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BOOK REVIEWS

*NANCY FELSON-RUBIN. *Regarding Penelope: From Character to Poetics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. Pp. 215 + xii. US \$14.95 paper.

In her Preface, Nancy Felson-Rubin indicates she has applied "anthropological and psychological maturation models" to her study of the "rite of passage" Telemakhos undergoes in the *Odyssey* (x). Later, she notes her examination of Homer's epic "is influenced by a number of research traditions" including "narratology, possible-world semantics, audience criticism, feminism, Peircean semiotics, and the dialogism of Bakhtin" (xi). This is a formidable passenger manifest indeed. There is the fear, perhaps more instinctive than not, that subjecting the (relatively uncomplicated?) earlier texts to too many critics with all their baggage might overload the vessel. On the other hand, it is probably very true that over the years many readers of the *Odyssey* have, taking the wrong route as it were, transformed Homer's Penelope into a classical version of the medieval Patient Griselda. But surely, virtually allegorizing the heroine of the *Odyssey*, following the lead of a thoroughly embittered Agamemnon in Hades, does nothing for Homer's art of characterization. As Felson-Rubin puts it, "Agamemnon never fathoms Penelope in all her complexity" (94; see also vii and 67). Nor do the critics with all their "battered baggage" get in each other's way, at least not obtrusively so, for Felson-Rubin's argument hangs together well, and the complexity of Homer's creation but especially of the ambiguous Penelope becomes evident.

For, if even a cursory glance at Homer's structural patterns in the *Odyssey* indicates an extensive degree of planning, might not the same be possible in his characterizations? The complementarity to be found, for example, among the various episodes is astonishing. In dealing with Odysseus' quest to return to his homeland, his appointed place in the universe, and, therefore, to reassert his "identity," the *Odyssey* subjects him to a series of interrelated tribulations and temptations. The tribulations threaten death while the temptations involve various kinds of (wrong) choices Odysseus can make. Both kinds of trials, more or less, in one way or another, can block the hero's

return and, therefore, deny him his identity, his selfhood. The tribulations with monsters are grotesque parodies of the quest for self motif in the temptations. In the case of the cannibalistic Lestrygonians (10.116, 124) and Polyphemus, and of the monstrous Scylla (12.99-100), however, the hero could be reduced to an entrée, dying horribly and ignominiously. The ironic distortion of the host-guest motif, wherein the hero is not given dinner, but is instead to be the dinner, is thus a low point, and that is probably why it is in the incident with Polyphemus that Odysseus metaphorically loses his name, becoming "Noman" (9.366).

The temptation of the Sirens epitomizes much of the meaning of the epic, for in submitting to their song, Odysseus could forget his desire to return (12.42-43) and immerse himself in the immemorial sea. Other temptations appear to run the entire hierarchy of life: in the land of the Lotus eaters, Odysseus and his men are tempted not only to forget their return, but also to take up a virtually vegetative existence; the episode with Circe perhaps as much tribulation as temptation reduces Odysseus' followers to beasts, although they can, even as swine, still remember their humanity (10.239-40); more appealing, Odysseus can marry a Phaeacian princess (7.311-14) and, presumably, eventually become a king again, but not of Ithaka; most appealingly, Calypso would make Odysseus godlike, "immortal and ageless" (5.136, 209, and 7.257). It is, therefore, no coincidence that both the goddess Calypso and the Phaeacian princess Nausikaa are associated with a lush, well-watered grove or garden (5.63 ff., and 7.112 ff.). Should Odysseus forget about returning, he could do so on an island paradise superior to his rocky Ithaka. Significantly, when he does return to Ithaka, each encounter with an individual from his past symbolizes the gradual reclamation of his birthright as he reassumes such various "roles" as landholder, father, warrior-king, husband and, finally, son of Laertes, from whom he received his name. Given this structural and thematic elaborateness, surely there must be a concomitant complexity on the level of characterization.

