a focus to the many contrasting ideas expressed. However, some essays seem to straddle the categories; Valdés' essay in "Dialogues," for example, could be also read in "Misreading," or Boening's in "Misreading" might be read in "Identity." As it is impossible to do justice in this brief review to the range of ideas articulated, I shall limit this discussion to only several essays from each part.

The question of cultural relativism is touched on in many essays. Gerald Gillespie of Stanford University summarizes the prevailing views which consider cultures not as closed but as changing and undergoing internal shifts together with experiencing external stimuli. Some of the Chinese contributors approach the question from a different perspective, stressing the complementarity of cultures and their dynamic aspects, as does Gu Zhengkun of Peking University. Yue Daiyun, also of Peking University, holds a similar view, but she asks how different cultures can peacefully coexist. In juxtaposition to the cultural relativism of Western scholars, she proposes the idea of "harmony in difference", espoused by Chinese thinkers for more than 2000 years. This concept, based on the Chinese reality of a cultural pluralism at a formative period, assumes that nothing exists in isolation. All there is exists in a network of relationships, Yue

explains, and these, rather than persist in conflict, must be brought into harmonious interaction.

But how do we evaluate cultures, and how do the biases of a person within one cultural context impinge on his or her evaluation? Reminding the reader of the Eurocentric bias in humanities scholarship, Mario J. Valdés of the University of Toronto adds several useful ideas about what historians or literary critics do when they evaluate an event or text that belongs to the past. Evaluation is always contemporary reflection of another time and place; of another present. There are other complexities aside from these. Peripheral, or so-called minor cultures, states Mihály Szegedy-Maszák of Eötvös Loránd University, are often considered derivative; unfamiliar phenomena are explained in terms of familiar phenomena of major cultures. He acknowledges the distortions European imperialism has imposed on how cultures are viewed, yet, he also cautions the reader not to ignore Europe's cultural diversity.

Part II, "Misreading" is more specifically concerned with examples of cultural misreading of texts as compared to their presumed correct reading. John Neubauer, University of Amsterdam, argues that misreading can be innovative, and when intercultural or historically later, may reveal features of a text that were not apparent at an earlier time or in a different place. Neubauer's remarks are related directly to the major thesis of Margarida L. Losa's (University of Porto) paper, which draws attention to reception and the reader. To find different meanings at different times in one and the same work is a function of the dynamics of reading and extra-textual inference. This leads her to one other observation. If a work can mean different things at different times, then no fictional work can be taken literally, and all reading is, in the final analysis, "personalized 'misreading.'" Yet, either despite or because of this, literary works mediate between cultures, and afford accessibility of one culture to another.

The latter point, in turn, raises the question of translations and misreading, which is the concern of several essays in this collection. Translation involves two functions, as pointed out by Shen Dan of Peking University. Translators, on the one hand, read a text hermeneutically in the source language and, on the other, transfer the interpreted text into the target language. The interlingual aspect is, therefore, combined with the unavoidable hermeneutic aspect. Obviously, all sorts of "misreadings," for better or for worse, are apt to occur in the intercultural transference of a translation. Where translations into Chinese are concerned, this has been frequently the case and Tao Jie's (also of Peking University) essay about the fate of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in Chinese is only one among many examples that could be cited. Lin Shu, the work's first translator, turned it into a cautionary tale about possible enslavement, whereas at a later

time the book would be read in Chinese as an exposé of American imperialism. But we have a problem here. Might one not also ask whether the Chinese translator is obliged to abide by a canonized-sanctioned reading?

The essays in Part III, "Identity," grapple with other problems as authors try to come to terms with globalization and the universalizing of culture. The distinction between "commercial and mass-culture" and "textual culture," suggested by John Boening of the University of Toledo, is a helpful conceptualization for the homogenizing tendency of mass culture to which the inherent heterogeneity of the second is a counterweight. Although also concerned with the levelling process of mass culture, Rien T. Segers (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen) expresses a similar idea when he contrasts nationalization and globalization. The former is the ever more concerted search for origin, preservation of particularism and national tradition, whereas the latter is a general striving for similarity. The question of cultural identity arises within this paradox, between these two opposing tendencies. The issue of cultural identity is complicated by the fact that cultural borders, writes Segers, are no longer synonymous with national borders, and once homogeneous societies are now subject to ever greater ethnic diversification.

Even if a definition of cultural identity is elusive, as evidenced in the essays in Part III, there is no doubt that the problem of cultural identity has special implications for Chinese both at home and in overseas communities. As discussed by Song Weijie of Peking University, the earlier borrowing from the West has given way in recent years to a search for a pure, original and indigenous Chinese culture. Not one, but several cultural identities are present, he writes, in China's multicultural society. In discussing Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*, Steven P. Sondrup of Brigham Young University finds a different kind of problematic, namely cultural identity in the Asian American community. The first generation's adjustment to American culture led to a distancing from its native and rapidly changing culture, whereas the children, born and raised in the new cultural setting, attempt to preserve some kind of link to the culture of their parents. This quandary — the culture-family linkage — is, of course, not only part of Amy Tan's fictional works; it has been also explored by other gifted Chinese American writers as, for example, by Gish Jen.

Although an index would have much enhanced this volume, especially for those readers who may want to compare discussions by different contributors,

its lack by no means detracts from the work. The many contributors struggle thoughtfully and perspicaciously with timely and important issues that should be of concern to all of us who question where we may be headed in the 21st century. (IRENE EBER, THE TRUMAN RESEARCH INSTITUTE, THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM)

*MARTHA C. NUSSBAUM. *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*. Martin Classical Lectures, N.S. 2. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1994. 558 + xiv pp. US\$65, cloth; US\$19.95, paper.

Much of the material contained in this book has seen the light of day in earlier collections, but the publication of the whole is most welcome for two reasons. First, Nussbaum sheds new light upon an important aspect of Hellenistic ethics, the medical analogy characteristic of all three schools (Epicurean, Skeptic, and Stoic). Second, she makes accessible to the nonspecialist a difficult period of ancient philosophy, and one which has had a profound influence (insufficiently recognized in our own century) upon the western philosophical tradition. The resulting volume is much more than the sum of its parts.

Nussbaum introduces Hellenistic medical moral philosophy by contrasting it with other contemporary approaches to ethics, first the Platonic and that which Nussbaum calls "based on ordinary belief" (Chapter One), and then the Aristotelian (Chapters Two and Three). While Hellenistic ethics attempts to combine the critical distance of Platonism with the immersion of ordinary-belief philosophy into the beliefs and desires of real people, it introduces a new element, the commitment to action. The goal of all the Hellenistic schools is human flourishing (eudaimonia), both public and private, which philosophy, like medicine, can accomplish by therapeutic means. While Aristotle shares the same practical goal and considers similarly to the Hellenistic philosophers that the emotions or the passions (Nussbaum uses these two words interchangeably, as she explains 319 n. 4) are related to beliefs and are therefore capable of cognitive modification, he differs from them in that he does not advocate their removal, but rather argues that some, properly educated, emotions are essential constituent parts of virtuous action. According to the Hellenistic thinkers, Aristotle's ethical philosophy is not sufficiently committed to the relief of human suffering. In fact, the combination of practicality and compassion offered by Hellenistic philosophy is, as Nussbaum rightly stresses throughout, the very reason why it is still relevant and important today.

Nussbaum turns next to the Hellenistic schools and shows how each takes up the challenge implicit in Aristotle's conception of the medical analogy. She begins with a reconstruction of the Epicurean practice of therapeutic argument (Chapter Four), and then analyzes closely three of the emotions for which Epicurus provides therapeutic arguments: passionate erotic love, the fear of death, and anger (Chapters Five through Seven). In each case, Nussbaum lays out what can be deduced of Epicurus' own thought from the (often sparse) surviving evidence, before turning to the fuller narrative of Lucretius' Epicurean therapeutic poem, the *De Rerum Natura*, quite properly taking into account its Roman context. In Chapter Eight, Nussbaum examines the Skeptic view of the medical analogy, taking as her chief source Sextus Empiricus. The chief goal of this school is freedom from disturbance (*ataraxia*), which the Skeptic hopes to achieve through the purgation from human life of belief, and therefore of emotion. Nussbaum devotes the remainder of the book to the Stoic school, in which the centrality of therapeutic arguments can be traced back to Chrysippus. Again, Nussbaum sensibly begins with a reconstruction of Stoic therapeutic arguments, showing how Stoicism goes beyond the other schools in its commitment to the therapy of the entire human race (Chapter Nine), which lays the groundwork for the Stoics' arguments for the extirpation of the emotions (Chapter Ten), for "it is only in the Stoic life of self-containment that we can have stable gentleness and beneficence, the avoidance of terrible acts" (398). Nussbaum then focuses more closely upon Seneca, the Roman Stoic philosopher and poet, who both elaborates and calls into question the Greek Stoic therapeutic treatment of anger in public life in his *De Ira* (Chapter Eleven), and of love and anger in private life in his *Medea* (Chapter Twelve). Nussbaum concludes with an assessment of the methodological achievements of the therapeutic arguments of the Hellenistic schools and some of the tensions inherent in their medical model, and offers brief final remarks on her central topic, the passions (Chapter Thirteen).

This is an ambitious project, and for the most part it succeeds. For the specialist, Nussbaum provides a sensitive and comprehensive treatment of an idea central to Hellenistic philosophy, but which has not until now received full study. The nonspecialist is equally well served. Nussbaum's narrative is lucid and clearly organized, with the exception of certain passages in Chapter Six (esp. 201-32), in which her argumentation becomes uncharacteristically obscure and confusing. Like the Stoic school, for which she repeatedly professes an affinity, Nussbaum herself frequently appeals to examples (I found those on anger [402-3] particularly compelling) to demonstrate that Hellenistic philosophy is applicable and relevant to the universal human experience. A further device to introduce

a concrete element into the discussion is Nussbaum's decision to follow the career of an imaginary pupil, Nikidion ("Little Victory"), a young woman whom Diogenes Laertius (10.7) names as a pupil of Epicurus, as she consults, in turn, the different philosophical schools. This device allows the reader to imagine what sort of instruction the pupil would receive from each school, and also provides Nussbaum with the opportunity to present her opinion of the benefits and drawbacks of each type of "treatment." Finally, the nonspecialist will find helpful the short descriptions of the philosophers and schools contained at the back of the book (although I must admit that I did not find Nussbaum's pithy introduction to her description of Socrates [515] as "Athenian philosopher who wrote nothing" particularly apt); perhaps a glossary of the common philosophical terms used by the various schools should have been appended.

Despite the book's obvious merits, a few critical remarks are in order. In general, there is a certain tension throughout between Nussbaum's attempt to elucidate Hellenistic philosophy and to reply to it, although, to be fair, I should point out that she herself anticipates this criticism (489-90). Likewise, it is difficult to fault Nussbaum for her topical approach to the material, when she introduces the book with a disclaimer for her "somewhat idiosyncratic account of certain central themes" (6). All the same, however, comparison of the efficacy of the therapeutic treatment offered by each of the schools in their common aim of healing human suffering (perhaps through the device of Nikidion), beyond that contained in the relatively cursory final chapter, would have served to unify and integrate the book further. Third, Nussbaum thoroughly grounds the Hellenistic medical analogy in Aristotle, but more could have been made of the influence of Platonism and ordinary-belief philosophy upon Hellenistic ethics, especially given the apparent contradiction inherent in the Hellenistic schools between commitment to practical action and advocacy of detachment. As a final point, despite Nussbaum's careful treatment of the literary, political, and social context of the Roman philosophical works, there is no corresponding discussion of the historical background to the Hellenistic philosophical movements. Of course, a full discussion is beyond the scope of this book, but one would like to see some indication of why the Hellenistic schools were uniformly preoccupied with the criticism of contemporary society or why the Stoic movement extends the basic human unit beyond local and national political boundaries to embrace all humanity.

On the whole, however, there is far less to criticize than to praise. As one would expect from the author of *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge, 1986), which provided new, thought-

provoking insights upon (especially) Aristotelian thought, this volume is an important contribution to Hellenistic philosophy, and will likely become a standard. (FRANCES SKOCZYLAS POWNALL, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*IRINA LEVINSKAYA. *The Book of Acts in its Diaspora Setting* (The Book of Acts in its First Century Setting. Volume 5). Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company / Carlisle: The Paternoster Press, 1996. 284 + xvi pp, 16 plates. US\$ 38, cloth.

As part of a multi-volume series devoted to placing the Book of Acts in its historical-cultural context, Levinskaya's book makes a notable contribution for a number of reasons. Even those students and scholars not particularly interested in the Jewish Diaspora of the first and second centuries AD will learn much from Levinskaya's meticulous analysis of Greek inscriptions. Her careful and concentrated efforts to decipher and interpret the sparse witness of words etched in stone are themselves an eloquent testimony to the demands required of all genuine, sustained scholarship. As the author explains in the preface, she was given an extremely precise task: "to gather the evidence we possess on the Diaspora in the first century in order to provide the background for our ongoing discussion of Acts in relation to the Diaspora." The book presents the fruits of her research, and though the findings may seem unexciting and small (in part due to the paucity of material evidence surviving from the first century AD) the implications are anything but.

The Book of Acts is a problem child in the Newer Testament itself and in ancient Christian literature in general. Academic debate inside and outside Christian confines stumbles over the proper way to interpret the book. Some scholars consider it an entirely theological work lacking all value for the historical study of the first century AD, others see it as an unequalled source for the beginnings of the Church whose value is somewhat compromised by the inclusion of legends and contradictory evidence, particularly in those sections dealing with the apostle Paul. Levinskaya brings her expertise as an ancient historian to the problem and considers Acts to be a reliable source of information for certain dimensions of the first century Mediterranean world, all the while recognizing the theological framework in which the book is cast. She shows that the information concerning Jews and God-fearers (non-Jews sympathetic to the monotheism of Judaism without necessarily accepting all of its implications) provided in Acts by Luke deserves the serious attention of

historians of Jewish-Christian origins, for although contemporary epigraphic and literary evidence is too sparse to be conclusive, evidence dated to the second through the fourth centuries corroborates what Luke describes in his book.

Levinskaya begins with a discussion of Jewish identity and upholds Luke's picture according to which Jews had a clear awareness of the religious distinction between themselves and friendly non-Jews. Awareness of ethnic distinctiveness is provided by Acts 16. 1-3. She argues that the circumcision of Timothy recorded there is the first documentary evidence of matrilineage later taken for the norm in rabbinical Judaism. Levinskaya then shows from epigraphic and pagan and Jewish literary evidence that Judaism was not a missionary religion, again in accordance with Luke's picture in Acts. Instead, the often-contested existence of God-fearers is shown to be a reality in the first century. With regard to this group of Jewish sympathizers one of the more intriguing bits of information unearthed and resolutely analyzed concerns those who worshipped the Most High God. Levinskaya undermines the notion that the term "hypsistos" was a widely-used pagan attribute and shows instead its unmistakable Jewish origins. Certain sects continued to worship the Most High God into the parietic era. That such groups were Judaizing Gentiles has some significance for the interpretation of Acts 16. 16-18 where Paul exorcises a slave girl. Equally fascinating is Levinskaya's discussion of the Jewish presence in the Bosporan Kingdom on the north shore of the Black Sea (present-day Crimea and environs). In addition to the light it sheds on material in the book of Acts, this particular chapter opens new avenues of thought about the religious history of ancient Rus.

Those interested in the early history of the church will find Levinskaya's discussion of the Jewish and God-fearer presence in Rome of great value, especially her treatment of the name "Chrestus" in the writings of Suetonius and Dio Cassius, Tertullian and Lactantius.

A précis precedes each chapter of the book, allowing for a quick sense of its contents; however, readers who go no further will miss many finely-nuanced arguments and the opportunity to witness a first-class scholar in action. The book concludes with three appendices: an extremely terse and useful discussion of the meaning and use of the term "syncretism" which should be of interest to any student of religion; an illuminating exposition of the meaning of "proseuche" and an extended presentation of inscriptions from the Bosporan Kingdom that substantiates an already solidly argued chapter on the same theme.

The book is not meant for the casual reader nor does it have immediate practical applications for theology students; however, the specialist in Jewish-Christian origins will profit from it and future commentaries on the book of

Acts will have to take Levinskaya's findings into account. (T. ALLAN SMITH, NEWMAN THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE)

PAUL GORDON SCHALOW and JANET A. WALKER, eds. *The Woman's Hand: Gender and Theories in Japanese Women's Writing*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1996. 511 pp. US\$ 65, cloth; US\$ 24.95, paper.

As the editors (G. Schalow and J. Walker) suggest, this volume provides us with thirteen essays to prove how theories derived from Western discursive practice can be applicable to the analysis of Japanese women's writing. The view that Japanese women's literary works are facilitated along different axes from Western female writers' works and that such tendencies can be shown to be much more intensified when tracing back to the classics will be thoroughly overturned by reading these essays. It shows us that the same result is obtainable in Japanese women's writing through gendered reading. In other words, "gendered reading" is the key to step beyond the gender binarism of male discourse regardless of when and where the works were written. Even the works categorized as Japanese classics are qualified to be read from the gendered viewpoint.

First of all, this volume consists of four parts: Part I, "Situating the Woman Writer in Japanese Literature;" Part II, "Narrating Body;" Part III, "Defining the Female Voice;" and Part IV, "Locating 'Women' in Culture." The three essays in Part I try to give cross-cultural interpretations of Japanese female writing from the Heian period to the present day. This is a pilot study of gendered reading in the Japanese classics by female writers. The representative works treated in the first essay are *The Pillow Book*, *The Kagero Diary* and *The Tale of Genji*. According to Oba Minako, these works are open ended, and provide readers with an opportunity to reflect on the female inner life. In particular, the advantage that *The Tale of Genji* has given us is the wisdom of its age, and the power of calm and penetrating description which transcended that age.

In the second essay, Ki no Tsurayuki's *Tosa Diary* is introduced as a revolutionary work. In this text, Tsurayuki pretending to be a woman, used two voices, taking advantage of the characteristics of the absence of pronouns typical of the Japanese language. This multi-voiced text was successful enough to overcome the hindrance caused by the conventional gender-differentiated barriers. Lynne K. Miyake highly appreciates this early experiment. The third essay presents an historical overview of the concept of "Women's literature." Joan E. Ericson admits that the difficulty, when treating the lineage of Japanese women writers and the reception of their works, lies in the fact that neither

separating women's works from men's nor neglecting the significance of gender is free from the criticism of distortion.

Part II contains three essays dealing with modern works focusing on the female body, which is a gendered body and a female body as the source of metaphor. In the first essay, Sharalyn Orbaugh, with the materials of Kanai Mieko's four short stories, "Boshizo" (1972), "Kikan" (1970), "Funiku" (1972) and "Usagi" (1972), expresses some disagreement with the nature of victories Kanai gave as the conclusions of her works, because Kanai's treatment rejected the possibility of cure and escape. On the other hand, Orbaugh evaluates Kanai's daring challenge of rejecting the conventional dichotomy of the colonizers and the colonized.

In the second essay, Doris G. Bagen insists that the liberation of a female protagonist in a trance which allows her to realize her sexual desire is an attempt at deconstructing gender binarism. Bagen's view was placed in the context of how Enchi Fumiko translated and reproduced Ueda Akinari's "Nise no En" (1802) in her own work "Nise no En-Shui" (1957). Akinari's negative view toward Buddhism observed in the original story focusing on the ex-priest's sexual desire was reproduced as the story of a female protagonist struggling with her own sexual desire. Bagen's celebrated mastery of Japanese classics and religion, omnipresent in her interpretation of these two stories, is indispensable to analyze Enchi's work. However, excessive efforts to find some kind of relationship with the classics in the words, phrases and settings Enchi used in her process of reproduction can sometimes become obstacles to the understanding of her story itself. The reproduction of Akinari's work by Enchi is that of sexuality through her pen.

The third essay, in which Maryellen Toman Mori discusses Takahashi Takako, stresses the meaning of *Jouissance* by defining a rapturous, disorienting sensation of self-dissolution. Mori considers *Jouissance* as what Takahashi intended to describe in her works, and finds the subversion of binary patterns in Takahashi's experiments with seizing so-called phallic power through her female protagonists.

The third part aims at hearing the women's voice in the Japanese women's works. Meera Viswanathan, historically tracing back the works treating the theme of "Yamamba" (Mountain witch) up to *Konjaku Monogatari* through Noh and Kabuki, presents how Oba Minako crystallized such a tradition and gave a new interpretation in her own work titled "Yamamba no Bisho" (1976). Viswanathan's opinion that, as against "Le Rire de la Meduse" by French feminist critic Hélène Cixous, the past constraint which can be observed in Oba's Yamamba provides us the chance to think about the existence of tradition

or conventional matters. In other words, the distinctiveness in Japanese women's writing are magnified when unique materials such as "yamamba" are treated. This point is especially true in the second essay in which the atomic bomb literature by Hayashi Kyoko is discussed. John Whitier Treat spends most of his essay in delineating Hayashi's intention by quoting critical opinions by Nakagami Kenji who opposed Hayashi's attitude by defining it as the self-serving literature of a wartime victimhood and calling it "Atomic Fascism." Treat concludes that our relationship to Hayashi's writings has to be a struggle to understand them and separate ourselves from them (287). The third essay by Michiko Niikuni Wilson acclaims the birth of the unconventional female characters both in *The Journey through the Mist* (1980) and in *Birds Crying* (1985), and explains persuasively how Oba Minako created characters from the female perspective.

Part IV faces the culture to which Japanese women belong. As the title of the essay by Mizuta Noriko shows, the protagonist of *Drifting Clouds* by Hayashi Fumiko (1951) traveled farther away from Tokyo seeking a lost paradise even if it was not the way to liberation but destruction. Mizuta perceives the existence of something more than realism and the possibility of a woman's life outside of womanhood in Hayashi's work. The second essay by Chieko M. Ariga criticizes the fact that most of the commentaries of paperbacks have been written by male critics, and that has provided readers with a patriarchal ideology far from the content of texts. Livia Monnet also finds political reasons to challenge existing social structures in her discussion of Tushima Yuko's "The Chrysanthemum Beetle" (1984). In the final essay, Nina Cornyetz points out that what Yamada Eimi intended to do in her literary work was to reproduce sex/gender and racial discourse in the existing structure of empowerment and resistance. Cornyetz's opinion that Yamada's writing treating a Japanese woman and an Afro-American man as material fails to transcend the axis of dominance/submission offers an instructive example of cross-cultural interpretation of Japanese material.

After reading this collection of essays, the reader will realize that quiet but stable progress has been made in the field of Japanese women's writing, mirroring the links between life and text. It is true that even the works treated in Part II and III are not free from so-called cultural constraint. At the same time, it is very likely that many of the cross-cultural factors embedded in the Japanese women's writing will suggest useful directions for future research. (JUNKO UMEMOTO, NIHON UNIVERSITY)

*VIVIANA COMENSOLI. *Household Business: Domestic Plays of Early Modern England*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996. 240 pp. CDN\$50, cloth; CDN \$22.95, paper.

In the last decade, feminist criticism of early modern drama has begun to reconsider the relations between the representation of gender on the stage and the real material conditions of women's lives. Recognizing that while women, as historian Joan Kelly argued, did not "have a Renaissance" in the same way that some men did (as starkly evidenced by the absence of women on those stages), critics began to speculate that women nevertheless had a positive, performative impact on their social and political worlds. Perhaps the multiple injunctions directing women to be "chaste, silent and obedient" did not imply that women unquestionably obeyed such prescriptions, but rather that they did not. As Karen Newman observed in 1991: "[i]ncidents of feminine transgression crowd the historical record." Recent work has looked to the dynamic and unstable cultural field, attending to both the archive of women's words and actions and to the range of literature written (and in the case of drama performed) by men, which presents evidence of anxiety and/or ethical struggle around issues of gender. In this spirit of inquiry, Viviana Comensoli offers her important reevaluation of a selection of plays from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that have been categorized in literary history as both "domestic" and "homiletic." Comensoli's study, in its concentration on this specific sub-genre of drama is also a part of the new formalism in early modern criticism, which brings to the study of the formal properties of literature rigorous questions about the cultural work generic capabilities make both possible and impossible.

The domestic drama, the book asserts, is particularly worthy of study because it inscribes, "sometimes more radically than does Shakespeare, discursive conventions and ideological paradigms...[and because] writers of domestic drama reveal an interest in perversity and contrariety" (15,16). We are presented with a selection of such texts "that reconstitute inherited precepts through irony, paradox, and ambiguity, creating disjunctions and clashes of values that are not easily resolved by homiletic formulas" (16). The dramas are interested in the category woman and in the family as a site of social regulation and the production of civility; some plays reveal "a profound disenchantment with the ideal of the well-ordered, civilized family," and offer an array of protagonists who rebel against the "cult of domesticity" (24). While Viviana Comensoli's study is feminist and formalist, it is also rigorously historicist; she reads her dramas with a wide array of contemporary documents — religious and secular conduct books, homilies, legal and political treatises, pro- and anti-theatrical

tracts, pamphlets and histories — with which the plays have an intertextual relation.

In Chapter one, Comensoli locates the genesis of her domestic plays domestically, in the English medieval cycle dramas, as well as in some early Tudor morality plays. Of the cycles, it is particularly the Noah plays "with their focus on domestic strife" and "the Towneley and Chester pageants [that] reveal an emergent theatrical interest in the precariousness of contemporary marriage codes" (39). The moralities, (such as John Heywood's *Johan Johan* [1533]), Comensoli demonstrates, are certainly homiletic but not entirely or always coherently so. Chapter two looks at sixteenth-century marriage codes and the literary trope of the patient wife Grizelda, a trope that is "refashioned" from an often allegorical tale about and for men and their relation to the deity, to stories that centre on "the secular significance of the...companionate marriage" (52). Both the plays and the marriage manuals of the period are "unequivocal on the need for the wife's quietness and obedience" as well as sharing the unquestioned assumption that the wife is a chattel of the husband. Yet the conduct literature also admonishes abusive husbands, as does "Grissil" herself in Dekker, Chettle, and Haughton's *Patient Grissil* (1599). Chapter three examines "domestic tragedy" a genre that appears between 1590 and 1610, "when early modern England was undergoing a severe crisis of order...by 1610 the fragmentation of families was seen as a problem of national urgency" (65-6). These "murder plays" — often based on contemporary incidents — include *A Woman Killed with Kindness*; *Arden of Feversham*; *A Warning for Fair Women*; *A Yorkshire Tragedy* and *Two Lamentable Tragedies*, all of which "scrutin[ise] the early modern concept of civility as a collective obligation which promises to ensure social cohesion and continuity...tragic suffering stems from the protagonists' inability to abide by the ideologies of civility and private life" (66). Always attending carefully to the implied performance text in the drama she considers, Comensoli observes that in *A Woman Killed*, many scenes include stage props denoting social status (such as table salt) and newly ritualized domestic behaviours. While this play is ideologically conservative, in *Arden of Feversham*, we are presented with a "rebellious wife, Alice Arden [who] shares the recalcitrance of early modern women who questioned the hierarchy of gender" (89). This stunning chapter provides substantial evidence to prove its thesis that "domestic tragedy neither uniformly nor unequivocally upholds the cult of civility and domesticity" (68). In Chapter Four, Comensoli looks at witchcraft, discussing plays with witches as characters, two in detail that actually centre on the witch character herself: *The Witch of Edmonton* (1621) and *The Late Lancashire Witches* (1634). Both are based on real English cases and share "the domestic murder

plays' interest in contemporary reportage and the cult of domesticity" (110). *The Late Lancashire Witches*, the author concludes, is a highly conservative warning tale, from and to "our owne Nation" (120): "the play represents the case for the prosecution alone" (120). In contrast *The Witch of Edmonton* offers a witch character — Elizabeth Sawyer — who is "not an agent of supernatural powers but an individual confronting an entrenched social code that relegates old and poverty-ridden spinsters to the devil's company" (121). Mother Sawyer offers profound evaluative statements about her situation: "Some call me witch...And being ignorant of my self, they go / About to teach me how to be one" (121). This play, Comensoli concludes is "in a unique position [its] rational perspective current in a number of discourses on demonology since the second half of the sixteenth century" (126). The last Chapter examines later developments in comedy that "reconstructs the Tudor Prodigal Son plots by focusing on the fall and redemption of profligate husbands and the trials of the patient wife... 'homiletic comedies' where a woman's constancy saves the day" (132). These include *How a Man May Choose a Good Wife from a Bad*, *The Fair Maid of Bristow*, *The London Prodigal* and the two parts of Middleton and Dekker's *The Honest Whore*. "[T]he prodigal's reformation and the wife's steadfastness [Comensoli argues, consistent themes in these dramas] are sanctioned by an extensive body of contemporary discourses" (133).

This study is at its least convincing when it subverts its careful, localizing, synchronic cultural study by introducing universalising anthropological speculation about such subjects as witchcraft and habits of consumption and, in its epilogue, when it performs a hasty tour of domestic drama through the subsequent centuries, fast forwarding to Arthur Miller and Eugene O'Neill. It is at its most valuable when it locates specific generic transformations that coincide with political and social transformations in the early modern period. This work opens up an array of intriguing questions about the advent of the governmental society and how gender and familial relations are deployed for the purposes of producing civilly prudent subjects of the state. Comensoli shows how in this particular time and place the maintenance of the status quo is dependent on men regulating the behaviour of women, women regulating the behaviour of men and all governing themselves within the intimacy of newly private domestic spaces. Ironically and significantly, issues relating to this private regulation are simultaneously debated in the open, on the public stages of "our owne nation." I would like to have had the benefit of Viviana Comensoli's further speculation about the relation between the state and the inner rooms of English citizens, between the public and the private, the political and the personal. For example, in *The Honest Whore*, Comensoli argues, the Bridewell

"house of correction" scenes provide "an inversion of the idealized society towards which domestic comedy typically leads" (143). While Bridewell presents itself as an enlightened site of correction — "Here providence and charity play such parts, / The house is like a very school of arts" (5.2.30-1) — the play blows the cover on the penal impulse at the heart of its methods. Yet, is there not a direct association between this real English "house" of reform (once the home of Henry VIII) and the range of habitats Comensoli has been exploring in the domestic plays? Comensoli observes that in *A Woman Killed*, the upwardly mobile Master John Frankford's home is also a "school of arts" where he disciplines himself in the rules of masterly decorum. At the same time, he tries his own adulterous wife, instructing her that he will "retire awhile into my study, / And thou shalt hear thy sentence presently" (4.4.94-5). Her sentence involves banishment to another house and a process of shaming that results in her starving herself, essentially disciplining herself to death. It seems that the regulation embodied in early modern decorum, shaming rituals and penal confinement are domestic practices of both the state and the family. Readers of *Domestic Plays of Early Modern England* are certainly taken on an important tour of these variable "houses of correction" where the history of a newly privatized heterosexuality is played out on the public stage. (MARY POLITO, UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY)

*LINE COTTEGNIES. *L'éclipse du regard: La poésie anglaise du baroque au classicisme (1625-1660)*. Travaux du Grand Siècle 8. Geneva: Droz, 1997. 408 pp. CHF 62, cloth.

Emanating from a doctoral thesis which won a prize from the Fondation Araxi Torossian, this work is original and offers extremely valuable perceptions by interrelating English and European (mainly French) versions of classicism and the baroque and by noting correspondences between art and science, gardens, landscape and clothing, architecture, painting and poetry. The effects of politics and philosophy on poetry are astutely observed and the constantly applied parallel between nations highlights the different development of concepts of the baroque and the classical, expressed for example, in rules for landscape and literary codes.

The author notes her debt to Starobinski and Foucault, whose work on the study of the metaphor of vision (*le regard*) preceded and informed hers. The study is broken neatly into three chronological "moments": (i) the dazzled or entraptured vision which implies the submission of the spectator to a static and

hierarchical vision of the world, (ii) the fractured perspective which reveals the impossibility of capturing the whole universe in one's vision and which includes attempts to represent time and space, attempts converging with the European baroque, and (iii) the rational perspective (after 1650 and the Restoration) which represents a response to the "crisis of vision" and which defines poetry in a social perspective, cut off from all spiritual and ontological questioning.

The emphasis on visual imagery permits the development of a series of dichotomies: being and appearance, veiling and obscuring, open or closed horizons which reveal a world at once fragmented and dynamic. Among the most interesting insights are the different and changing definitions and perceptions of perspective in England and France. The parallels between art and poetry discussed are not between individual works, but rather between ideas and ideals involved in the portrayal of nature (*ut pictura poesis* or "Nature her self amaz'd") (325). This inspires at least this reader to seek a direct parallel between actual images and texts. This would make an interesting follow-up study. It would also be interesting to apply the concept of the fractured perspective to the recent works on the representation of the body in literature. One could go beyond poetry to look at Richard Brathwaith's *The English Gentlewoman Drawne out to the full Body* (1641, third edition).

The dialectic between these opposites will be familiar to scholars of the Enlightenment who will note the parallel which can be drawn between the crisis of vision and the crisis of enlightenment. The observations of Rémy Saisselin on the splintering of the image of woman, Eva Kushner's seminal work on the myth of Orpheus, Felicity Nussbaum's prize-winning article on gardens, and Joan DeJean's work on Sappho could all have been cited and enriched this work were it not already sufficiently rich and complex.

While the author's *corpus* was bountiful indeed, permitting the understanding of the transition from baroque to classicism in English poetry, and while the author brought a fresh point of view and critical style to the critical examination of English literature of the period, it might be regretted that a greater effort might have resulted in the addition to the number of women writers mentioned (two — both of whom are considered "atypical"). This was possibly due to the authors' reliance on three standard anthologies, although she does add to her list John Eliot and Rowland Watkins, poets otherwise absent from the traditional anthologies.

Cottegnies mentions the valuable and still valid work of Earl Miner who illustrates and analyzes the themes of the Cavalier poets, noting the differences between public and private verse, cavalier and metaphysical modes and

manners. While Cottegnies applies the critical angle of visual tropes to these works, she builds on the insights and solid research of her predecessor.

Cottegnies' interpretative grid is extremely apt and appropriate. The authors has an impressive and extensive knowledge of the period and of writers and their works. This is a solid thesis which contributes both to our understanding of the different development of literary and philosophical movements in England and France and to the close interrelationship of all manners of expression from art to architecture, from political tracts to poetic verse. (ROSEANN RUNTE, VICTORIA UNIVERSITY)

*ROBERT F. GLECKNER. *Gray Agonistes: Thomas Gray and Masculine Friendship*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997. 272 pp. US\$ 48.50, cloth.

Robert Gleckner's examination of Thomas Gray's career proceeds from the conviction that the "two-voice theory" used by many critics to describe Gray's work is not adequate to a full understanding of Gray's literary complexity or to the characteristics of his age and milieu. This theory, discernible with certain modulations in Gray criticism since 1945, identifies a public and a private voice functioning in Gray's writings and uses the distinction to account for Gray's many poetic "borrowings" from predecessors through extensive echoes and allusions. This allusiveness has, as Gleckner notes, made "source hunting" an industry for at least three generations of critics. Gleckner demonstrates that Gray's "allusive practice" is too deliberate and complex to suit this theory. Countering the impulse to apologize for Gray's many borrowings, Gleckner assumes that Gray's allusive practice is a conscious and sophisticated means of communication linking the spheres of masculine friendship and poetic influence. The result is a study that revises our understanding of Gray's poems and letters; furthermore, through the theory and method he devises, Gleckner identifies new possibilities for reading the codes of autobiographical reflection and transgressive masculine relationships in their historic and social context.

As his title suggests, Gleckner identifies Milton as the central influence on Gray's work. And he identifies Richard West, a member of the "quadruple alliance" — the circle of friends that included Gray, West, Thomas Ashton and Horace Walpole — as the central relationship in Gray's life and letters. For Gleckner, the coherence of Gray's allusive practice appears when it is seen to enact his personal history in the form of a "double narrative" that combines his search for poetic originality under the formidable influence of Milton with his

understanding of his own sexuality in his affection for West. Gleckner's purpose is not merely to reconstruct the two narratives; instead, he seeks to discover how the Gray-Milton narrative and the Gray-West narrative, in his words, "interlock, intersect, interanimate with, even at times serve as surrogates (or metonymies) for, each other" (8). Placing his project in proximity to recent studies of homosexuality in Renaissance England by Alan Bray and Bruce Smith, among others, and in distinction from theories of autobiography developed by Paul de Man, Gleckner sets aside the project of psychobiography and proceeds to discover how Gray's poems both "determine and reflect" his life as a poet. Gray's struggles as both poet and person are perceptible in a subtext that reveals his relations with Milton and West.

Milton's achievement inevitably made the eighteenth century a self-consciously "post-Miltonic" period (19). Gleckner contends that Gray never wrote without Milton's voice echoing in his consciousness. The image of Milton as a "sublime" poet whose achievement surpassed the ancients was mediated for Gray by John Dennis in *The Grounds of Criticism* (1704) as well as by Bysshe and Addison. The challenge facing Gray was to emulate Milton without becoming "merely Miltonic," or derivative in terms of style and diction (40). The imperative in this challenge consists in Gray's attraction to Milton as a transgressive and presumptuous poet who dared to soar "Above th'Aonian Mount," an image strongly echoed in Gray's *The Progress of Poetry*. The invocations to Books 1, 3, 7, and 9 of *Paradise Lost* are overt occasions of self-scrutiny for Milton because they depict the poet in the poem. These moments become "specular images" (28) for Gray's own self-scrutiny as it is organized in the analogies between Milton and Gray as poets, and between Milton's heaven (the place of true fame in both "Lycidas" and *Paradise Lost*) and Gray's prospects of poetic immortality with its attendant anxieties over success and failure. The Gray-Milton narrative in Gleckner's thesis assumes Gray's sense of entering Milton's consciousness to experience the vicissitudes of dark and light, height and depth, rising and falling. Gray's Milton is above all a poet of transgression whose surpassing of boundaries forms the basis for interpenetration of the Gray-Milton narrative with the Gray-West narrative of transgressive masculine friendship.

Gray's Milton is preeminently that "Genius of the shore" described in "Lycidas," a poem that is an interplay of voices between the living and the dead, a lament for masculine friendship shortened by death, and an exploration of the poetic vocation. The central relationship of Gray's life, his friendship with Richard West, was also shortened by West's early death. The man lamented in "Lycidas," Edward King, was not as close to Milton as the poem suggests; the *Epitaphium Damonis*, however, a lament for Milton's more intimate friend

Charles Diodati who died at an early age, combines with "Lycidas" and with West's *Ad Amicos* (an allusively Miltonic poem that Gleckner reads as a powerful testament of West's love for Gray) to demonstrate the interlocking *agon* of poetry and friendship which would eventually be intensified by loss. Gleckner identifies the coincidence of West's death and Gray's "sudden burst into a career" (69) as the point of "intricate interfoliation" of the double narrative of Gray's career. Just as the conventions of "Lycidas" allow for pastoral concealments of identity, so do the letters and poems of Gray and West allow for verbal and epistolary encodings that are legible in the subtext Gleckner pursues. One example among many is West's Greek prefix to a letter to Gray of December 22, 1736: "speak it forth, hide it not in thy mind, that we both may know it" (45). Gleckner reads this apparent allusion to the *Iliad* as both a declaration and a concealment of love. Such encodings and verbal disguises were required by the transgressive nature of the homosexual love between West and Gray with its painful tension between personal desire and social disapproval. Gleckner argues persuasively for the "epistolary encoding" of their relationship in intricate and subtle ways in the letters, defining his thesis, not as psychobiography, but as a study in "intrapsychic scripts" (18). The intrapsychic qualities of his emulation of Milton and his communication with West comprise, in the balance of Gray's career, a "profoundly personal and intricate elegiac complex" (135) as well as a "remarkable allusive mélange" (139).