This is where Felson-Rubin's study is invaluable, in demonstrating the immense care Homer must have taken with his characterizations, but particularly with that of Penelope. Structurally, too, there is implicit in her study the suggestion that, on the level of characterization, the first half of the epic is largely concerned with the choices Odysseus makes; the second half, with those confronting Penelope.

Perhaps Felson-Rubin's most challenging and incisive point is her suggestion "that Homer first sets forth a rather standard or conventional way of thinking and then undermines or challenges it in subtle ways" (x). If she is correct in her appraisal of the *Odyssey* and she presents a good deal of evidence to support her view there is then a significant deviation from the *Iliad*, the major thematic thrust of which would appear to be to assert "a rather standard or conventional way of thinking." Any challenge to the

conventional, to examine or test it, results inevitably in a reassertion of the "standard or conventional." For in the *Iliad*, Homer's reassertion of heroic or hierarchical values operates on all levels except, perhaps, the divine, where the Gods are subject at times to comedic deflation. Still, Zeus, Athena, and Apollo are treated with a good deal of deference.

At the top of the human hierarchy, Agamemnon's royal staff, a central image, is used by the hero-king Odysseus to beat into silence a potentially subversive voice from the bottom of the hierarchy, that of Thersites. Odysseus, adding insult to injury, also delivers a tongue-lashing. Furthermore, from the outset Homer precludes any possible sympathy on the audience's and from within the poem, presumably, on the army's part for Thersites and his point of view by describing in realistic detail unusual in Homer the exquisite ugliness of this rebel from the ranks. On the other hand, Sarpedon's poetically powerful statement on the reciprocal interrelationships between aristocratic prerogatives and duties seems entirely devoid of irony or ambiguity, coming as it does at a most critical moment in the battle, and placed as it is virtually at the very centre of the poem. And, after all, Sarpedon is the son of Zeus. Finally, even Achilles' questioning of the meaning of the heroic life and its sole illumination, honour, is qualified by his own obsession with heroic honour, and his inevitable return to battle. The *Iliad* is essentially monologic.

Felson-Rubin, however, presents us with an *Odyssey* that is not monologic, but dialogic — polyvocal even. The difference may be more apparent than real, since the main thrust of the *Odyssey* is not to assert the heroic ideal, although it does, to some extent, do that too. But Felson-Rubin does appear to recognize a difference in densities between the two poems when she notes that the sort of complex "assessment of 'style'" found in the *Odyssey*, "along with poetic self-consciousness generally, with a few exceptions, is noticeably lacking from the *Iliad*" (181). (It would certainly be interesting to have Felson-Rubin examine characterization in the *Iliad*.)

After her observation in the Preface that Homer often undercuts the traditional or conventional, I find it disappointing, then, that Felson-Rubin finds no humour in the poet's use of the lion simile, when Odysseus approaches Nausikaa on the beach: "the lion simile evokes Odysseus's latent power to victimize Nausikaa and her maidens as a predator his prey; yet no victimization, no rape takes place" (47). Felson-Rubin also takes the lion simile quite seriously elsewhere (184, n.56).

I have always assumed that Homer is here parodying one of his favourite tropes, the epic simile. Similarly, because the audience is given the "context" of the episode, a laundry party, the warrior's heroic choice, "Flight or Fight," is also parodied when Odysseus debates with himself. Homer uses the formulaic introduction for the heroic choice as to what course he should take when he hears the cries of the women, and when he debates with himself

whether he should stand where he is and address Nausikāa, or kneel before her, embracing her knees as a suppliant. Here the humour thickens considerably, for taking the latter course would, presumably, require the naked hero to drop the branch he is holding before him. A coat of brine being his only remaining vesture (6.137), Odysseus is not suitably attired for the company of maidens and their princess.