Gleckner's argument depends upon his perceptive reading into the unspoken codes of the interlocking narratives he elaborates. The Gray-West relationship is largely unspoken except through the epistolary codes that make sense of Gray's allusive practice. Elsewhere, Gleckner suggests that the very lack of references to Milton in the letters constitutes an "eloquent testimony" to Gray's Miltonic self-consciousness. As a result, Gleckner is occasionally cautious about possible over-decodings of inferences concerning Gray's reading of Milton or his letters to West; nevertheless, Gleckner's ultimate appraisal of Gray's career, aligned with the mythic contours of *Paradise Lost*, is compelling and persuasive. More than a new reading of Gray that counters long-standing critical tendencies, this remarkable study affects our view of Gray's period, extends our ideas about Milton's relation to Eighteenth-Century and Romantic poets, and enlarges our experience of biographical insight in literary correspondence. Gleckner's title and subtitle, pointing respectively to Milton and West, fittingly capture his scholarly and perceptive reading of the poetic consciousness that animated both relationships. (DAVID GAY, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*SVEN HAKON ROSSEL, ed. *Ludwig Holberg: A European Writer — A Study in Influence and Reception*. Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1994. 238 pp. DFL 75 / US\$ 42, paper.

This book is one of those rare international publications that tells about a famous Nordic author and the whole body of his work. *Ludwig Holberg: A European Writer — A Study in Influence and Reception* is a thorough anthology containing seven different contributions by historians of theatre and literature, translators, and a single dramaturgist.

In the first contribution, the editor, Sven H. Rossel, makes a fine profile or monographic sketch of "Ludwig Holberg: The Cosmopolitan." In the following six contributions, Holberg is related to different historical, topographical, and linguistic areas and perspectives: Holberg and Greek-Roman Antiquity, German-speaking Europe, the Romance World, the Anglo-American World, the Russian Literary Landscape, and, finally, Holberg in Scandinavia.

An anthology like this requires the writers to combine substantial detailed study with the stylistic clarity of an essay. This demand has, in general, been well met by the contributors and the editor of *Ludwig Holberg: A European Writer*. The reader is given good surveys of, as well as interesting details about, the history of Holberg and the different literary cultures by which he was influenced and vice versa. There are, however, minor problems. First, and this is a general methodological problem in the literary reception of Holberg, too little attention has been paid to the fact that Holberg wrote in so many different genres and that a quotation is not simply a quotation, but is specifically determined by its literary source. Secondly, and this relates to the editor, a number of details are repeated to frequently. But that is a detail.

When Holberg published his story about Niels Klim in 1741, he created a sensation in Denmark: the book came close to being confiscated. In Europe, it became a bestseller by the standards of that time. As it was written in Latin, *Nicolai Klimii iter subterraneum*, was immediately translated into German, French, Dutch, and, soon after, Danish as well as English, Swedish, Russian, Hungarian, Polish and Finnish. *Klim*, which is both a philosophical science fiction and a satire of Holberg's own time, is, perhaps, the most obvious illustration of the fact that the relation between Holberg and the literary cultures throughout Europe could be mutual: *Influence and Reception*. Those two categories are treated with changing importance in this anthology — and with good reason.

Holberg as a playwright — his comedies — is a study on its own when it comes to influence and reception. In general, he is one of the most translated

Scandinavian authors, but it is, in particular, the comedies that became a public success. That is, of course, true for the Nordic countries, but also for Germany — shows Vivian Greene-Gantzberg. From the middle of the eighteenth century, via Gotsched's parallel to Holberg's own Danish theatre, *Die Deutsche Schaubühne*, on to Oehlensläger's enormous translation of no less than 25 comedies into German in 1822, and up to the last part of the nineteenth century, Holberg's comedies were staged to an extent not even the late Henrik Ibsen can rival.

The comedy about *Jeppe paa Bierget* (Jeppe of the Hill) is particularly interesting in terms of influence and reception. Jeppe was translated into Russian in 1904 and staged in Kiev 1918-19. It became, as far as we know, the only Holberg drama played during the time of the Soviet Union, as well as after. Holberg was looked upon as a reactionary during the revolutionary period and that is why he was excluded, so to speak. The anachronistic paradox lies in the fact, shows Cynthia Dillard, that it was the publishing of the collected works of none other than Karl Marx in 1956 that reintroduced and established Holberg in Russian culture. Back in 1848, Marx wrote: "Denmark achieved all of its literary power in the same way it achieved its material power, from Germany, and that which is Danish literature — with the exception of Holberg — is but a pale imitation of German Literature." Soon after, six of Holberg's comedies were published in a new translation and a review was written about "The Forgotten Dramaturge."

Of course, *Jeppe paa Bierget* is highly valued not only in Scandinavia, and with good reason, as Bent Holm shows in his sophisticated and well-written essay about "Ludwig Holberg and his Double," a title and a topic that seem to refer to the famous Antonin Artaud's visionary manifest *Le Théâtre et son Double*. Holm describes the double aspect, the relation between absolute and relative levels in Holbergian thematics, especially as exposed by the play about Jeppe. Jeppe is a fool as well as one who makes a fool of others; the play is a carnivalesque comedy of culture which points out that Holberg's "work contains a plea for *ratio* combined with the almost manic obsession of *irratio*, a combination of a light and a dark view, and a degree of value relativism lacking a center of orientation." This essential topic — and, not least, the changes in the interpretation of it — is displayed very convincingly by Holm in both a theatrical-historical and a dramaturgic perspective.

The story about the comedies in general is, perhaps, the obvious example of Holberg's influence in areas of literary culture most different from those areas by which he himself was influenced. In Italy and France, those countries so important to Holberg and the comic genre, Holberg never succeeded, neither

during his own time nor subsequently. There are, nevertheless, several explanations for that, and some of them are given by Torben Damsholt, Jørgen Stender Clausen, and Gerald S. Argentsinger in the other three articles of the anthology.

One radical and paradoxical explanation is that Holberg was, at once, lagging behind and forerunning contemporary comedy. On the one hand, the development of theatre was delayed in the Nordic countries when compared to Paris, where Molière and the upcoming sentimental comedy was in force in the 1720s (and that is why Holberg failed to bring his comedy on stage in Paris in the year 1725). On the other hand, Holberg produced an original and, for his age, modern contribution to the comic genre, namely a parodic tendency that pointed beyond contemporary classicism and forward to romantic irony which was totally strange for Holberg and his contemporaries.

This fact points to another explanation of a more general kind: in several parts and genres of his oeuvre, he created an internal and, as such, a hidden critic of the constitution of the works. This is what makes him one of several forerunners of European modernism.

Both from a historical and a modern perspective, Holberg is, indeed, a paradox. He was a literary authority and dramaturgic patriarch, a *persona grata*, whose social and political satire made it difficult for the local development of the sentimental (trag)comedy that was on stage in the dramaturgic centre of contemporary comedy in Europe: Paris. In the perspective of theatre history, one could say that even though Holberg's comedies disappeared from the stage with surprising rapidity after his death in 1754, he remained important to the development of the comic genre on stage — in his own as well as in our time!

Ludwig Holberg: A European Writer — A Study in Influence and Reception captures many sides of the Holbergian paradox. The anthology is a much needed collection of the traditional as well as present reception of Holberg. It should be a natural part of any library containing Scandinavian literature. It is a pity, though, as noticed by Norwegian scholars among others, that the publishers could not find the funds to compile an up dated and complete bibliography on Holberg. It is, nevertheless, a book like this that creates links between scholars and other interested readers to the cosmopolitan Holberg — beyond those automatically made by institutions. (PETER CHRISTENSEN, UNIVERSITY OF ÅRHUS)

*MARK EDMUNDSON. *Nightmare on Main Street: Angels, Sadomasochism, and the Culture of Gothic*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997. 190 + xvii pp. US\$ 14, paper; US\$ 22.95, cloth.

Mark Edmundson's *Nightmare on Main Street* is that unusual publication in the late twentieth century, a speculative extended essay, which draws on extensive cultural capital of literary variety, but which is not burdened by it. It is pitched at a more general readership, which does not require to be encumbered by academic debates of a definitional or pedantic nature. While this is a frustrating quality of the text and one sometimes is forced to demand evidence (which is not forthcoming), one cannot but admire the forward pressure of the argument, the breadth of reference, the passion with which it is conducted, and, at times, the passages of analysis.

The essay begins with a disarming anecdote about the author's obsessive absorption in horror movies, which leads him directly into the heart of his analytic project: to account for the cultural work currently being done by contemporary Gothic for its consumers. Whether it is because the turn of the century, and more so the turn of the millennium, are somehow congruent with Gothic modes of discourse, or whether it is a logical outcome of almost a century's absorption (since high modernism) in the corporealities of being human, I share with Mark Edmundson a fascination with both the Gothic phenomenon itself and the hold that Gothicism has on the young and on literary, and especially cinematic, audiences. I am grateful for the light he sheds on it, though I do have concerns that among the late twentieth century ills that evoke terror, he fails to analyze the impact of late capitalism on the psyche and the superego (which he interestingly casts in the role of a potential Gothic villain). He does, however, give due weight in his consideration of late twentieth century literature to that most in-your-face and simultaneously subtle social phenomenon, race/racism, which he sees, and I agree with him, as the most pressing challenge of our times.

There are problems with Mark Edmundson's definition of Gothic. It is so broad as to render it the kind of umbrella terminology which *Romanticism* and *Modernism* have become, and it runs the danger of meaning everything and nothing. One longs for the kind of precision that a more exact and comprehensive literary historian like David Punter used in the early '80s (and revised more recently) in his analysis of two centuries of the Gothic phenomenon in literature. To be fair, Edmundson's project is not literary history: it is something more culturally interventionist. And, given the broad canvas on which Edmundson's argument operates (his field is cultural studies,

and his texts as varied as literature, chat shows, slasher films, New Age books of the how-to [be a man/woman, find the inner child] variety, tabloid celebrity coverage, the phenomenon of American belief in angels, '60s counterculture, sadomasochism), the fluidity of his definition may be strategic. Certainly, his book could never be accused of scholarly pedantry. The study aims at "broad cultural diagnosis" and is empowered by a missionary zeal to at least identify the aetiology of the current generation (a form of "cultural haruspicy" not very dissimilar from that engaged in by the tabloids he denigrates?), in the light of forces unleashed in the last two hundred years. However galvanized and intrigued the author might be by the Gothic phenomenon, there is underlying this text a puritanism and moral zeal which means that his surrender to the Gothic is only partial, and highly critical. His concern is to ensure that the dark and illusory "epistemological certainty" which Gothic offers is not taken for "the truth" (68). There is too an absolutism about his use of such transcendental signifiers that gives this reviewer cause for some disquiet.

Although Edmundson traces his intellectual genealogy from Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel*, he is less critical of Gothic than his mentor, being heir to thirty years of poststructuralist neo-Freudianism, and to almost two decades of theorization of Gothic, though curiously little of the latter makes its way into his notes. It is astonishing to note how insistently Freudianism underwrites any discussion of this topic, and it saturates Edmundson's thinking. The key structural polarity which the book establishes is a dialectic whereby Gothic and transcendence are opposed: "facile transcendence" is construed as the inverse of Gothic, and films as different as *Forrest Gump* and *The Silence of the Lambs* are made to seem related phenomena, with the former "[teeming] with potential traumas" and denying the power of them, and constituting for its viewers a busman's holiday from terror, which at the same time reinforces it. Edmundson is careful to distinguish between easy transcendence and the kind of more muscular transcendence which writers like Toni Morrison in *Beloved* and Tony Kushner in *Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes* offer, though he has reservations about the achievements of both. He critiques the separatism of the first and the sentimentalism of the latter. Is it, I wonder, significant that although film analysis is the trigger for this study of Gothic in contemporary culture, its resting point is the higher and even new-canonical end of the literary spectrum? And will it reach the audience it is intended for because of this?

One of the most intriguing manoeuvres of this work is to recuperate the Romantic, clearly a passionate preoccupation of the author, for Gothic, though it has to be said that he occludes high modernism in the process, which he

presents, oddly, as "untenably idealizing" (is this as true of "The Wasteland" as it is of "Four Quartets?") and as refusing to give house-space to the uncanny. Modernism is a dead-end for Edmundson because it failed to give proper resistance to Gothicism. He sees contemporary Gothic as a "debased residue of the richer Gothic forms to be found in Lewis, Shelley, and Blake" (166), and worries that this powerful genre may, in its contemporary articulations, be dead-end and lacking in political potency. Given that Romanticism is his touchstone, it is, nonetheless, invigorating to consider the S&M and revenge plots which animate the O.J. Simpson, Menendez, Lorena Bobbit and Michael Jackson traumas alongside *Rambo*, and to compare these manifestations of Gothic with Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*, "the greatest poem to arise from the visionary movement in late-eighteenth-century England" (141). For Edmundson, Shelley not only teaches "the centrality of the sadomasochistic impulse for the post-revolutionary Western self," but he also dramatizes a way of breaking out of the revenge cycle, a notion which is central to his hermeneutic methodology in dealing with the late century texts of which he approves, with qualification. Edmundson's "solutions" to the Gothic scenario (love, forgiveness and a harnessing of the energies of Gothic) are perhaps simplistic and reductive, and to some extent bear witness to the influence of 60's flower-power which he also critiques as "facile transcendence," and for which he would substitute a Blakean higher innocence. His diet of slasher movies, Oprah and CNN, and his responsiveness to the modern world have, however, made him a great deal more street-wise than his Woodstock kin.

This is a book which will stimulate general readers and the kind of undergraduate in cultural studies or literary studies who is curious about intellectual genealogies, who is keen to read literary texts as having ideological and cultural work to do, and who is curious about the ways in which pop culture feeds off and into the high culture. It is a text which naturalizes literary Freudianism and which construes Gothic as psychic drama *par excellence*. It cannot entirely disavow its high culture origins, however, and it will generate a great number of arguments over its interpretations and argumentative strategies. (FRANCES DEVLIN-GLASS, DEAKIN UNIVERSITY)

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*ALEXANDER STEPHAN, ed. *Themes and Structures: Studies in German Literature from Goethe to the Present*. Columbia, South Carolina: Camden House, 1997. 331 pp. US\$ 75, cloth.

This collection of articles holds something for everyone. The volume is a *Festschrift* to honour the Germanist Theodore Ziolkowski, of Princeton University, on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday, and so the tremendous variety displayed by the essays is a very apt recognition of the breadth of Ziolkowski's own expertise. A useful select bibliography of Ziolkowski's publications is appended, which serves to underscore this point very clearly. And it is remarkable how often a contributor makes reference, in an aside or a footnote, to a work by Ziolkowski or to a view held by him. The editor's brief introduction is a sort of thumbnail character sketch of the scholar in whose honour the volume has been compiled. After that, the essays appear in chronological order, ranging impressively from Winckelmann to Joyce Carol Oates.

Geoffrey Atherton opens with a thorough and scholarly assessment of eighteenth-century responses to the Laocoon statue. Winckelmann's most famous and influential description occurs in the *Gedanken über die Nachahmung*, but there is also an analysis of two others by him. A broader canvas emerges when Lessing and Schiller are discussed, as well as Goethe's lack of appreciation of the Vergilian account of the episode which this statue recalls. Disappointingly for Atherton, a glaring printing error appears on the first page of his article. The second contribution is an entertaining and informative piece by Walter Wetzels on the Enlightenment project to popularise the New Science by means of didactic dialogues, aimed especially at a readership of educated women. Two successful examples, by Fontenelle (1686) and Algarotti (1737) form the focus. With the current flurry of heightened interest in Franz Schubert, Ellis Finger's analysis of Friedrich Rückert's poems as arranged in settings by various composers was welcome, although the suggestion that in setting Rückert's poems, Mahler should have essentially been moved by the desire to establish the poet's reputation for posterity is rather implausible and might instead be a reflection of the writer's own plans. The case for a connection between Gottfried Keller's ambitions as a painter and his use of colour symbolism, on the other hand, is entirely plausibly and interestingly made by Otto Johnston. Johnston provides a very detailed analysis of *Romeo und Julia auf dem Dorfe*, with the occasional sideways glance in the direction of Goethe or Pierre Paul Frédéric de Portal's pivotal work on symbolic colours in antiquity (1837). George C. Tunstall takes a very close and careful look at just one poem by Hoffmannsthal,

"Die Beiden", identifying the influence of the medieval canzone form and borrowings from *Des Knaben Wunderhorn*. A very original juxtaposition of Jack the Ripper and Lulu by Maria Tatar made for a rewarding read, in which references to Wedekind's life are offset by insights culled from Nietzsche, Brecht and Baraile.

Three contributions in particular continue to extend the scope beyond the purely literary, in the directions of politics and philosophy. The first is Hildburg Herbst's discussion of an underrated theme — Goethe and Politics. In assessing Goethe's attitude towards general political issues and the French Revolution in particular, Herbst looks at the somewhat neglected text, *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten*. Immediately following this is a serious and interesting treatment by Paola Mayer of Friedrich Schlegel's critical history of philosophy and his understanding of consciousness and of time and space, as outlined in the *Theorie der Entstehung der Welt*. James M. Skidmore turns to the period of the Weimar Republic and Ricarda Huch's treatments of various historical figures as well as her fictional work, *Der wiedergebende Christus*, through which she gives voice to her political commentary.

For all its laudable breadth of scope, this volume has some weaknesses. Surprisingly, two contributors have chosen to discuss the same text, albeit from quite different perspectives. The main character of Peter Handke's 1986 work *Die Wiederholung* is compared by Kathryn Shailer Hanson, in an interesting alignment, with the Romantic protagonist of Tieck's *Der Runenberg*. But the Handke story is only thinly disguised as *Repetition* when it receives its second treatment, at the hands of Scott Abbott. Abbott's is a close analysis of the text, with emphasis on use of language and symbols. For this reviewer's taste, Clark Muenzer's contribution on Goethe's plant morphology is marred by tenuous etymologies and such conceits as a "porous intellectual field" and the suggestion that Goethe himself could become "an increasingly complex symbolic topos." Then the determined feminist stance of Kathleen Komar's piece on Christa Wolf's *Kassandra* leads her to cause an imbalance in her own argument by reiterating, almost *verbatim*, her own lament that *Kassandra* is all but absent from the *Iliad*.

For the most part the contributors — and this is very much to their credit — contrive to keep the intellectually alert, well-informed but non-specialist reader in mind. Thus, efforts are made to prevent language from being a barrier to the reader's enjoyment and summaries of the works under discussion are worked into the article where appropriate. Most accessible for the non-German specialists are the last three, and thus most contemporary, topics in the volume. David Dollenmayr's assessment of the essay collection entitled *The Smoking*

Mountain, by the American writer Kay Boyle, traces the vicissitudes of the expatriate Boyle as she tries to come to terms with the situation in Germany just after the war. Then Alan Keele uses historical documentation to ask questions about the historicity of Walter Kempowski's narrative collection, *Deutsche Chronik* and wonders to what extent Kempowski presents his own family, and their experience of arrest in 1948 and subsequent incarceration on charges of espionage, as symbolic of the times. Finally, Cecile Cazort Zorach turns to recent American fiction in an attempt to put together a composite picture of contemporary Germany and its attitudes towards the past. Using a good-sized sample, Zorach demonstrates that a writer's viewpoint in relation to Germany is inevitably complicated by that writer's relationship to his or her own country.

Besides the Ziolkowski bibliography already mentioned, the volume includes a useful index and Notes on Contributors. The occasional quibble aside, it must be said that this collection constitutes a fine compliment to a scholar who has clearly had a tremendously widespread influence on German letters throughout the United States and beyond. And because of the variety of topics treated here, *Themes and Structures* will need to be consulted by scholars with the most widely diverging interests. (JANE V. CURRAN, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY)

*BEATRICE MARTINA GUENTHER. *The Poetics of Death: The Short Prose of Kleist and Balzac*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996. 216 pp. US\$ 71.50, cloth; US\$ 24.95, paper. ARMANDO PETRUCCI. *Writing the Dead: Death and Writing Strategies in the Western Tradition*. Translated by Michael Sullivan. Stanford: Stanford University Press (Figurae: Reading Medieval Culture), 1998. 163 pp. US\$ 35, cloth.

Writing and death: writing which inscribes death, which survives death, the writing of tombstones and memorial books, the narratives whose terminus or origin is death, writing which in its struggle with death courts death, like a bullfighter, and speaks for it, the love and fear of death as the desire of writing, the strategies of avoidance, displacement, deferral, and the immense courage to continue to the end: these are the concerns of Beatrice Guenther's study of Balzac and Kleist, a commentary on the commentaries of death, and also of Armando Petrucci's survey of the material traces of death in our culture. They are also extremely different. Guenther's is an intense literary-critical study of her chosen authors, examining the centrality of death in their works, its implications for narrative, and how they tried to overcome its seduction and its threat. Her

approach is overtly deconstructive, in that she shows how death confounds the possibility of its representation. At the same time, she is interested in the variety of strategies her authors adopt, why they continued writing. Poignantly, she interleaves her analysis of fiction with the correspondence and circumstances of the writers, culminating, in the case of Kleist, in his suicide pact with Henriette Vogel. Her command of and ability to summarise the critical literature is impressive; she introduces psychoanalytic theory clearly and pertinently. In contrast, Petrucci confines himself to the marginalia of epitaphs and obituaries, how death was inscribed, the social forces and quiddities contributing to calligraphic change and funeral practice. The subject is fascinating; Petrucci's treatment of it, however, is both too cursory and too detailed to be satisfying.

Guenther argues that for Kleist the obsession with death, the drive towards suicide both literal and metaphorical, is implicated in his discovery of the death of Truth, following his reading of Kant. Once he had believed that perfection, the dream of *Bildung*, was possible, if only in an afterlife. Now the only alternative to death is escape, an exhausting and pointless displacement. The death of truth is combined with alienation from the irrecoverable innocence of the past, the empty future, and the elusive present. Kleist writes of the spontaneity of writing, and its entanglement in second thoughts, in "Reason! O unfortunate reason!" (97). His narratives recount deaths, which are inexplicable and unrepresentable. The flight from death may be either literal, as in the travels Kleist undertook as a remedy for despair, or literary, substituting fictional death for his own demise. Nonetheless, the flight from death reverses itself into a solicitation of death. On his travels he narrowly escaped death, and was appalled both by its randomness and the strength of the will to live. In his fiction, death is repeatedly reenacted. In his last months, images of death and life were persistently conflated, and death was imaginatively transformed into happiness and sexual pleasure. Guenther accompanies her analysis with an account of Lacanian views, according to which death is both the precondition of writing and its ultimate desire (85-86).

Kleist's *Tales* are characterized by their multiple conflicting points of view, their doublings of plot and character, and their substitutions of imagery. Guenther shows how these features are symptomatic of the anxiety of meaninglessness. Metaphorical substitution becomes progressively emptier; narrative sequence collapses. In *Earthquake in Chile*, for instance, the escape of the young couple at the beginning of the story is inverted in their murder at the end. Narrative shifts, mises-en-abyme, replicate the impossibility of mimesis and development. If there is no truth, the only *Bildung*, the only education, is a reverse *Bildung*, a divesting of the self of all its certainties. Death, in Kleist, offers

redemption; for instance, the most terrible moment of *The Duel*, when Littegarde doubts her experience and accepts her fate, is the precondition for her vindication. Hence all signifiers point to death, and are self-nullifying. As in Lacan, desire is desire for nothing.

Kleist's critique of *Bildung* is accompanied by a rejection of colour, and depiction in general, as the medium for narration, in favour of music. His brief tale *The Beggarwoman of Locarno* consists almost entirely of a repetition of sounds. Music may displace death, may express movement and vitality, but it also may be deadly, as in "Saint Cecilia," whose iconoclastic protagonists are paralysed by music.

Guenther's treatment of Balzac is simpler and less fraught than that of Kleist. Balzac had encyclopaedic ambitions, and hoped to achieve in literature what Napoleon had failed to accomplish in war. The desire for mastery, however, is rendered powerless by death. Balzac was anxious about the death of the mind (105), preceding that of the body. Art in his fiction is frequently fatal. Doubles of Balzac in his own work, especially *Les Proscrits* and *Honorine*, are suicidal and trapped. Writing is an exile from oneself (101). The motif of death is subsumed in the longer fiction, which maintains an illusion of continuity; in an excellent discussion of four novels, Guenther shows how death threatens narrative control and coherence, and is integrated within the total structure, which promotes a fantasy of endless survival. Especially interesting is her reading of the tension between linearity and circularity in *César Birroteau*, in which civil death is the birth of thought, and actual death is nostalgic return.

The last chapter turns to the poetics of thought in Balzac, and to his shorter fiction. Thought is both antonymic to death, in that death is the limit of thought, and prevents movement and life. Examples of the corrupting power of thought and art are *Louis Lambert*, whose philosophic hero is reduced to aphasia, and *Gambara*, whose subject is incommunicable genius. The short fiction, as opposed to longer novels, is less able to sustain an illusion of survival. It is more discontinuous, fragmentary, and synecdochic for the entire project of the *Comédie Humaine*, in which the aim of encompassing the whole of life in a single work of art decomposes into a multiplicity of narratives and perceptions. The struggle of the artist to control his creation, and the danger that he be consumed by it, are the simultaneous perils of infanticide and parricide which Balzac avoids and repeats through ever new work, ever new attempts to find an alternative.

The writing of death, as Petrucci remarks in his preface to his consciously episodic history of funeral epigraphy, is a writing of life and the living, visible to the public, and distinct from rituals that demarcate the realm of the dead (xviii). The study of inscriptions on tombstones cannot be separated from that

of other kinds of public writing. A funeral inscription is a political and social statement, as well as an ideological one; it asserts the worth of an individual for commemoration, and hence the prestige of the group to which he or she belongs. Petrucci accordingly considers who commissions and composes epitaphs, their implied audience, their message and function. Why did people begin to record the particulars of their dead? How did the practice become universal? In the process, Petrucci finds periods of expansion and contraction, innovation and classicism, geographical and ecclesiastical variation. The diffusion or paucity of inscriptions is dependent in part on the rate of literacy, and on social stratification. Periods that idealize the past, such as the Italian Renaissance, will imitate their models; others, such as the Baroque and Gothic eras, will promote creativity. The history of funeral writing consequently traces that of Europe and its art. Sadly, Petrucci does not attempt a cross-cultural comparison, for instance with the commemoration of ancestors in China.

He begins with Greece, in the seventh and sixth-centuries B.C.E. The earliest inscriptions suggest a strong identification with the departed, in contrast to Egyptian funeral texts, which are addressed entirely to the gods. This is too categorical, however, since there are abundant memorials, dating back to the Old Kingdom, which would have been visible to the living, and are not essentially different from later epitaphs. He continues with the development of a classical style in Athens and Rome, its extension from the aristocracy to the middle and lower classes, the transformation wrought by the advent of Christianity, with its insistence on the equality of the faithful and their need for salvation, the eclipse of funerary inscriptions in the Dark Ages (except for ecclesiastical dignitaries), the tension between text and image, monument and document. Various chapters examine other modes of recording death, for instance, the honorary rolls of early medieval monasteries, the annals of mercantile families from the thirteenth onwards, obituaries and death notices in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The graphic depiction of death changes in significance, from the memento moris of medieval northern Europe to the morbid pleasures of the Baroque, which coincided with the development of the science of anatomy. Petrucci is particularly good at analysing contemporary kitsch.

This book is quite overwhelming in its detail, its richness of observation, its attentiveness to minutiae of calligraphy whose significance is not always evident. It is strong at setting social context. Yet it lacks human warmth. Rarely does it explore the emotional significance of death or the departed, what the writers or commissioners of epitaphs might have felt for their loved ones. There is little analysis, for instance, of the epitaphs themselves. Another aspect of the book I found disturbing was its exclusive focus on classical and Christian

materials. In particular, the Jewish presence in Europe is totally ignored, even where it might have contributed considerably to Petrucci's discussions. I would have liked to have known more about the continuity between early Christian inscriptions and Hellenistic Jewish ones. The Yiddish Memorial books have I think no parallel in early modern Europe. Amazingly, Petrucci simply does not mention the Holocaust, with its attempt to wipe out all trace and memory of the dead, and the enormous proliferation of Holocaust memorials, such as Yad Vashem. These limitations are disturbing precisely because the book is in many ways so interesting. (FRANCIS LANDY, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA.)

*JYOTSANA G. SINGH. *Colonial Narratives/Cultural Dialogues: Discoveries of India in the Language of Colonialism*. London & New York: Routledge, 1996. 196 pp. US\$ 65, cloth; US\$ 16.95, paper.

The British rule lasting over India for about two hundred years aimed at administrative expediency. For perpetuating it, the British rulers devised a political agenda as well. How in extent if not direction, this agenda aspired for hegemony becomes evident from *Colonial Narratives*, a cogent and combative book on the subject.

Written by Jyotsana Singh, a feminist critic from India but now situated in the West, this book grapples with diverse issues pertaining to colonial rule, racial bias, gender-control, anti-colonial impulse and their post-colonial reckoning. Without losing its focus, the book mediates through these issues. Narrative texts drawn from diverse periods come under scrutiny without anywhere sounding pedantic. Creditably enough, insights owing allegiance to Gramsci, Williams, Said, Anderson and Clifford in the West and Tagore, Gandhi, Nehru and several others from India are put to discriminate use. Through elision and allusion, Ms Singh negotiates a viable position for herself. What seems wanting is a purview of Indian writings that in counterpoint could have further enriched the book's content.

Discovery motif is the seminal trope from which Ms Singh develops her analysis in a morphological way. She locates its origin to the 17th century travellers who, frequently as functionaries of East India Company, wrote their narratives to ingratiate themselves with the native rulers. Invariably, disinterested curiosity eluded them. Christian faith, incipient impulse to colonise and unfamiliar linguistic assumptions impelled/compelled them to fabricate reality. With Clifford's term (*The Predicament of Culture* [1988]) ready at hand, Ms Singh names them as "participant observers" (29). In thus naming them, a grain of truth

may be there but their failure to grow further into observer analysts cannot be denied.

The narratives of Sir Thomas Roe and Thomas Coryate are taken up for illustrating the point. In Roe's *Journal and Letters*, a series of spectacles figure both to exoticise and demonise the natives. Though he claimed to be a "master hermeneut" (32) yet his cultural and linguistic frustration was such as could draw from him only a differing discourse. The court being his locus, he could not cross the stratifying hurdles. Coryate, who unlike him was a "flamboyant traveller" (41), had eye-witness experiences to narrate. For the purpose, he found it convenient to imbricate them within "the conventional embellishments of the travel-genre" (42).

Generic to begin with, the discovery motif acquired idolising and rescuing proportions in the 18th century. Orientalists drawn to the ancient Indian classics and gentlemen of the British court were their proponents. Whereas the orientalist evoked India's glorious past to which paradoxically enough there could be no return, the gentlemen bound irrevocably to tradition rued over the decadence that from the Indian dominion accrued to English life. In her effort to negotiate a unity between these two contraries, Ms Singh draws upon Edward Said (*Orientalism* [1979]). With all the resilience at her command, she diverges herself from his passionately affirmed view of regarding orientalist scholarship as an appendage of colonialism. At the same time, she does not go to the other extreme to hold it with J. J. Clarke (*Oriental Enlightenment* [1997]) as an epistemic discovery undermining West's belief in its own efficacy and veracity. For her the discoveries of William Jones and his associates were part of the "colonial discourse of civilisation" (69) in the widest sense of the term.

Of course, India's glorious past could not offset her decadence but the English people were duty-bound to perpetuate the colonial rule and at the same time safeguard their morality. Ms Singh pinpoints their dilemma by deconstructing Edmund Burke's rhetoric. The colonial bias that his rhetoric covered gets piquantly uncovered in the process. She affirms her point further by analysing Samuel Foote's play (*The Nabob* [1772]) in which the Indians are invisible victims of the plunderers who then visibly inviggle the English people in the tentacles of their "affluence and influence" (76). The issue would have got further crystallised if Indian writing (*Travels of Dean Mahomet* [1784]) of the same era had also come under analysis. With all its ambiguities and inconsistencies, it brings the Indian point of view to the fore. Its apologetic tone is very much in keeping with the ethos that the situation warranted then.

In the 19th century, the British rulers took measures overtly to enhance their hegemony but covertly to perpetuate their domination. In the foreground

was the gender-issue revolving round *sati*, the custom both sanctified and vilified in the eyes of the people. Ms Singh's poignant analysis of two novels (*Seeta* [1872] and *On the Face of Waters* [1897]) brings out the dilemma baffling the British reformers and their Indian supporters. "Humanitarian feelings notwithstanding," none could call for "viable alternatives to a life of asceticism for widows" (103). What slips her notice is the differing fact that in areas as the Punjab to which Ms Singh herself belongs, *sati* was not the prevalent evil. There the problem was of female infanticide against which the British rulers, after their conquest in 1849, promulgated several measures but without providing for female education and gender-equality.

What to talk of native women, the British rulers did not have on agenda gender-equality for their own counterparts even. Come to India in a large number then, they had to suffer domestic seclusion though to the Indian subjects they seemed so polished and accomplished. There was thus 'the thrust of colonial influence into the personal authority of their own women' (98). At best they could have recourse to pity and fear, an easy tool for catharsis. In return, this catharsis provided them excuse to hold courtesans, dancing girls and prostitutes in liminal space with non-chalance. Perhaps it was his extreme exasperation against this non-chalance that later on led first the much-maligned and then the much-eulogised Sadaat Hasan Manto to limit humanity if at all to these fallen women only.

The British agenda seems to have fared better in the superstructural sphere. In the chapter "Shakespeare and the civilising mission," Ms Singh has ample evidence to show how performances of the master playwrights' writings revived theatre and drama in India. There is no disputing the fact that with the coming of his masterpieces into transcultural vogue, epistemic developments became imminent. The "colonial manipulation of literary reception" (131) ceased and culture-specific productions appeared to show Shakespeare not only as "our contemporary" (146) but also as polyphonic, i.e. in dialogic relationship with the literary imagination of the Indian writers, particularly the playwrights.

A marginal difference of opinion may not look inapt here. The Shakespearian phenomenon was not of that iconic importance in the north-western languages and their literatures. In Punjabi that happens to be Ms Singh's mother-tongue, dramatic writing began under another ambience, the composite one, that realistic drama and the Irish theatre had provided. Shakespearian remnants were to be found in certain playwrights but their role was to prove residual in the long run. Such was more or less the case in Hindi as well though Ms Singh is at pains to suggest otherwise. Indian People's Theatre Association held so much sway in Urdu that no alternative trend could strike roots there.

The last chapter of the book grapples with India's discovery as a post-colonial nation. Ms Singh begins her argument by locating orientalist elements along with anti-colonial ones in Jawaharlal Nehru (*The Discovery of India* [1945]). Though the Buddhist motifs did fascinate Nehru yet the image of the Indian national identity that his vision vouchsafed could not be deconstructive in retrospect and reconstructive in prospect. Contradictions between unity and diversity, region and country, native and national language, came to embed it. For all its transcendent claim, optimism of will or pessimism of intellect was in store for it. The first is epitomised in the Indo-Anglian realist novel. Irrespective of individual variations, it's advocates have, in relatively seamless narratives, woven together or elided "the material disparities and discursive instabilities of a nation-in-formation" (161).

In this regard, Ms Singh ardently advocates the post-colonial novel-writing by Rushdie that mercilessly interrogates the Nehruvian presumption. With more fire than fineness, he, through "textual fragments of metaphoric, non-chronological time" (170-71), has given a total lie to the very idea of a nation-in-formation. It is as if for Rushdie the destiny of the Indian people is commensurate with the new world order actually sliding into disorder. For Ms Singh its retrospective version is to be found in Dharamvir Bharati (*Andha Yug* [1955]) seeking to scale down the epic war to an endgame, unlikely to hold any hope for the future. In this play of the absurd, she reads Brechtian elements which are so in technique only. The complex seeing, that metaphorically speaking may like flowing water get the better of porphyry and granite, is not its forte. All the same, this complex seeing is not alien to Indian writers right from Tagore and Tara Shanker in Bengali, Prem Chand and Mukti Bodh in Hindi, Sant Singh Sekhon and Mohan Singh in Punjabi and Rajinder Singh Bedi and Faiz Ahmad Faiz in Urdu. Ms. Singh's engagement with them would have enhanced the scope of her book. At the same time it might have drawn greater appeal at least from the reading public in India. (TEJWANT SINGH GILL, G.N.D.U., AMRITSAR)

*RENATA R. MAUTNER WASSERMAN. *Exotic Nations: Literature and Cultural Identity in the United States and Brazil, 1830-1930*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1994. 288 + x pp. US\$ 42.50, cloth; US\$ 17.95, paper.

Recent studies of the romantic novel in the Americas have rejuvenated critical discourse on the subject by focusing on the role of post-independence literature in the formation of national identities. This trend has brought American

romanticism centrally within the scope of post-colonial studies. *Exotic Nations* is one of a few fundamental books in this area. It offers a well documented, analytical, and yet readable account of the process of cultural identity formation, leading from the New World encounter to the 19th-century romances of the U.S. and Brazil. Its original arguments and historical analyses, which dispel the myth of exoticism as a superficial byproduct of romanticism and shows its importance as a discourse of identity, apply to other national literatures of the Americas.

The book begins with a review of recent critical perspectives on literature and nationality (Benedict Anderson, Homi Bhabha, Doris Sommer), the distribution of cultural power (Michel Foucault, Frederic Jameson), the interconnectedness of literature and cultural processes of the First and Third worlds (Edward Said, Robert Weisbuch), and the inscription of a discourse of otherness (Claude Lévy-Strauss, Michel de Certeau). The *exotic* is defined as a complementary other, constructed and absorbed by European discourse as part of its claim to cultural universality, and then re-appropriated by post-independence American subjects seeking self-definition, recognition and cultural parity. The second chapter traces the images of the New World in travel chronicles by Spanish, English, French, and Portuguese writers. The genre of captive narratives is mentioned but not considered at length. Yet, a sense is conveyed of the veritable repertoire of New World images assembled by the 18th century in Europe, often deriving from propaganda to attract settlers or repel competitors, but always impacting European thought as American otherness became "naturalized" within the metropolitan debates on society, history, human nature, and morals. Salient images included those of the archaic plainness and purity of a state of nature akin to the European past but now lost to (corrupt) modern civilization, and, side by side, the negative view of rudimentary life, of American "immaturity" and lack of history. Europe's preoccupation with the origins of society (basic to the debates on morality and law which a century later would give rise to anthropology) found a concrete field of observation, and a laboratory, in America. Strangeness and difference were reduced to exotic familiarity as the early raw images of the New World became processed and absorbed into evolving social and moral discourses.

The next three chapters are respectively devoted to Rousseau, Saint-Pierre's *Paul et Virginie*, and Chateaubriand's *Atala* — works which had a vast influence in the Americas. Rousseau's social thought is interpreted as proposing only a symbolic, temporary return, for undoing historical mistakes, so that the new society could ultimately overcome both extremes, primitivism and decadence, which touch in the theme of incest, at the boundary between nature and culture. Saint-Pierre is seen as bringing the exotic to the foreground, only to reabsorb it

into the familiar, while Chateaubriand attempts to recreate the European past in America and reestablish Christian morality as the "natural" result of original society's child-like experimentation with passion and love. Wasserman analyzes the characteristic plots of incest and marriage (particularly interracial or from "extreme exogamy") as limit fictional situations designed to test European attitudes towards self and morality.