In stressing "the violence inherent in the simile" (47), Felson-Rubin notes that "The verb *miksesthai*, 'to mingle,' commonly used in Homer for 'have sexual intercourse with' (LSJ, s.v. *meignumi* 94)), suggests that this is a scene of potential rape" (47). Her extension of the meaning of the verb from "sexual intercourse" which itself may be a figurative use in Homer to "rape" is largely based on the "Artemis simile, some lines earlier (102-04)," and we need not go into it here. We certainly can ask, however, if what is perhaps a touch of feminist criticism illuminates the text here, or simply obtrudes, elbowing out the possibilities of some rather sophisticated humour on Homer's part. Does Homer wish us to play subtly with semantics and a previous allusion to Artemis, or does he simply wish us to see (the humour of) the scene? Admittedly, taking in the immediate humour on the surface of the scene does not necessarily preclude a second, darker reading running counter to the surface humour, if such there be.

But it would be difficult to quarrel with Felson-Rubin's application of the "anthropological and psychological maturation models," noted earlier, to Telemakhos' growth into manhood. This aspect of the *Odyssey* has of course been looked at before, and Felson-Rubin cites several studies. Her use of the "maturation models" is, however, exceptionally thoroughgoing and illuminating, particularly in the analysis of Telemakhos' development as he learns to relate to women in general and his mother in particular (67-91). Here, Felson-Rubin makes, if only implicitly, a strong case for Penelope's role in the epic as virtually equal to that of the hero. She even appropriates for Penelope the many-faceted construction of Odysseus' character which I indicated earlier, with such chapter headings as "Weaver" (a metaphor for Penelope's Odyssean ability to plot and plan), "Wife," "Mother," "Heroine," and "Siren."

This suggestion of Penelope depicted as a match for Odysseus is brought out especially forcefully in Felson-Rubin's study of reciprocity in the epic. The dominant role of reciprocity in such battle-epics as the *Iliad*, the *Beowulf*, and the *Roland* is self-evident, especially in the interrelationships of individual honour and revenge. And there is something of this in the *Odyssey*. Felson-Rubin also reveals, however, the operation of reciprocity in more sophisticated areas, for example, on the level of performance, between poet and audience (9-10, 148-49, n.30), but particularly on the level of characterization. Time and again she examines the reciprocal relationship even "utter reciprocity" (41) between Odysseus and Penelope, suggesting

complementarity, if not equality (vii-viii, 9, 40-41, 62). There is "a reciprocity and mutuality" (vii), and a "role-reversal" which neutralizes the "gender hierarchy" (9). Here feminist criticism gives Penelope her due. After all, Penelope has long been seen as the perfect mate for Odysseus. Ought not all the implications of that view be recognized? Felson-Rubin then provides a nice compromise to describe the relationship between two such active characters: "Neither domination, with the male holding supremacy over the female, nor static equality characterizes the Penelope/Odysseus relationship. Rather, they alternate between subordinating and dominating each other" (9). This rings true: a dynamic interchange between a man and a woman in a culture essentially hierarchical would need to be predicated on the switching of positions on that hierarchy, while such an interchange in a modern novel could, as it were, be enacted on a level playing field. My only quarrel with Felson-Rubin here would be a phrase which results, I believe, from her rhetoric, for I see nothing "static" about a state of equality between husband and wife. Such a condition would be indeed dynamic unless they were both dead.

Felson-Rubin's detailed scrutiny of characterization in the *Odyssey*, then, underlines the poem's structural and formal coherence and consistency. Demonstrating convincingly that even such a relatively minor figure as Agamemnon is "a single, coherent character: a bumbler, a victim, a misogynist" (103), she reveals the thematic interrelationship between the two episodes in Hades. And although her view of "the consistent characterization of Agamemnon" (103), taken in conjunction with her analyses of Penelope and Odysseus, implicitly advances a strong argument for a "well-wrought" *Odyssey*, she avoids the controversy: "I do not address issues pertaining to the genesis of the text; my concern is rather with its impact on the reader, given its structure or form" (175, n.20).