The following three chapters (6-8) establish a transatlantic symmetry, as they respectively deal with American authors: James Fenimore Cooper (*The Last of the Mohicans*, *The Pioneers*, *The Deerslayer*), José de Alencar (*O Guarani*, *Iracema*, *Ubirajara*), and Mário de Andrade (*Macunaíma*). The themes of history, marriage, and the boundaries between nature and culture, developed within the European discourse of the exotic, are reconfigured within the American discourse of nationality, as a way of contesting cultural power by a formerly marginal U.S. literature and its still marginal Brazilian counterpart. The book ends with a discussion of "exoticism as strategy," in which more contemporary literary responses to the foundational American exotic are considered. Wasserman rightly points out that "literatures of cultural or national identity are born of the confrontation between cultural entities of unequal power" (259). As the relations of power among Europe, the United States, and Latin America changed in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, so did the conditions that produced the characteristic elements of the literatures of exoticism and independence. "In Brazil and Latin America such elements tended to persist; in the United States they became residual in mainstream literature and more characteristic of regional or 'minority' writing" (244).

Exotic Nations re-conceptualizes various historical aspects of the period and its nation building process. Traditional approaches to post-independence literature have emphasized the *rupture* with respect to colonial forms and early New World themes. In contrast, Wasserman suggests that New World images continue to inform the American 19th century, no longer directly but in "processed" form, through the influence of Rousseau and his contemporaries. Much like American raw materials came back from Europe as a few finished products, those primary images, after being assimilated and distilled, returned already as moral discourse — in what one might call "the molasses triangle theory" of cultural reconversion. European thought now exerting a direct influence had itself been transformed by three centuries of assimilating American realities. In the interest of establishing this seldom recognized reciprocity, Wasserman somewhat overstates the case for the New World's influence on European thought and society, an influence more extensive than profound, since Europe absorbed without fundamentally changing its own structure (or ethos)

which, in turn, it imposed upon (and transformed) that of indigenous America. It is doubtful, for example, that Locke's concept of *tabula rasa*, as Wasserman suggests, was inspired by the perceived American "emptiness" (original absence of religion, history, and civilization); more likely, the latter was simply a handy example, a perception that tended to support Locke's argument (much like the falling apple illustrated Newton's gravity, but did not *inspire* it, as myth would have it). On the other hand, Wasserman corrects the modern prejudice which dismisses the early American novel as merely imitating European models and failing to realize an autochthonous form. She points instead at a dialectics of opposition and imitation, where reconversion of European forms constitutes a strategy which involves a demand for recognition, parity, and cultural continuity, in response to the colonialist perception of America's immaturity and lack of history. "In this appeal to an older unity, the American search for a separate identity proceeds by counteracting the sense of difference, of radical discontinuity in the European view of the discovery, conquest, and settlement of the Americas" (26-27). Here too, the author appears to overstate the case in positing a European perception of the New World's "radical discontinuity." The frequent comparisons found in colonial chronicles between the Amerindians and the ancient Greeks and Romans were part of a (religiously motivated) European attempt to unify history and reconcile geography with biblical continuity. Wasserman suggests that those comparisons "are echoed in later attempts to provide an American past for the new American nations by assimilating Indians to the ancients and finding in the Americas an earlier, correctable model of European history" (55). Overstatements aside, the author is ultimately right on both counts, and her analysis remains a valuable reformulation of previous assessments of post-independence literature.

The book's central reformulation may be found, however, in its definition of the *exotic* as a mediating entity between (European) self and other; it is not the complete other, but the acceptable, complementary, renewing other, which excludes the ethical extremes of cannibalism and incest. Applied to Latin America, this concept of the exotic constitutes an important, fresh alternative to notions of hybridity, *mestizaje*, and syncretism which have traditionally informed the discourse of identity. By the same token, it is limited to *foreign* cultural relations, since it inevitably skips over the inner national tensions which the other concepts bring forth. Thus, Wasserman's discussion of Cooper and Alencar centers on their patterns for adapting the European discourse of the exotic to the production of an American literature of nationality, in which identity is posited as a harmonious combination of heterogeneous elements. Her discussion of Andrade's *Macunaíma* centers on a more modern issue: the

problematic relation between national identity and foreign influence. Yet, in portraying the re-appropriation of the exotic as a quasi subversive strategy, Wasserman reevaluates a post-independence American literature which other authors criticize as derivative, as a product of a still colonized mind set, or, at best, an ambivalent affirmation of American identity as neo-European. (ERIK CAMAYD-FREIXAS, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY)

*MARTIN BIDNEY. *Patterns of Epiphany: From Wordsworth to Tolstoy, Pater, and Barrett Browning*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1997. 256 pp. US\$ 34.95, cloth.

Martin Bidney announces his intention to use neo-Bachelardian phenomenology in his critical assessment of the epiphanic styles of selected nineteenth century writers. He defines literary epiphanies as "moments of imaginative or poetic intensity" (1) in a work and later describes them as expansive and mysterious and composed of the four elements of the ancient and medieval worlds: earth, air, fire, and water. Indicating his difference from other phenomenological critics, Bidney suggests a regrouping of the writers he studies as informed by the phenomenology of Gaston Bachelard. He presents details of images in the epiphanic moments and patterns in works of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Arnold, Tennyson, Pater, Carlyle, Tolstoy, and Barrett Browning, and shows how his criticism agrees with or departs from that of others. The critical methodology selects writers who "privilege elements, motions, and shapes" (14) often in a vision or dream that becomes the paradigmatic epiphany of the work, a section that is most "complete, intense, and fully elaborated" (14). Variations in turn are composed of the same elements as the paradigm and repeat or develop it.

The "spots of time" in Wordsworth's poetry are designated by Bidney as epiphanies. He chooses Wordsworth's poem "The Pilgrim's Dream" as the paradigmatic epiphanic lyric in which the glow-worm, sphere and motion are the major components. Sections from "The Prelude" are given as variants of the apocalyptic paradigm, as well as sections from "The Ruined Cottage." Bidney argues that finding the "epiphanic center" of Wordsworth's poetry provides us with a Wordsworth stronger and more assertive than has been perceived, for example, by Geoffrey Hartman, who places him at the "border" where he can "offer repeated intimations of glory" rather than, as Bidney suggests, "blaze" forth with elemental apocalypse (42).

Bidney suggests that like the work of Arnold, who appears in the next chapter, the poetic practice of Coleridge is at odds with his criticism. Coleridge

as critic is an organicist. In his *Biographia Literaria*, he writes that imagination unifies the work of art. In his poetry, that unifying principle doesn't always appear. The epiphanies in the poetry, Bidney writes, are "disjunct, nervous tremblings, fevered flushing or flashings" (44). Bidney presents the poem "Melancholy: A Fragment" with its paradigmatic epiphanic pattern of intermittent yet repeated motion, generating poems that continue to develop the epiphanic moment. "The Eolian Harp" has "quivering epiphanic motions" (47) and the arrangement of the effects of sound and light in the poems "This Lime-Tree Bower My Prison" and "Frost at Midnight," unlike the paradigm poem, are organized around a central epiphany of motion. "The Nightingale" also has a unity of motion, sound, and light, and the opposing epiphanic elements in "Kubla Khan" (life-death, fountain-cave, etc.) cause instability. An epiphanic pattern appears in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner," in which there is a play of opposites in the elements water and fire, air and earth as well as frenzied motion. The epiphanic structure of "Christabel" shows darkness and hints at doom. Dark forces combine with the elements and "shuddering" motions to produce a poem in which excessive love is rejected. "Dejection: An Ode" shows the rejection of excessive love as well, and in "To William Wordsworth" the epiphanic bubbles are described by Bidney as "glittering, rounded shapes of the poet's transcendence" (55). Coleridge the critic contradicts Coleridge the poet. The critic's vision of harmony as a requirement of the literary work is not borne out in the poet's departure from harmony in epiphanic passages.

Like Coleridge, Matthew Arnold contradicts his poetry in his criticism. Bidney writes that the contradiction can best be described as the difference between two forms of imagining. Arnold as critic idealizes the past; Arnold as poet rejects the ideals of the past in a present fraught with conflict. After reviewing criticism of Arnold, Bidney offers his perception that his ambivalence in the poetry undermines the duality of good and bad. Water and fire mix in the poetry, and this suggests his ambivalence. The poem "A Dream" is selected by Bidney as the epiphanic paradigm poem. The epiphanic water and fire in this poem predict a duplicity developed in the poems "The Future" and "Palladium." The verse drama *Sobrab and Russtum* develops epiphanic themes present in the shorter poems, and "Empedocles on Etna" depicts the merging of the elements fire and water as Empedocles rushes into the volcanic fire, a fiery sea that engulfs him.

Bidney establishes a linkage between Tennyson and Pater in that both use flowering fire to establish their epiphanies of elemental death and illumination. Tennyson's epiphanies begin with death and culminate after a rite of passage in a new, higher state of being. His paradigmatic poem is "The Vision of Sin,"

which in addition to fire-flowers includes the epiphanic dawn-rose and wheel. The companion poem "The Palace of Art" is selected by Bidney as almost as paradigmatic. "In Memoriam" contains the most expansive epiphanies with wheels and fiery dawn-roses. (Tennyson's use of the image of the rose in "Paradiso Memoriam" is reminiscent of Dante's use of the image of the rose in "Paradiso" in *The Divine Comedy*). The poems "Rosalind" and "Tithonus" carry on the epiphanies as well as do "The Lady of Shalott," "Mariana," "Mariana in the South, Oenone," "The Death of Oenone," and "Demeter and Persephone." Bidney concludes this chapter with descriptions of the excellent epiphanies in the Arthurian romance *Idylls of the King*.

Like Tennyson, Walter Pater's epiphanic image is the fire-flower (red-yellow in Pater), but he adds the image of the dying white bird, a sign of hope. Unlike Tennyson's fire-flowers that ascend upward to the heavens, Pater's fire-flowers perish downward to the earth. After reacting to earlier critics, Bidney explains how Coleridge is Pater's mentor, particularly with the dying white bird (albatross). Pater's tale "The Child in the House" is chosen by Bidney as the epiphanic paradigm work. The stories "Apollo in Picardy" and "Sebastian van Storck" and the novels *Marius the Epicurean* and the unfinished *Gaston de Latour* develop the pattern of images.

The final chapters of the book deal with views of history in literary works by Carlyle, Tolstoi, and Barrett Browning. Carlyle's recurrent epiphanic image is the sphere. The works Bidney includes are *On Heroes, Hero Worship*, and the *Hero in History* and *Sartor Resartus*. The man-god Odin becomes a fire epiphany and the key to Carlyle's poetic prose on history. Sartor presents epiphanies of "Fiery Becoming," and Bidney points out that in Sartor the dominant metaphor of clothes contradicts the meaning and effect of the epiphanic fires. The book lacks a single intention, and like Heroes its "medium" or form contradicts its message or meaning.

Tolstoi's *War and Peace* is a novel searching for historical meaning. Tolstoi presents his theory of history, and the intense epiphanic moments of the five characters or "seekers" provide other, individual meanings. The novel shows the intersection of their lives with the larger effects of history, and Bidney writes that Tolstoi's vision of history is also epiphanic. He argues that the novel has a center in the link between the characters' own lives and the narrator-persona's epiphany of history. The paradigm is the scene in which Pierre Bezukhov dreams of the peasant Platon Karatayev as his geography teacher, carrying a globe. Platon explains to Pierre how individual lives on the surface of the globe rise and sink, and from the lesson, Pierre understands the meaning of his teacher's life and of his own. In the novel appear the element water, motion, and shapes associated

with the major male characters. Tolstoi's view of history is that of movements eastward and westward of great masses of men, who slay their fellow men in each direction. In another passage from the novel, he uses the metaphor "the sea of history" in which men are driven not by gales but by a seething in the depths. Ultimately, Tolstoi writes that only God can determine the movements of human history; God moves individuals as well as history.

Elizabeth Barrett Brownings's epiphanic patterns occur in her verse narration *Aurora Leigh*, and Bidney compares them with Wordsworth's in "The Prelude" or Pater's in *Marius*. Barrett Browning's apocalyptic theme in the narrative recalls the apocalyptic scene in Wordsworth's "A Pilgrim's Dream." Her central epiphanic device is the transformation of stone to fire, aided by crystal. Bidney claims that although the poet does not achieve the stature of Tolstoi, *Aurora Leigh* is one of the best epic poems of the modern age. He concludes his book with this work because of its apocalyptic nature.

Bidney's book ends with "Fifteen Theses" that justify and explain the Bachelardian phenomenological critical method he uses to identify and explicate epiphanic moments and patterns in literature. He shows excellent understanding of phenomenology and uses it judiciously as a critical method. His explanation of the epiphanic content of each work is illuminated by the appropriate quotations he selects. I believe the book to be an important contribution to phenomenological criticism because of its originality and erudition. One can wish that such criticism would be applied to the works of other major writers. (ROSEMARIE A. BATTAGLIA, MOREHEAD STATE UNIVERSITY)

*MICHAEL UGARTE. *Madrid 1900: The Capital as Cradle of Literature and Culture*. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press 1996. 188 pp. US \$35, cloth.

Perhaps because we are approaching our own *fin de siècle*, there is a renewed interest in focusing on cultural transitions. This work shows how Madrid was represented in prose at the end of the nineteenth century.

In Chapter 1, "Reading Madrid's History," Ugarte reminds us that Madrid developed into an urban center in the 18th century, and not until the end of the 19th century did it become the place for Spanish intellectuals to publish. It became the capital of Spain because Phillip II moved the court from Toledo to the *villa* of Madrid in 1561 to avoid political conflict. Thus the capital began as a hamlet on the Manzanares, considered a second-rate city situated on a third-rate river, a town in search of water, cleanliness and social elegance. Madrid, unlike

Barcelona, did not become a city with a full-fledged industry until the 19th century. That it was the center of an impenetrable and time-consuming bureaucracy supplied good drama and jokes for Lope de Vega and other Siglo de Oro writers of *comedia*.

If Madrid is an "artificial" capital, the distinction of the so-called generation of '98, is also an artificial one, according to Ugarte. The name was given to a group of writers who raised a series of aesthetic, historical, political, religious, and ethical questions facing Spain at the turn of the century, and who were aware of its cultural lag behind Europe. It became an accepted but arbitrary distinction for a group of men "who could not be more dissimilar" (50). The year 1898 was a turning point. In 1898, Spain was defeated in the Spanish-American War, which left her with few colonial markets at a time when agricultural production took a downturn, forcing the migration of poor peasants to the city.

The essays of Mariano José de Larra and Ramón Mesonero Romanos on social customs were meant to lead to social transformation. These authors were intent on making city life better. They continued to write about the wastefulness of Madrid bureaucracy, and the sloth of its civil servants, material previously mined by earlier dramatists. But Ugarte suggests that writing about the problems was meant as a concrete antidote to the social malady and the creation of an urban consciousness.

Because of the capital's high mortality rate, in 1898 Madrid was the site for the Ninth Annual Congress on Hygiene and Demography. For this, Ugarte calls Madrid the city that discovered sociology. Pio Barojas applied scientific principles to the study of society. For Baroja the city was a laboratory, a breeding ground of crime, poverty, disease, deviance, and pathology. These concerns are reflected in Baroja's novels, who understood the negative aspects of the city as part of an "organic" process. It is through Baroja that Ugarte bridges the gap between the urban story teller and the urban sociologist. *El árbol de la ciencia* (1917) continues Baroja's advancement of scientific models for human understanding.

Novels not only reflect consciousness but create it. "As cities become the focus of novels they serve as models of what should and should not exist in the social and political structure" (10). While the woman's point of view was evident in novels such as Galdós' *Fortunata y Jacinta*, women did not write about the city with the same frequency or in the same voice as their male counterparts. Emilia Pardo Bazan is enshrined in the canon for her Spanish rural novels. Her short stories set in Madrid, on the other hand, dealt openly with urban problems such as poverty and class divisions. By this time Madrid had experienced rapid growth and was rimmed with pockets of poverty.

Chapter 3 is devoted to "the neglected" Carmen de Burgos Seguí, a Madrid feminist, a writer of domestic urban space and the open city street. Carmen de Burgos (1867-1932) was the first in a long line of Spanish urban women to earn a living by working for newspapers and by writing popular fiction. She was known for her advocacy of divorce laws and as the lover of Ramón Gómez de la Serna. Unhappy in her marriage, ostracized by family and friends, she eventually became a prominent (but not rich) Madrid journalist and fiction writer. *Larampa* (1917), with its themes of loneliness and isolation deals with the condition of women in the city, and drew its subject matter from the same social, political and economic reality that had confronted the writer. Burgos' female characters experience the city as an urban monster. With their fates in the hands of lascivious men, and their activities restricted, the women become victims of the city.

Ramón Gómez de la Cerna wrote non-fictional portrayals of the seamier sides of Madrid and of the Bohemian life on the street which became both his trademark and aspiration. Ugarte calls him a canonical writer without a generation. *El Rastro* (1915) is a depiction of Madrid's famous flea market. The fragmentary portraits are depictions of individual lives. Ramón offers no judgments; he simply presents unflattering portrayals of his urban neighbors.

In Chapter 5, "Madrid, Capital of Bohemia: Ramón María del Valle-Inclán," Valle is presented as a master at exploiting the richness of his native culture within an urban setting. *La vie Bohème*, with its refusal to live within the boundaries, became a sub-culture. In Madrid Bohemianism and anarchism lived side-by-side, and Valle-Inclán took on his urban persona there, becoming a legend among Madrid literati. A caricature of himself, he actively contributed to the conversion of his own life into a commodity (139). But he was also the modernist connection to Latin America, and his intimate friend Alejandro Sawa lived the poetic Bohemian ideal. While Galdós strove to depict urban historical reality and Baroja studied the city scientifically, Valle Inclán's 1920's urban *espeperitos* (satirical and grotesque pieces) should not be read as sociological studies, but rather as revealing his fascination with crime and the city. They are depictions of deviance, the unseemly, and the eccentric.

The last chapter, "Madrid's Grand Country Bumpkin," is devoted to José Martínez Ruiz's transformation to Azorín through his biographical novels. As the most cohesive force of the Generation of '98, he was linked to both anarchist social reform and the aesthetics of Madrid's Bohemia and the ongoing discussion for aesthetic and spiritual rejuvenation of Spain's soul.

At the outset of his study, Ugarte voices the "Hispanist's complaint," that is, the frustration of writers whose work is read only among a small group of

specialists. This book succeeds in presenting the work of *madriñeño* canonical and vanguardist writers through their relationships to the city. The inclusion of a successful female member is laudable. This being said, the work remains limited to the study of prose produced during a few decades in a city still trying out its identity as a European capital. (ROSEANNA MUELLER, COLUMBIA COLLEGE CHICAGO)

*CLARA ORBAN. *The Culture of Fragments: Words and Images in Futurism and Surrealism*. Studies in Comparative Literature, 11. Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1997. 202 pp + 18 illustrations. DFL 165 / US\$ 34, paper.

Firmly rooted in the twentieth century, and almost exclusively in Futurism and Surrealism, the aim of Orban's study is to discover in what ways early twentieth century avant-garde works use and combine words and images to create meaning. Although much space is devoted to retracing the history of both movements, there are some interesting insights into similarities and differences between the poets and painters she selects: Marinetti and Breton, Boccioni and Magritte.

Her hypothesis is that all four exploit fragmentation. Using Marinetti's *Zang Tumb Tumb* she explores its "literalised iconicity," used to stimulate dynamism. She argues that its highly iconic impact makes us perceive it as both object (as in art) and text, and that these verbally composed icons no longer provide any trace of the referent in the extra-linguistic Saussurean sense (which many philosophers of language such as Strawson, Searle and Donnellan now discredit anyway, when it comes to mimetic arts or discourse). Rather, these icons themselves take on the status of referent. For Orban, such juxtaposed icons-cum-referents recall the technique of collage—as do all Marinetti's *parole in libertà*, and represent "discourse fragments," words exploding as images. Like Willard Bohn, whose *The Aesthetics of Visual Poetry* (1988) she quotes, she sees modern visual poetry's aim as being "to abolish the dual perspective introduced by the written word" (Bohn:1988, 2). For not only is each letter a unit in a verbal chain, it belongs to a visual chain too. Deciphering the linguistic message necessarily entails retracing the visual message line by line (Orban 50). Language becomes object in Marinetti's poetry, and she sees it as poetry which "perfectly depicts simultaneity, as an instance in space and time" (51). She goes on to remind us how Marinetti altered language by distorting syntax, privileging iconic forms and heightening the visual and acoustic impact. Although one cannot help feeling that Apollinaire (to whom she often refers) privileged iconic forms to a somewhat greater degree, and in a more sustained and sophisticated way, this

book only claims, after all, to deal with those most associated with Futurism and Surrealism.

A study of Boccioni's words and images on the fragmented canvas follow the chapter on Marinetti. Orban sees Boccioni's "collages", juxtaposing word and image, as producing fragmentation too, this time by introducing new discourses, other voices and different contexts into his paintings, and thereby disrupting the viewing process. In fact Boccioni deliberately uses words to contradict images and so enrich meaning. Moving onto Surrealism and Breton's *Clair de terre*, Orban demonstrates how visual and verbal images are refracted, as though seen through a prism, thus disrupting facile interpretation of words and images. She reminds us how the Surrealists modified poetic images by concentrating on extended metaphors, juxtaposition and distorted signifier/signified relationships.

In her final chapter, Orban, using many of Magritte's most often cited 1926-33 examples (*Le Miroir vivant*, *La trahison des images* [*Ceci n'est pas une pipe*], *Les Deux mystères*, and *La Condition humaine* in particular), recalls how he explored the relationship between words and images: by juxtaposing verbal signifiers to contradict imaged signifieds. This enables Orban to remind the reader of her main theme of fragmentation and point out how Magritte thus attracts attention to the fissure between words and images as well as their conflicting contexts.

The author's introduction and preliminary chapter "Words and Images" suggest a methodology which will harness what she sees as the pertinent apparatus for her study, namely structuralism and semiotics, the latter being particularly suited to the paintings and visual dimension of the texts she intends to explore. She presents a brief history of the dialogue between art and literature, more especially between words and images, and reviews different theorists' comparisons of both domains. Plato's *Cratylus*, Leonardo da Vinci's *paragone*, Lessing's *Laocoön* and such modern theorists as W.J.T. Mitchell, notably his *Iconology: Image, Text, Ideology* (1986) are all presented briefly. There is also passing reference to Ernst Gombrich's work, as one would expect.

Orban's own approach to textual and pictorial analysis seems to a large extent based on Saussure's well-tried distinction between signifier and signified and, less significantly, on Jakobson's well-known model of communication. Predictably, she also refers, albeit cursorily, to Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and, in a little more detail, to Charles Sanders Peirce. The latter's all-encompassing semiotic system would seem particularly suited to such a study as this; but in fact the author barely applies it later on. Admittedly it is complex, and what interests her most is the iconic level. Nevertheless, it would have been interesting to see Peirce applied consistently in such a study as this. Orban's

method seems rather to derive from what interests her in each text and painting, so that much of the theory in the theoretical preamble remains pure theory. Nevertheless, it is in her discussion of these chosen texts and paintings that she is at her best, and we enjoy her sensitive readings and insights into hybrid forms of word and image as well as into *parole in libertà*, collage and calligrammes. Although the differences between these terms warrant close inspection, her conclusion tends to view them as part and parcel of the same phenomenon since "all project fragmentation onto the logical sequencing implicit in syntax or painterly form" (166). (ANNA SAINT-LEGER-LUCAS, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY)

*GERARD ACHING. *The Politics of Spanish American Modernismo by Exquisite Design*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. 183 pp. US\$ 54.95, cloth.

In *The Politics of Spanish American Modernismo by Exquisite Design*, Gerard Aching conducts a poststructuralist study which reevaluates the role of the Spanish American *modernistas* in two crucial areas: (i) the creation of a literary, political and cultural consciousness; and (ii) the colonial independence from Spain, and its simultaneous and deliberate desire for assimilation with Europe. The book consists of six chapters: 1. A Reevaluation of the *modernistas'* Detachment. 2. The *reino interior*. 3. Poetry and the Performance of Cultural Meaning: Dario's "Salutación del optimista" (with text provided in the Appendix). 4. Sculpting Spanish America: Rodó's *Ariel*. 5. Founding a Transnational Cultural Literacy: The *modernista* Literary Reviews. 6. The "Excesses" of Spanish American *modernismo*.

As is clearly illustrated by the title to Chapter One, Aching is eager to settle, or rather debunk, the notion that many critics have of the *modernista* (specifically the Spanish American male poet and essayist) as an individual not interested in mundane activities, who would much rather daydream in an ivory tower pondering why "la princesa está triste" [the princess is unhappy]. Aching confronts this issue forthrightly and asserts that the so-called *modernista* detachment should be viewed as a purposeful one in which the poet exercises an innate right to choose to become an outsider, while at the same time managing to preach a political and social credo to his counterparts. For this reason, Aching contends, the reader may view this particular escapist detachment in the *modernista* poet as an "assertive engagement, that is to say, as the will to embellish from a precise cultural and discursive location '*arriba y afuera*'" [above and outside]? (p. 3).

Aching's concept of the *modernistas* presents scholars of *modernismo* and literary critics in general with a very innovative and fresh outlook on the *modernistas* literary production. This viewpoint has the real merit of allowing the *modernistas'* oeuvres to be glimpsed as aesthetic pursuits and, at the same time, as emblematic engagements that bespeak the politics of Spanish America as it confronted a turn-of-the-century question of identity. Although derived from a European cultural heritage, Spanish American identity circa 1900 is typified, in Aching's context, by a turning away from the colonial past. Thus, because of this purposeful detached engagement we find ourselves in a historicizing and contextualizing writing where the *modernistas'* quest for subjectivity is reflected in their declaration of an emphatic break with society's conventions. This divorce is, however, a concurrent and fierce continuation of postcolonial allegiances to Europe especially, a gesture that creates significant cultural distance with, and suggests intellectual superiority over, the colossal and pragmatic United States.

The Politics of Spanish American Modernismo carefully examines the intricate relationship established by the Spanish American *modernista* authors with Spain and Europe. In exploring the tenets of postcolonial theoretical thought, Aching asks himself and his readers the following question: "if resistance to colonizers forms one of the principal characteristics of a postcolonial subjectivity, what can be said about the *modernistas'* stated appreciation for Europe's metropolitan cultures and art?" (154). Indeed, in their wish to identify with the Old Continent, the *modernistas* attempted to create a transnational identity and they did this by utilizing in their writings a very elegant form of Spanish. In itself, this tendency does not fit with postcolonial theories which maintain that the colonized subvert and, at times, reject the language of the colonizer. Indeed, this very proper usage of Spanish on the part of the *modernistas* betrays a desire for inclusion in European high culture and announced to the literary world that Spanish American poets, in search of a Spanish American literary identity, possessed a European cultural legacy to carry on in the New World. Concurrently, in a posture that mimics our own postmodern condition, Spanish American poets subverted European dominance and appropriated the turn-of-the-century language of the colonizer precisely because they wished to demonstrate to their counterparts in Europe that they could make *castellano* even more poetic. Consequently, and following Aching's thoughts, one could argue that the *modernistas'* very assertion of independence from the Old Continent presupposes an obvious dependence and a quest for fulfillment of Europe's cultural promise via the *modernista* writings (as in the case of José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel*). Thus, by affecting a desire for political and cultural

independence from Spain, the roots of European high culture, the *modernistas* of the turn-of-the century were utterly engaged in the making of a Spanish American cultural identity which could not be separated from the Old World, as their fierce debate on *la raza* demonstrated.

When approaching the book's title one finds a very conspicuous term, *Exquisite Design*. Coined by Achting to reveal the supposedly contradictory relationship that permeates the *modernistas'* complete aesthetic aspirations when tackling their work, *Exquisite Design* demonstrates how these authors felt a more committed and nationalistic purpose when writing fiction. The author tells us that *Exquisite Design* "signals the complementarity of the movement's aesthetics and cultural politics" (18). The term, as employed by Achting, denotes not only an encompassing of dual and seemingly contradictory agendas, but *Exquisite Design* also entails the highly elitist bent of the *modernista* movement. The authors write for a specific audience who will no doubt be as educated as the poets and essayists themselves and will, in turn, respond to the authors' needs and tribulations. In Chapter four we can appreciate how Rodó's *Ariel* becomes institutionalized, or rather larger-than-life, by the author's intent purposefulness in putting himself and his readers/critics in an interminable culturally elitist exchange in order to build a Spanish American aesthetic. The same can be said of Chapter five in which we can clearly see how the *modernista* poet's subjectivity turns him into a journalist who writes elitist manifestos in order to conceptualize the movement itself ("Founding a Transnational Cultural Literacy," as Achting titles the chapter). Therefore, the movement's tenets, its cultural and political aspirations (or lack thereof), appear indelibly imprinted in a newspaper column that will be appealing only to other *modernistas* or upper-class readers. As opposed to our own turn-of-the-century infatuation with rendering homage to economic prosperity, the *modernista* movement gave great value to high culture and a well-rounded classical education. It is perhaps this elitist discursive route of the *modernistas* that has provoked negative reaction among a particular constituency of readers (some of whom can be found at graduate schools in Spanish programs) who are turned off by the *modernistas'* seemingly political neutrality and lack of ideology, agendas that can easily be observed in much more politically charged Latin American texts. But Achting's felicitous term *Exquisite Design* allows contemporary critics of *modernismo* to catch a glimpse of how politically engaged these individuals were when declaring the absolute autonomy of their literary discourse. In wanting to forge a national or, rather, transnational identity, the literary reviews in which the *modernistas* presented their aesthetic views became the "writing space" of *modernista* detached, but nonetheless highly charged, subjectivity. It is for this very same

reason that Achting tells us that "the 'progressive' technologies that provided for the dissemination of *modernista* cultural agendas were the instruments and not the agents of engagement" (117).

The poetic figure that permeates Achting's text and remarkably encompasses the notion of *Exquisite Design* is that of Nicaraguan Rubén Darío, a poet who emblemized the entire *modernista* movement. Achting states that "although he may not be the first *modernista*, he is certainly the movement's most visible figure and, among his writings, his prologues and essays on aesthetics clearly reveal that he and other *modernistas* possessed elaborate ideas about their instrumental role in Spanish American societies and culture" (28). One of the most striking aspects of Darío's work is the possessiveness with which he confronts the process of literary creativity and his refusal to abide by any already established rule set by his forerunners. Darío's quest for subjectivity makes him state boldly that the context from which he writes is "mi literatura es *mía* en mí" [my literature is *mine* in me] (31), a quotation which Achting uses to underscore Darío's hermetic notion of the creative process (the trope of the *reino interior* in chapter two). This purposeful alienation on the part of Darío presents a binary contradiction in which the poet/monk's desire not to be part of society or not to be imitated by other poets betrays an innermost desire to be a role model for the *modernistas* and for the type of literature created by a movement which refuses to be called a "school." Likewise, in "Salutación del optimista" of chapter three, Darío makes his readers aware of a clear cultural context from which the poem and the poet himself make their presence known to the movement. Going back to an earlier term used by Achting, Darío fully participates in the making of poetic Spanish American poetry/history from "*arriba y afuera*" [above and outside] (3).

In the "Excesses of Modernismo," Achting concludes his examination and tells us that, in wanting to be original while at the same time preserving the tradition of their Spanish counterparts, the *modernistas* may appear to us "more Spanish than the Spanish" (p. 159), a gesture which contextualizes their quest for subjectivity within the realm of a Spanish American transnational identity. Thus, the *modernistas* accomplished their desire to participate in the historicizing of a twentieth-century definition of Spanish America by *Exquisite Design*. (PATRICIA VILCHES, UNIVERSITY OF EVANSVILLE)

"EDNA AIZENBERG. *Borges, el tejedor del Aleph y otros ensayos*. Madrid: Iberoamericana, 1997. 169 pp. US\$ 13.50, paper; PTS 1.675, paper.

The book is divided into three major sections, each one of them composed of several short essays and having as their main theme the presence of Judaic elements in Borges' literary works. The first part, "Itinerario judeoborgeano" is devoted to investigating the influence of Judaism in Borges' life: in other words, Aizenberg tries to find out how Borges became interested in the topic by retracing his personal history and identifying when and how he established contact with Jewish friends or read Jewish writers. Thus, in the first four chapters, Aizenberg retraces Borges' early years looking for the possible sources of his initial interest in Judaism. Although this is no doubt an interesting and unorthodox way of reconstructing Borges' biography, many of Aizenberg's observations contribute very little to understand his literary work and in some cases she even draws very unconvincing conclusions: in the opening chapter, "Bilingüismo y bilingüismo," for example, the critic unsuccessfully argues that the bilingual environment in which Borges grew up somehow predisposed him to appreciate other cultures, but especially Judaism. But it is also in this first chapter that Aizenberg explains her main theory about Borges' view of Judaism, one that she will go back to, time and again, throughout the book, sometimes employing it to produce valuable insights: "Borges ve el judaísmo como la antítesis del ultranacionalismo, la intolerancia religiosa y la xenofobia" (19). By far the best chapters in this first section and in the entire book are "Nazismo y judaísmo" and "La fiesta del monstruo," in which Aizenberg analyses what one could call Borges' anti-Fascist and anti-Peronist writings — a group of texts (his essays for *El Hogar* and *Sur*, and anti-Nazi short stories such as "Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius," "El milagro secreto," "Deutches Requiem," etc.) that he wrote during the 1930s, 40s and 50s, some of which have received little attention by the critics. Perhaps the exception is Emir Rodríguez Monegal who recognized the significance of these texts both in his biography of Borges and in "Borges and Politics," an article frequently quoted by Aizenberg. In the chapter on Nazism, Aizenberg discovers previously unknown facts about Borges' involvement in the struggle against anti-Semitism (for example, she mentions that "[Borges] aparece . . . como consejero y miembro del comité organizador del Primer Congreso contra el Racismo y el Antisemitismo celebrado en Buenos Aires el 6 de agosto de 1938" [38]), and her rereading of many texts from this period is effective in showing his political position with respect to Nazism. Her analysis of "La fiesta del monstruo," an often neglected text and also one of the few (if not the only

one) *openly* political fictional tale by Borges, succeeds in demonstrating the connection between the situation of the Jews living in Argentina during the Perón regime and Borges' own condition as an intellectual being punished for denouncing Fascist politics in his writings.

Aizenberg also presents in this chapter about Peronism an interpretation of Borges' well-known essay "El escritor argentino y la tradición." This essay's main theme is that Argentine writers should not limit themselves to work with local topics for the composition of their works but rightfully consider the entire Western tradition as their own and feel free to use it. In his search for the answer to the question of which tradition should the Argentine writer belong to, Borges rejects first the local tradition as having too narrow a scope, and then the Spanish one because Argentines do not feel particularly close to Spanish culture. A last option, which he also discards, would be that Argentines have no tradition, that they are "alone." Borges' solution is that Argentine writers, like Jewish or Irish artists, can use the entire Western tradition with freedom and create innovative works. The creation of unique works in the Jewish and Irish examples is not the result of having total freedom but of coming from marginal cultures subordinated to the Western one. Jewish and Irish writers and thinkers have always felt free to modify Western culture because it is not their main cultural tradition. According to Aizenberg, Borges attributed to the Jewish people "intellectual superiority" and non-nationalistic views which were the result of their marginal position with respect to the Western culture, and for her this explains why he never endorsed Zionism or the creation of the new state of Israel. For Borges, the Jewish people represented the opposite of nationalism (read Fascism and Peronism) and creating a Jewish state could have the damaging effect of awakening in the Jewish people those nationalistic feelings that Borges condemns in politics and literature.

But if Aizenberg's study contributes to the necessary task of recuperating the original historical context of Borges' major writings of the 40s and 50s, her reading also contains enormous problems, mostly the result of the critic's inability to develop a coherent theory about Borges' ideology. Aizenberg is trying to show that Borges' fantastic short stories are not "unreal" as, she says, most critics claim, but since she is limiting herself to an analysis of their content without considering alternative approaches (e.g. studying the stories' formal aspects or the multiple narrative strategies present in them), she can only talk about those stories in which Borges' historical situation is mentioned directly. In other words, her approach is unable to connect the ideology that we find in Borges' anti-Fascist writings with the rest of his work, especially the fantastic short stories that cannot be easily classified as "anti-Fascist." But a more serious

problem is the critic's inability to link Borges' political position during this period and his rejection of totalitarian regimes with the pro-dictatorship comments that he made during the *Proceso* years. Aizenberg has to explain this attitude as being a "malentendido" and a "faux pas" (157), thus failing to present a coherent view of the evolution of Borges' ideology. This constant attempt to justify Borges' "mistakes" (his rejection of the *gaucho judío* or his negative portrayal of a Jewish character [Lowenthal] in "Emma Zunz") is without doubt one of the weakest aspects of Aizenberg's study.

The second part of *Borges, el tejedor del Aleph* is composed of several articles dealing with Borges' use of Judaic themes and motifs as the origin of many of his aesthetic positions. Instead of the "historical" approach that Aizenberg employed in part one, this section takes the form of a close reading of Borges' texts. One of Aizenberg's main preoccupations is, to use postmodern terminology, the "death of the subject" as an aesthetic principle for Borges. Thus, in the first two chapters of this section, Aizenberg attempts to demonstrate that biblical and Kabbalistic sources become for Borges a model for his postindividualistic fictions. It should be noticed that many of these chapters are intended to be a contribution to the already large body of studies on Borges' use of the Kabbalah (the best known ones perhaps being Sosnowski's and Alazraki's books on the subject) and they tend to support rather than challenge traditional readings of Borges. However, often Aizenberg discovers new territory, exploring topics that have received little attention so far (such as the *gaucho judío* theme that I have already mentioned), but that would benefit in the future from more totalizing and daring readings than the ones Aizenberg is proposing here.

The third section of this study of Borges includes a chapter in which the critic puts arguments in favor of recognizing Borges' anti-Nazi short stories as part of the Holocaust literature, and two chapters trying to link Borges with recent trends in literary criticism. In the latter Aizenberg is only able to establish superficial connections between the theories of Bloom and Derrida and Borges' fiction. I do not mean to suggest that this path should not be followed by Borges' critics, but that it requires a more comprehensive inquiry that the one Aizenberg is offering in this study. The book ends with the most unfortunate and disappointing chapter in this collection, entitled "Borges, precursor postcolonial." For Aizenberg, the fact that "Borges" has been appropriated by post-colonial writers necessarily turns Borges into a postcolonial author himself. The fact is that — as Borges taught us in his essay "Kafka and His Precursors" —

these writers are turning him into their precursor. One can find kafkaesque elements in Robert Browning's work and read him as a "precursor" of Kafka, but just as Robert Browning's texts were not *really* kafkaesque, Borges was not postcolonial. (JOSÉ EDUARDO GONZÁLEZ, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN)

*ERIK CAMAYD-FREIXAS. *Realismo mágico y primitivismo*. Lanham: University Press of America, 1998. 349 pp. No price.