The "maturation models" are again brought to bear on a study of the suitors' relationships with Penelope and Telemakhos (109-13). In marked contrast to Odysseus' son, they suffer from a "delayed maturation" (176). Perhaps they too, however indirectly, are victims of the Trojan war: "The ten-year war and the absence of a whole generation of mature males is primarily responsible, but so too are the permissive relatives who fail to censure their abuses.... The suitors pay, with their lives, for societal disarray" (114). The closing chapter contains a defense of "psychologizing," of a close and sensitive reading of the epic, and of directly engaging with the text. Defining and defending her psychological approach to character, Felson-Rubin contends that "Interpreters who speculate about the psychological viability of a fictional character and make inferences about the character's psyche from clues in the text can be said to 'psychologize.' Those who refuse this whole approach are left only with genetic explanations which, even when ingenious, do not account for literary impact; or, they are left with cold

descriptions of attributes and are robbed of the phenomenological experience the pleasure of making sense of those attributes in terms of what they know" (127). (For Felson-Rubin, "to ascribe an item to the demands of plot or to a preexisting folk tale would be a genetic explanation," 178, n.12.) She justifies her close reading of the *Odyssey* by challenging "the claim that only one traditional value system (transmitted formulaically) is present" and defends "the possibility that the poet introduces new and contending value systems" (126). Most significant, however, are her remarks on a direct (often emotional) engagement, even entanglement, with the text, which lead her to confront such postmodern approaches as structuralist semiotics and deconstruction: "I have come to accept my own willingness to be in a dialogue with the text rather than 'playing it cool' and distancing myself, postmodern-fashion, from its emotional content. The 'postmodern cool' is a protection against entanglement, against risk, against engagement, a ploy on the part of interpreters to maintain the upper hand. In the gender-split Western world, this habit of mind may characterize more males than females; but, many female scholars are male-taught and male-mentored. Clearly, from all we know of performance poetry, emotional involvement is an important factor" (128). Surely we can substitute "literature" for "performance poetry"!

Felson-Rubin appears in her closing remarks to wish to put some (traditional) critical tools back into the hands of the scholar-reader, tools current theory has dismantled or cast serious doubt upon, not the least of which is a human sympathy and sensitivity for the written word. She shows how an eclectic approach using judiciously those systems which can help one pry some meaning, unashamedly, from a given text may be the best, perhaps the only, way to proceed, and that, all claims of objectivity notwithstanding, "every interpretation, including that of a structuralist, will inevitably, I believe, be filtered through the interpreter's lens" (126). Unbridled subjectivity remains the human curse, while an intense but controlled subjectivity can be, perhaps, a critic's cure.

Finally, I should note that, reminiscent of the spirit and tradition of oral formulaic-heroic poetry, the second paragraph on page 140 is repeated, quite appropriately with minor variations but repeated nonetheless, in the second paragraph on page 143. Perhaps the author may wish to make some changes in the event of a second printing, which this splendid book most certainly deserves. (EDWARD MILOWICKI, MILLS COLLEGE)

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*TAYLOR, JANE H. M., and LESLEY SMITH, eds. *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence*. London and Toronto: The British Library and University of Toronto Press, 1997. 287 pp. cloth \$75.00; paper \$29.95.

Medieval specularity demands a particular attentiveness to the role of image as construction and as constructor, especially when the reading and viewing gaze is trained on women. Always alert to such doubleness, the fourteen essays in this well produced, handsomely illustrated collection examine the visual evidence of women as authors, scribes, illustrators, patrons and subjects in texts, manuscripts, ornaments and sculptures. Looking at historiated initials, manuscript miniatures, marginal illuminations, sketches, misericord carvings, gospel lectionaries, psalters and books of hours, the essayists unfold not only the codified and conventional aspects of this visual evidence but also its experiential, often visionary, immediacy for the nuns, beguines and aristocrats who were the first audience.