Para tener una idea de la magnitud de este estudio y de las dificultades del esfuerzo intelectual que representa, es necesario notar que su propósito esencial es combinar dos términos artísticos, el realismo mágico y el primitivismo, que tradicionalmente se han caracterizado por su ambigüedad, o mejor dicho, por la falta de precisión con la que los críticos los han definido. La primera dificultad que logra superar el autor de este libro consiste en definir ambos términos con una rigurosidad crítica que sólo puede ser el resultado de un estudio detallado de la historia de cada concepto. De por sí, la tarea de analizar la trayectoria histórica del primitivismo serviría para calificar este estudio como una contribución significativa, dada la importancia del tema en el arte y la literatura del siglo XX; si a ello añadimos la reconstrucción de la evolución y de las múltiples interpretaciones de uno de los conceptos centrales de la literatura latinoamericana contemporánea, entonces se entiende la amplitud de la contribución de *Realismo mágico y primitivismo* para la historia literaria latinoamericana. Pero este estudio es mucho más que una contribución a la historia de la literatura, el libro de Camayd-Freixas logra ante todo una definición nueva y original del realismo mágico desde el punto de vista etnológico al colocarlo dentro del contexto del primitivismo artístico.

La idea del realismo mágico como reflejo de un pensamiento primitivo ciertamente no es nueva y el autor nos da una breve historia de las diferentes versiones de esta interpretación de carácter etnológico en el apéndice al libro, pero faltaba, como señala Camayd-Freixas, "una teoría comprensiva y una lectura comparativa de las obras representativas" (320). El problema central de la definición del realismo mágico siempre ha sido la búsqueda de una explicación a la combinación de lo sobrenatural y lo real, lo lógico y lo ilógico (o "la desnaturalización de lo real y la naturalización de lo maravilloso" como lo ha llamado Irleamar Chiampí) de modo que lo primero aparezca en el texto con gran naturalidad, como un suceso cotidiano. En otras palabras, es un problema de verosimilitud. Este estudio resuelve ese problema al encontrar en la ideología primitiva la perspectiva central que le da coherencia a estos textos. La teoría de

Camayd-Freixas es simple pero ingeniosa: partiendo de la idea de que lo verosímil es aquello que es familiar, habitual para la sociedad, el crítico postula que la verosimilitud del realismo mágico tiene también su origen en convenciones, en este caso en ideas que habitualmente relacionamos con lo primitivo y que hemos recibido (o aprendido) a través de una infinidad de fuentes muy diversas.

Uno de los descubrimientos más profundos de la semiótica es el hecho que lo que llamamos "realidad" es en el fondo una mera *convención*. Es decir, la percepción e interpretación de la "realidad habitual", en una sociedad dada, no es más que un conjunto de proposiciones y de signos cuyo significado proviene de un tácito acuerdo social. Esa convención de lo cotidiano es, como el lenguaje, un código socialmente compartido, y de ahí el que los semiólogos la llamen "texto" y la postulen como fundamento de la verosimilitud de la obra de ficción. En la novela del realismo mágico el "texto" de la actitud natural de la sociedad ha sido sencillamente transcurado, al desplazarse el punto de vista hacia una ideología primitiva. De hecho, lo que sostiene la coherencia del texto mágico-realista es justamente la coherencia de ese otro "texto", de ese otro sistema de valores, propio de la convención primitiva, la que conocemos mediante estudios etnológicos, exploradores y misioneros. (58)

¿Cuáles son esas convenciones? ¿Cuáles son las características que sin darnos cuenta asociamos inmediatamente con lo primitivo y que constituye este mundo textual del realismo mágico? Es aquí donde la investigación cuidadosa de la historia del primitivismo que forma parte del comienzo del libro rinde frutos ya que le permite a Camayd-Freixas identificar una serie de convenciones que forman el "texto habitual" de lo primitivo. El crítico logra resumirlas en nueve categorías: la tradición como norma suprema, el concepto mítico del tiempo, la noción mística de la causalidad, la visión animista y vitalista, la unidad de lo natural y lo sobrenatural, la unidad de lo humano y lo telúrico, la fluidez ontológica, la lógica de lo concreto, el elemento lúdico y la tendencia a lo hiperbólico. Todas ellas nos son familiares, las hemos aprendido a asociar con una perspectiva arcaica de la realidad. Así como existían una serie de normas o convenciones a las que los escritores realistas del siglo XIX debían ceñirse para que sus obras fueran verosímiles, explica Camayd-Freixas, también los autores del realismo mágico siguen estas convenciones que los lectores asociamos con lo primitivo.

La investigación histórica y teórica constituye una tercera parte del libro, el resto del estudio está dedicado a leer los textos de autores que generalmente se asocian con el realismo mágico (Miguel Ángel Asturias, Juan Rulfo, Gabriel García Márquez y Alejo Carpentier) dentro del contexto del punto de vista arcaico explicado al comienzo. Pero estos capítulos están lejos de ser la mera

aplicación de una teoría — cada uno de ellos es en sí mismo una relectura innovadora con acercamientos variados al problema del primitivismo en cada autor. Un ejemplo es el capítulo sobre Asturias en el cual se combina una investigación de la escritura maya y la escritura surrealista que ilumina de manera inesperada la relación entre lo moderno y lo primitivo en los textos del escritor guatemalteco. Entre los varios temas que seguramente llamarán la atención están la teoría de la alegoría histórica, especialmente en Rulfo y García Márquez, y las conexiones entre el primitivismo en la pintura latinoamericana y los autores del realismo mágico (la pintura de Fernando Botero y la prosa de *Cien años de soledad*, las técnicas muralistas de Diego Rivera y *El reino de este mundo*).

El interés por el primitivismo renació en la década de los ochenta, especialmente a raíz de influyentes exposiciones artísticas y de nuevos estudios sobre la persistencia de este tema en la cultura y la literatura occidental. Pero análisis como *Gone Primitive* de Marianna Torgovnick, aunque trajeron nueva atención sobre el problema, solamente lo hicieron para resaltar cómo el discurso primitivista occidental enmascaraba prejuicios e inexactitudes sobre las llamadas culturas primitivas, es decir, que en occidente el primitivismo se utilizaba para crear una representación negativa del otro que permitía así construir una identidad occidental por oposición a una "inferior" y de ese modo asegurar su supremacía política y cultural. Sin embargo el proyecto de Camayd-Freixas nos recuerda — y en esto radica una de sus mayores virtudes — un aspecto que normalmente se olvida entre todos estos ataques postmodernos al primitivismo: el modo en que el primitivismo artístico, específicamente (pero no únicamente) el latinoamericano, en este siglo se ha apropiado este discurso (incluso aspectos originalmente negativos del primitivismo) a fin de lograr reinterpretarlo y utilizarlo de manera innovadora en la construcción de una identidad cultural latinoamericana.

Pero además de lograr una saludable restitución del carácter afirmativo del primitivismo artístico, *Realismo mágico y primitivismo* también sienta las bases para futuras críticas del mismo. Porque ¿qué hay, por ejemplo, de correcto en esas convenciones que como Camayd-Freixas ha señalado asociamos mecánicamente, casi instintivamente, con la perspectiva arcaica del mundo? En otras palabras, hasta qué punto esas características primitivas que hemos interiorizado a través de nuestra educación y por diferentes medios y que forman el texto habitual de lo primitivo, no son el resultado de interpretaciones erróneas de parte de occidente? Una historia relatada por Sally Price en *Primitive Art in Civilized Places* sobre un artista primitivo de Suriname nos confronta con un dilema parecido al del escritor "realista-mágico" cuyas creaciones dependen de las convenciones que conocen sus lectores para que sean verosímiles:

In the 1960s, a Saramaka man set up a stall next to the road leading to the Suriname airport, where he carved a variety of objects and offered them for sale to passing tourists. In response to his customers' repeated requests for the symbolic meaning of the pieces they were buying, the artist explained each time that his carvings were intended only to be decorative. Perceiving their dissatisfaction in one case after another, and sometimes being drawn into arguments with them on the subject, he finally gave up and adopted a different strategy. He purchased Muntslag's dictionary of Maroon motifs... even though he could not understand it because he had never learned to read. He then used its illustrations as models for the motifs in his carvings, and simply showed the book to his customers so they could look up the meaning of their purchases. (118)

El problema aquí tiene que ver con convenciones otra vez, en este caso con las convenciones que el público occidental espera del arte primitivo (esperan quizás que los adornos sean símbolos de la conexión con lo telúrico, de la fluidez ontológica o de alguna otra de las ideas que Camayd-Freixas ya ha clasificado). Es una situación inversa a la del autor de textos realista-mágicos, pues en este caso el artista no conoce esas convenciones, las cuales pertenecen a una visión occidental de su arte. Así, el problema central de los artistas primitivistas (como los practicantes del realismo mágico) que intentan usar el primitivismo no como instrumento para reproducir una supuesta superioridad occidental sino como una manera positiva de reivindicar el sujeto no-occidental, reside en saber hasta qué punto lo que se imita es la verdadera mente primitiva, la perspectiva arcaica, y no lo que occidente *imagina* son sus procesos de pensar. Porque, si Camayd-Freixas tiene razón (y pienso que la tiene) al señalar que la verosimilitud del realismo mágico depende de que los lectores aceptamos ciertas convenciones, ¿no se puede concluir de esto que aquello que no siga las convenciones de los primitivos que nuestra mente ya conoce, sería rechazado por inverosímil, por no ser suficientemente "primitivo" (aún cuando se tratara de una representación más exacta de la mentalidad arcaica, pero a la cual no estemos acostumbrados)? La imposibilidad de saber si existe una verdadera mimesis o si se está violentando o apropiando la visión primitiva, juzgándose a partir de estructuras de pensamiento occidentales, es lo que hace del primitivismo artístico un tema tan volátil y controversial.

El realismo mágico parece haber pasado de moda, quedando para siempre asociado con la generación del *boom*, sin embargo, es precisamente ahora cuando el tema merece nuestra atención crítica, ya que la distancia que facilita el análisis histórico, la emergencia de la generación del *postboom* y la aparición del postmodernismo, han creado las condiciones necesarias que permiten una apreciación crítica más completa y acertada de ese fenómeno artístico. Por un

lado, se podría alegar que la teoría de Camayd-Freixas sobre la importancia de las convenciones para la ficción "realista-mágica" es sin duda el resultado directo o indirecto de una nueva época postmoderna más consciente de la "realidad" como confección humana. Por otro lado, una de las preocupaciones constantes a través de este libro es la supuesta incompatibilidad entre el postmodernismo y el realismo mágico. El reto contemporáneo a los discursos totalizantes y a la existencia de "esencias" parecería ser así responsable de que el realismo mágico ya no ocupe la posición privilegiada que antes poseía. El crítico dedica varias páginas a explorar la actualidad que el discurso realista mágico tiene en estos tiempos y explica convincentemente cómo no es el descreimiento en visiones totalizantes ni el rechazo del esencialismo lo que ha reducido esa vigencia. Según Camayd-Freixas la actualidad del realismo mágico ha decaído porque el escepticismo del postmodernismo ha eliminado la posibilidad de la "fe" en una realidad maravillosa, como óptica de la lectura. Por lo mismo en las páginas finales de su estudio se expresa una nostalgia, un deseo de regreso a mitos y universalidades "necesarias" para la construcción de identidades. Pienso, sin embargo, que esos mitos — incluyendo el del "latinoamericanismo" — no sólo no volverán sino que pertenecen a una etapa histórica que el libro de Camayd-Freixas entre otros nos está ayudando a historizar y en el cual existía una relación entre el intelectual y la cultura que ahora está desapareciendo y con ella las búsquedas de una "expresión americana". (JOSÉ EDUARDO GONZÁLEZ, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN)

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Price, Sally. *Primitive Art in Civilized Places*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991.

*PETER V. ZIMA. *Moderne / Postmoderne. Gesellschaft, Philosophie, Literatur*. Tübingen, Basel: A. Francke, 1997. 428 pp. DM 80, cloth; DM 36, paper.

Nach der Publikation der Bände *Ideologie und Theorie* (1989), *Literarische Ästhetik* (1991), *Komparatistik* (1992) und *Die Dekonstruktion* (1994) liegt nun von Peter Zima ein neues umfangreiches Buch vor. In ihm werden die Theorien der Moderne, des Modernismus und der Postmoderne diskutiert, die historischen und theoretischen Zusammenhänge und Rahmenbedingungen. Wie in den vorangegangenen Arbeiten legt auch jetzt der Autor den Bedeutungsakzent nicht darauf, in die theoretische Debatte des gegenwärtigen Diskurses mit einer neuen Perspektive einzugreifen. Seine Darstellung der *Moderne / Postmoderne* ist eher retrospektiv orientiert, ein umfangreicher nach Problemkreisen gegliederter

Forschungsbericht, materialreich gestaltet, subtil entfaltet und wissenschaftskritisch differenziert erarbeitet. Die Diskussion des umfassenden theoretischen Diskurses zum Thema ist dem Autor wichtiger als ein eigener Theoriebeitrag. Die Bibliographie des Bandes veranschaulicht eindrucksvoll den Aufwand, der in die in den Theoriebereich einführenden, stilistisch geschickt dem Leser zugewandte Arbeit investiert wurde.

Der Verzicht auf den eigenen theoretischen Beitrag wird bereits im Vorwort signalisiert, indem zusammen mit der einleitenden Inhaltsübersicht keine neue theoretische Problemperspektive vorgestellt wird. Das Thema des Bandes, kurz gefaßt, ist die sogenannte "postmoderne Problematik", deren Beschreibung dem Autor mit einigen Einschränkungen dann allerdings auch ausgezeichnet gelingt.

Um die Diskussion theoretischer Positionen zum Thema sinnvoll und produktiv zu gestalten, hat Peter Zima den Forschungsgegenstand in sechs Problembereiche geteilt, in denen die folgenden Aspekte behandelt werden: Diskussion und Bestimmung zentraler Arbeitsbegriffe (Neuzeit, Moderne, Modernismus, Postmoderne, Posthistorie und nachindustrielle Gesellschaft); Entfaltung der soziologischen und philosophischen Kritik der Moderne und Postmoderne; Diskussion der "postmodernen Problematik" in der Literaturwissenschaft und schließlich neue Ansätze postmoderner Literatur der letzten drei Kapitel. Das letzte Kapitel stellt die sogenannte "dialogische Theorie" des Autors vor, die allerdings in der Perspektive des heute erreichten Reflexionsniveaus zum Thema, dazu einige Worte weiter unten, nicht als ein origineller Beitrag mißverstanden werden darf.

Zimas Verzicht auf einen neuen theoretischen Beitrag als Bezugsrahmen hat nun leider zur Folge, daß viele der von ihm behandelten Theorien auf eine Weise diskutiert werden, deren Form und Substanz bereits seit einiger Zeit schon überholt ist. Ihm fehlt sozusagen das methodologische Instrumentarium, mit dem die vorhandenen Materialien in der Perspektive eines bestimmten theoretischen Problems zu beschreiben gewesen wären, um mittels der auf diesem Wege erarbeiteten Einsichten neue Aspekte zum Thema zu entwickeln. Dazu wenigstens einige Beispiele.

In Kapitel V. ("Von der modernen zur postmodernen Literatur: Ambivalenz, Indifferenz und Ideologie") versucht der Verfasser den Wahrheitsbegriff der Aufklärung zu retten, der, wie es im folgenden Kapitel heißt, "weder einem indifferenten Pluralismus noch einem extremen Partikularismus" geopfert werden müsse (367), was die modernistischen und postmodernen Theorien zu verlangen scheinen. Zima schlägt vielmehr im Rahmen seiner "dialogischen Theorie" vor, "daß Wahrheit nicht monologisch-

universalistisch dekretiert werden, sondern eine dialogische Gestalt annehmen sollte, die sowohl Universelles (Verallgemeinerungsfähiges) als auch Partikulares verkörpert" (367 f.), wobei die "Dialektik von Besonderem und Allgemeinem" als "Triebfeder des theoretischen Dialogs" angesehen wird (368).

Im Rahmen dieser Ausführung wird Wahrheit als ein Produkt des aufklärerischen Diskurses verstanden. Und zwar als ein Produkt, dem in der dialogischen Diskussion der wissenschaftlichen Kommunikation nur die Gelegenheit dazu gegeben werden muß, um den Regeln der Vernunft entsprechend hergestellt zu werden, worauf dann dieses Produkt "Wahrheit" in der Lage ist, im politisch-sozialen Raum gerecht zu funktionieren. Mit anderen Worten, der Verfasser weist darauf hin, daß Wahrheiten, wie Inhalte der Sprache, im Grunde gesellschaftlich verhandelte rhetorische Konstruktionen sind. Eine neue Einsicht ist damit nicht entstanden. Und im Grunde wird von Zima nur wieder jene ultra-nominalistische Auffassung angesprochen, die in der postmodernen Kulturtheorie im Zusammenhang der sogenannten "foundational concepts" (Harvey) bereits seit einiger Zeit schon wenig aktuell ist.

Weiter heißt es zur "dialogischen Theorie" des Verfassers auf dem Bucheinband: "Der Autor versucht, sowohl der Ideologisierung als auch der Indifferenz zu entgehen, indem er im letzten Kapitel eine dialogische Theorie vorschlägt". Wenn es dem Autor in der Tat gelungen wäre, "Ideologisierung" zu überwinden, welche neuen Möglichkeiten zeigten sich dann vor einem derartig gestalteten Verstehenshorizont. Im angesprochenen letzten Kapitel aber heißt es dann doch bescheidener, "keine Theorie kommt ohne ein ideologisches Engagement aus" (369). Auf diesem Wege gibt sich das alte bekannte Gefängnis, in dem sich der Autor wie jeder andere eingerichtet hat, wieder zu erkennen. Auch scheut sich Zima an vielen Stellen keineswegs davor zu zeigen, wie ideologisch belastet und "partikular" seine Argumente und Beobachtungen im Grunde doch sind. Dieser Punkt wird besonders dann deutlich, wenn theoretische Positionen diskutiert werden, die der aufklärerischen Theorie Habermas' nicht entsprechen, oder, was noch schlimmer bestraft wird, ihr gar konträr gegenüber eingestellt sind. In dieser Hinsicht heißt es beispielsweise hinsichtlich des kulturtheoretischen Diskurses im nordamerikanischen Bereich pauschal abwertend, wobei ich nur einen Fall von vielen wähle, daß die dort vertretenen "gegeneinander abgeschotteten Partikularismen" als "unverbindlich" und "austauschbar" erscheinen (396). Der Grund:

Wenn unzählige Gruppen, jede auf ihre Art, die einzig wahre Lehre verkünden und einander unablässig widersprechen, werden sie mir gleichgültig. Der amerikanische Pluralismus, der dem Prinzip verpflichtet ist 'jedem seine Wahrheit' (solange er

Lage gewesen wäre, sich vom Umfang und Reichtum seiner in den Computer getippten Zettelkästen und Materialsammlungen zu befreien.

Es läßt sich also schon die Auffassung vertreten, weniger und genauer wäre mehr gewesen. Dennoch hat das umfangreiche Buch des Autoren auch seine Reize. Zumindest führt es den interessierten Leser informationsreich in den Theoriebereich der Postmoderne ein, von dem er nach der Lektüre des Bandes möglicherweise dazu angeregt wird, weiter nach Antworten auf neue Fragen zu suchen. (HOLGER A. PAUSCH, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*ROSE MARIE BURWELL. *Hemingway: The Postwar Years and the Posthumous Novels*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. 250 + xxvii pp. US\$ 59.95, cloth; US\$ 17.95, paper.

Rose Marie Burwell's *Hemingway: The Postwar Years and the Posthumous Novels* is an engaging work of criticism that combines several modes into one. It is a critical biography of Hemingway; an interesting account of some years of Burwell's own archival detective work; and a provocative reading of Hemingway's posthumous novels, on one hand, and of Hemingway himself, on the other. Burwell begins her book this way: "When Ernest Hemingway took his own life on 2 July 1961, he left manuscripts of four unfinished novels. Three were extensively edited and published by Scribner's between 1964 and 1986" (1). The three novels that have been published are *The Garden of Eden*, with "a writer-protagonist in his late twenties" who agonizes a great deal about "the creative imagination" (2); *Islands in the Stream*, which features "the artist as painter who, his vocation lost, has turned to self-destruction" (2); and *A Moveable Feast*, which "explores the beginning of the artist's vocation" (2). The fourth work, "a still-unpublished African book" (1), features "a writer-protagonist (named Hemingway) in his mid-fifties, [who] contemplates and rejects escape from the artist's obligation to produce ... through his integration into a culture where there are no writers" (2).

Using newly released archival materials, including Hemingway's notes and letters, as a guide, Burwell puts the four unfinished novels back together in the order in which they were composed making a continuous serial text out of them (Burwell claims that Hemingway always saw *A Moveable Feast* as fiction even though it was published and is usually read, as a memoir). Next, she restores materials that were lost editorially in the three published novels. Finally, she supplements the resulting text with archival documents. What results is a tetralogy of self-reflexive novels that together examine Hemingway's notions of

nicht versucht, sie dem anderen aufzuzwingen), bestätigt die Nichtigkeit partikularistischer Wahrheitsansprüche im Indifferenzzusammenhang (396).

Also doch besser kein "Dialog" mit den Staaten und Kanada in diesem wohl kaum die Ideologisierung überwindenden Argument?

Es kann an dieser Stelle nicht darum gehen, den zahlreichen kulturtheoretischen Positionen, die der Autor diskutiert, kritisiert und recht unbekümmert beurteilt, im Rahmen erdachter Qualitätsmerkmale neue Benotungen nachzuliefern. Durch den Verzicht auf eine eigene theoretische Perspektive wird der Autor jedoch wieder und wieder gezwungen, sich dem argumentativ Unverbindlichen, dem kategorisierend-moralisierenden Allgemeinen, Enzyklopädischen, kurz, dem Oberflächlichen zu ergeben. Diese Stilhaltung wird immer wieder deutlich. So wirft Zima Lyotard beispielsweise vor, ihm sei die "Dialektik von Kontinuität und Diskontinuität" (xii) in der Geschichte nicht bekannt. Eine kuriose Anmerkung, die vom Leser hoffentlich nicht verlangt zu glauben, Lyotard sei nicht mit den geschichtstheoretischen Konzepten der Kontinuität und Diskontinuität vertraut. Doch das tut sie auch nicht, denn der Verfasser bezieht sich vielmehr im Zusammenhang mit dem, womit Lyotard nicht zurecht komme, auf die "Dialektik" der beiden Begriffe, ihre Bezüglichkeit. Und darunter versteht Zima, "daß die Postmoderne zwar aus der mit ihr verwandten Spätmoderne (dem Modernismus) hervorgeht, daß sie aber zugleich einen Bruch mit der modernen und modernistischen Problematik herbeiführt" (xii). Der skizzierte Argument enthält jedoch keinen dialektischen Vorgang im Sinne Hegels. Wenn nämlich der Fall B aus dem Fall A hervorgeht und danach mit ihm bricht, handelt es sich nicht um eine "Dialektik von Kontinuität und Diskontinuität", sondern im Kontext der zeitlichen Ordnung immer noch schlicht um Kontinuität. Dieses kleine Beispiel könnte ohne Bedenken als unwichtig abgetan werden, wäre es nicht symptomatisch für die vielen flink formulierten Ungenauigkeiten des Buchs.

Ein anderes Beispiel ist an der Stelle zu finden, wo es von Touraine heißt, daß er wie Foucault "den ersten Modernisierungsschub im 17. Jahrhundert zu erkennen meint" (41). Im Kontext der Ausführung ist zwar zu verstehen, was gesagt werden soll. Der Verweis, sind die entsprechenden Texte bekannt, pendelt jedoch so wie er formuliert ist im Irgendwo zwischen Ungenau und Falsch, wodurch dann eben das gesamte Argument beeinträchtigt wird. Ähnliches geschieht an vielen weiteren Textstellen, wo von Nietzsche, Deleuze, Derrida, Baudrillard und Benjamin oder Lyotard, Foucault, Rorty, Jameson und Sartre die Rede ist. Die Konturen der Beobachtungen und Informationen sind zu ungenau gezeichnet. Sie zerbröseln und zerfallen als ob der Autor nicht in der

what it means to be an artist. It would be a fascinating project indeed to publish these novels, edited and restored as Burwell suggests, as a collection. In any case, the bulk of Burwell's book is a reading of Hemingway and his late work in and through these four novels. As Burwell notes, "All of the writing is, at one level, about the cost of the creative process — to the artist and to those whose lives are united with his" (2). Furthermore, "the four narratives record Hemingway's fifteen-year search for a form and a style that would express his reflexive vision of the artist" (1).

Although there is a good deal of biographical material in Burwell's book — she writes that "Hemingway-the-man wrote the novels, and the novelist lived with the man's conflicts: art and life occupied the same space" (3) — Burwell has no ambitions to write a full-scale literary biography here. What she wants to do, she says, is to point out that the four unpublished novels, read together and in the order in which they were written, compose a "portrait of the artist as an American and [serve as] an unparalleled example of fiction as self-analysis" (6). In other words, Burwell's book is "a biographical consideration of the experiences that can be seen to have shaped Hemingway's anxiety about his art into the forms it took" (11). Although she does not want to read the fiction as biography, exactly, Burwell notes that "when people, events, and image configurations from Hemingway's life are demonstrably reflected in the posthumously published novels or the African book, I have presented the biographical information as interpretive background" (11). As a project, Burwell's book is very interesting; it is certainly of value to anyone who is interested in Hemingway and his writing, especially the late and posthumous work. As a work of criticism, it will be of value and interest for any and all Hemingway scholars for some years to come.

That said, and without diminishing my praise for a good and useful book, I must note that Burwell's *Hemingway* also unfortunately illustrates some of the differences between criticism and theory and is yet another demonstration of an annoying tendency in recent academic books to drag theoretical considerations (if only to mention them in passing) into the most pragmatic and otherwise a-theoretical work, even when there is nothing particular to be gained by so doing. There is, of course, a great deal that can be and has been written about the theory of pragmatic criticism, but that is a different story.

When Burwell is writing criticism, she really shines: she is a careful, even a painstaking reader of Hemingway's texts and life and archival materials. When she ventures into theoretical territory, however, she stumbles. Here is an example of the sort of inappropriate use of theory, or at least of theoretical labelling that I mean: "Hemingway strikes [a] postmodern note in [his]

suggestion of anxiety over the paternity of texts that Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar set forth in *The Madwoman in the Attic*" (111).

First of all, there is nothing — distinctively or otherwise — "postmodern" about such concerns. (I think I would claim, in fact, that such a concern is quite seriously anti-postmodern: it suggests a level of ownership of material that postmodernism is just not interested in, except as an anachronistic curiosity. See, for only one obvious example, Donald Barthelme's *The Dead Father*).

Second, Gilbert and Gubar do not themselves consider texts that display anxiety about their own "paternity" to be "postmodern." Gilbert and Gubar do discuss the metaphor of literary paternity (the pen as penis, and so on) that, they claim, pervades Western culture, but their focus, as their subtitle suggests, is "The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination." Gilbert and Gubar consider literary paternity as a pervasive metaphor and attitude and as a serious problem for nineteenth-century women writers, but not as a feature of postmodernism. I would be surprised to find the term "postmodern" anywhere in *The Madwoman in the Attic*, in fact.

Third, I wonder why, outside of a misdirected anxiety about theory, should Burwell introduce the postmodern into her discussion at all? "Postmodern" is not even important enough to her to have included the term in the indexes to this book. The answer may lie in an assumption on the part of Burwell that the self-reflexivity that characterizes these late Hemingway works-in-progress is "postmodern" in nature. If that is her assumption, it is a flawed and theoretically unsound one. Though she demonstrates successfully that Hemingway was caught up in a "pervasively self-reflexive mode in this work" (105), Burwell moves without apparent problem into a conflation of self-reflexivity and the postmodern; Hemingway becomes a postmodernist, or at least his work demonstrates "postmodern" elements and concerns. Although it is true that self-reflexivity is an "element" of postmodernism, it is also an element of modernism, and can be detected in fiction from *Don Quixote* on: some would claim that self-reflexivity is a feature, in varying degrees, of all fiction. In any case, self-reflexivity and postmodernism are not identical. And although he may be intensely self-reflexive in these posthumous novels, Hemingway is not a postmodernist.

Burwell's problems with theoretical issues continue with her use of Edward W. Said's *Beginnings*, especially regarding the excerpt that she chooses to cite: "David's protectiveness toward the African stories is another postmodern element of the novel, for it is a paradigm of the paternity of literary texts of which Edward Said asserts..." (118). The piece from Said that Burwell chooses is from a passage in *Beginnings* in which the tradition of the "paternity" of texts is

being examined critically in the particular context of Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*. As the work of Gilbert and Gubar does, Said's text deals with a traditional problem and a traditional paradigm that needs to be examined critically and from a theoretical perspective — he is not, in this passage or in this book, interested in the postmodern, however. This kind of cursory nod to theoretical issues surely should not have to appear in every academic book. Ironically, in this case, lending a kind of reverential and, finally, paternalistic referential air to even the most a-theoretical of texts.

Hemingway scholars should read this book. It is a fine piece of work in most ways. It is evidence of a skilled pragmatic scholar at work. That it falls prey to a pervasive academic fashion, while annoying, is not enough to condemn it, or even to produce serious second thoughts about its usefulness. (STEVEN SCOTT, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*ROBERT ELBAZ and LEAH HADOMI. *Elias Canetti, or, the Failing of the Novel*. American University Studies, Series III, Comparative Literature, vol 57. New York: Peter Lang, 1995. 119 pp. US\$ 35.95, cloth.

Le titre de cette brève étude sur le seul roman d'Elias Canetti, *Die Blendung*, implique déjà le programme des auteurs : prouver qu'écrire une « Comédie humaine » traitant de figures en marge de la folie n'était plus possible après la rédaction de ce roman. Comme outil d'analyse, Elbaz/Hadomi ont choisi la sémiotique. Cependant, il est étonnant de constater que seul le nom de Saussure revient à plusieurs reprises ; dans la bibliographie, aucun travail des J. Geninasca, M. Riffaterre, R. Jakobson. V. Propp ou encore de Greimas n'est cité. Par contre, bon nombre d'études sur Canetti, parmi les meilleures, approchant le texte canettien d'angles très différents (Ishagapour, Bischof, Magris, Göpfert, Roberts, Piel ; il est dommage que des travaux plus récents n'aient pas été mentionnés). Il semble que Elbaz/Hadomi aient choisi une approche plutôt personnelle profitant d'une réflexion théorique dont la question centrale demeure ultimement l'absence de sens dans le roman. L'approche méthodologique tout comme la façon dont se servent les auteurs du texte canettien stimulent la discussion.

D'abord, leur volonté de rattacher ce roman à une tradition me pose problème : à plusieurs reprises, Elbaz/Hadomi situent *Die Blendung* comme un texte précurseur du Nouveau Roman. Rien ne paraît plus discutable, puisque l'objet du texte (l'aveuglement progressif du personnage central, jusqu'au délire total) comme le traitement de la réflexion sur les phénomènes entourant la création littéraire (langue, écriture, [double] sens, parodie, cliché, topoi) diffère

profondément des préoccupations de l'école française. Par ailleurs, l'incertitude exprimée quant à l'appartenance linguistique de Canetti (ladino, allemand, anglais) ou encore religieuse me semble sans véritable fondement, puisqu'ils citent, avec raison, des prises de position canettiennes à ces sujets démontrant hors de tout doute que l'auteur ne voulait pas être rattaché ni à une culture ni à une religion en particulier, mais qu'il s'exprimait le mieux en allemand et que son héritage juif primait, sans exclure pour autant d'autres orientations religieuses. Bien plus important est le problème central posé dans cette étude, à savoir l'impossibilité de faire sens.

Lorsque Elbaz/Hadomi lisent *Die Blendung* — qu'ils mettent constamment, et intelligemment, en rapport avec d'autres textes canettiens, comme les différents volets de son autobiographie et *Die Stimmen von Marrakesch*, ce qui donne souvent d'excellents résultats — ils relèvent des facteurs d'une importance capitale sans cependant les exploiter à fond. Un exemple frappant est le traitement, au troisième chapitre, de la jupe de Thérèse (p. 45 segg.). Que les objets ne sont pas utilisés innocemment par Canetti, tout le monde le sait. Pour bien comprendre l'importance et le sens de la jupe, il faut retourner à un autre récit tout au début du roman, celui où le narrateur nous relate l'épisode du jeune Kien trouvant un coquillage (« die Muschel »), qu'il veut ouvrir. Il a beau s'évertuer, l'animal lui résiste puisqu'avec l'ouverture il perdrait la vie. Le garçon parle même avec l'animal/objet qui fait « la sourde oreille » (tout comme Kien qui se couvre les oreilles quand la police frappe chez lui à la fin du roman). Finalement, l'enfant écrase l'animal, qui n'est qu'un petit tas de misère, de glu et d'imposture ». Il faut donc établir, d'une part, les liens avec les livres qu'il faut ouvrir afin qu'ils livrent leur contenu, et l'interdiction de lire, récurrente de façon obsédante dans le texte : tout ce qui a trait aux livres est soit frappé d'interdiction, soit source de pouvoir et de plaisir (cf. la scène où le jeune Kien est enfermé dans une librairie). Thérèse, qui acquiert des traits maternels en prenant soin du livre le plus méprisé de la bibliothèque de Kien (*Die Hosen des Herrn von Bredow*), n'est qu'un produit de l'imagination du protagoniste, mais qui le mènera à faire le lien entre les livres, leur nécessaire protection et le mariage, par lequel il croit pouvoir assurer la survie de ce qui lui est le plus cher au monde. Que cette femme porte justement une jupe aussi difficile à briser ou à « ouvrir » qu'un coquillage acquiert alors une importance capitale pour la compréhension du texte.

Les mots, qui sont porteurs de sens, expriment l'affect, la peur, le désir, le réel et l'irréel ; rien n'existe sans les mots, et rien n'est dit pour rien. Le choix des mots, les répétitions, le déroulement d'une action, les associations, les pauses, jusqu'à un manque de mots, tout trouve sa causalité et obéit à une logique interne.

décomposition ? Canetti dit lui-même qu'il n'était possible d'en représenter la réalité [sic] que si l'on avait le courage d'en montrer les failles (*ibid.*, p. 131). Mais il ne parle jamais, comme d'ailleurs la plupart de ses critiques et exégètes, de l'allégorie, seule encore capable d'exprimer la vérité sur cette époque. Pourquoi ne pas accepter qu'après la rédaction du roman, Canetti n'ait pas pu, ou voulu, poursuivre sa « Comédie humaine des fous », puisqu'il avait dit ce qu'il avait à dire ? « La tête sans monde » ne peut survivre dans un « Monde sans tête » ; cette même tête doit sombrer dans la folie du « Monde dans la tête » : le programme du roman se dessine clairement dans les titres de ses trois parties. Comme les auteurs l'indiquent, la production textuelle ultérieure de Canetti converge vers ce roman unique, toute la problématique canettienne — la folie, l'absurde, le fractionnement du monde — est préfigurée dans *Die Blendung*. Une analyse plus poussée, plus complète aussi, aurait pu en clarifier la complexité. (HANS-JÜRGEN GREIF, UNIVERSITÉ LAVAL)

*P.J. MURPHY, WERNER HUBER, ROLF BREUER, and KONRAD SCHOELL, eds. *Critique of Beckett Criticism: A Guide to Research in English, French and German*. Columbia, South Carolina: Camden House. 1994. 173 + xii pp. US\$ 57.95, cloth.

As many literary researchers will by now have discovered, this book is a very useful non-specialist tool. Even for dedicated Beckettians it is not without virtue, for how many of us can claim to be *au fait* with the general evolution — never mind the minutiae — of Beckett criticism in all three languages dealt with here?

The study, a truly international venture, falls into four major sections: three essays on criticism — Murphy on English studies, Schoell, Murphy and Huber on French, Breuer and Huber on German — and a trilingual chronological bibliography. The space devoted to each essay is, not surprisingly, unequal: 54 pages to English, 22 to French, and 18 to German. The cut-off year is 1993. This means that, unfortunately, Bair is used as the biographical standard.

The Preface sensibly issues a disclaimer of objectivity and completeness. Even with regard to monographs the aim is only to be "as thorough and comprehensive as possible." The intention *vis-à-vis* articles is more modest: coverage of those "which represent significant patterns or trends" (xi).

Whatever the principles of selection had been, it would have been impossible to satisfy everyone. Nevertheless, I have counted twenty-six omissions from the bibliography that I regard as regrettable or inexplicable, in the English criticism alone — and that is just for the letters A and B.

Encore faut-il être attentif aux mots, et ne pas les déformer. Quand Elbaz/Hadomi évoquent, pour expliquer la perte de la parole du protagoniste, le premier souvenir de Canetti au tout début du premier volet de son autobiographie, *Die gerettete Zunge*, ils citent le passage où le narrateur nous dit que l'homme en face de lui sort son couteau pour lui *couper la langue*, et non pas parce qu'il veut procéder à une *circuncision* (passim). Ici, toute tentative de récupérer le texte de Canetti à la judaïté s'avère vaine. Car il s'agit d'un des traumatismes les plus graves de l'enfance, comme nous le savons (cf. S. Freud, M. Klein), celui d'être privé de la parole et de perdre l'usage de l'instrument par lequel il peut transmettre ce qui se passe dans sa tête. De là aussi sa frénésie d'apprendre, de s'appropriier les mots, qui va jusqu'au désir d'éliminer tout obstacle (sa cousine) se dressant entre lui et les mots. Il est important de noter que Elbaz/Hadomi superposent, comme le faisait C. Mauron pour Racine ou Mallarmé, les textes canettiens (avec un texte presque absent cependant, *Masse und Macht*). Il est dommage qu'ils n'aient pas su tirer profit de cette technique — qui n'est pas la leur, il faut en convenir, mais dont ils ont repris le procédé. Ils auraient pu poursuivre les pistes, évidentes, que nous livre l'auteur. C'est justement l'entrelacs de ces pistes, ce filet hautement complexe qui ont rendu si ardue la lecture du texte à des auteurs/critiques aussi avertis que H. Hesse, qui disait déjà en 1936 que *Die Blendung* était un roman « passionnant » mais « torturant », ou H. M. Enzensberger (1963), dont le jugement est sans appel : « Un livre insupportable, un monstre littéraire », ou encore une des plus grandes autorités littéraires en Allemagne, M. Reich-Ranicki, qui disait encore en 1980 que ce roman était « immangeable ». Certes, il n'est pas aisé de suivre le naufrage d'une intelligence, d'assister à son incapacité de lutter contre les stupidités et les embûches de la vie et son désir d'autodestruction : ici, l'identification avec un « héros » n'est guère possible.

Puisque les auteurs se réfèrent souvent à la biographie de Canetti — leur sixième chapitre, portant sur le métatexte, autobiographique, est sans doute l'un des plus stimulants de cette étude —, la mention des circonstances qui ont vu et fait naître le roman aurait clarifié bien des aspects de la présente étude. D'une part, Canetti voyait non seulement les deux tableaux de Breughel et Rembrandt, ayant rapport aux aveugles et à Samson à qui on enlève la vue, mais il regardait chaque jour sur l'immense cité des fous de Vienne, là où les mots ne font plus sens. Par ailleurs, ses deux séjours à Berlin, si importants, lui permettent de *vivre* ce dont on ne faisait que *parler* à Vienne (cf. H. Göpfert, *Canetti lesen*, p. 130).

Un dernier mot encore sur la démonstration de Elbaz/Hadomi concernant « l'échec » du roman et l'incapacité de Canetti de poursuivre son œuvre romanesque. Ce roman n'est-il pas autre chose que le portrait d'un monde en