The collection as a whole vastly extends the catalogue of recognized and commented-on medieval women. It positions these accomplished artists, moreover, in the context of clerical opposition and longstanding scholarly neglect. To the ranks of Hildegard of Bingen, Herrad of Hohenbourg/Landsberg, Gertrude of Helfta, Mechthild of Magdeburg, Mechthild of Hackeborn, Marie de France and Christine de Pisan, Marie-Luise Ehrenschwendner ("A Library Collected by and for the Use of Nuns: St Catherine's Convent, Nuremberg") introduces the tireless Kunigunde Niklasin (d. 1457), the most important *scriptrix* of St. Catherine's Convent, Nuremberg, "who copied thirty-one manuscripts, among them the entire Bible, some books of sermons, the lives of Dominicus and Heinrich Seuse, and the legends of St. Catherine and St. Ursula" (125). Kate Lowe ("Women's Work at the Benedictine Convent of Le Murate in Florence") cites the manuscript chronicle of Le Murate finished by Suora Giustina Niccolini in 1597 and the Roman Missal beautifully scripted, illuminated and decorated by Reverend Mother Suora Battista Carducci, a gift presented to the visiting pontiff, the native Florentine Leo X, in 1515. The nuns at Le Murate were enterprising and capable; "in addition to copying manuscripts, [they] produced gold thread, wove shirts, woollens, tablecloths, and other linens, netted seeds of perfume, and cast gesso reliefs" (142). The success and profit of these cottage industries met fierce ecclesiastical resistance, with Girolamo Savonarola railing against book production at Le Murate in a sermon preached in 1495 and the bishops of the Council of Trent insisting on the poverty and consequent humbleness and anonymity of religious women's

work; as Lowe intervenes, such work "by definition, should be trifling or homely or both, and should not be of financial benefit to the woman concerned" (143).

Another characteristic of the collection is its range of theoretical allegiances. Engagingly heterodox, the epistemological positioning varies from Lesley Smith's ("Scriba, Femina: Medieval Depictions of Women Writing") anxiety "to avoid any amateur psychology about the likelihood of each sex to advertise itself" when confronting the fact that "men rather than women scribes draw themselves into manuscripts" (29) to Sandra Hindman's ("Aesop's Cock and Marie's Hen") examination of the framing cock and hen illustrations in Marie de France's *Fables*, which draws a clear connection between the "mirror images" (49) of the woman in the fable who offers sustenance to the hen and Marie who proposes morals to her readers. A compelling argument for a "uniquely female version of the concept of *translatio studii*" (48), Hindman's essay shows how Marie is like but also different from Aesop: "he may have initially authored the fables, but Marie has the last word" (48). Wendy Armstead ("Interpreting Images of Women with Books in *Misericordes*") offers a Bakhtinian reading of the gothic and comic grotesquery of misericord carvings; the equality of men and women in carnival laughter nicely complicates the interpretation of misericord ornament as simply satiric and misogynistic. Both wit and threat inhere in the depiction in a misericord from Worcester Cathedral of a bold female wielding a pen "in this clerical, all-male space" (67). The relation of pictures and images to women's actual lived experience informs Martha Driver's ("Mirrors of a Collective Past") cataloguing of their roles within the household and metalworkers, tinsmiths, locksmiths, gold-spinners, miners, glaziers and masons. Anne Rudloff Stanton's study of the Queen Mary Psalter ("From Eve to Bathsbea and Beyond"), presented to Mary Tudor in 1553, concentrates on the links between textual and historical realities, noting how this illustrated manuscript's story-book quality, vernacular language and fully developed female characters from Eve, Bathsbea and Mary to the Saracen Princess who became the mother of Thomas Becket reflect the importance of targeting a female reading audience in the text's interest in monogamy and its genealogies traced through mothers. Sandra Penketh ("Women and Books of Hours") attends to the mingling of sacred and profane in Books of Hours containing not only visual prayers but reflections of courtly love in the love games and scenes of seduction nestling in the illustrated borders and margins of the text. The biggest stretch from Lesley Smith's caution about psychoanalysis is Flora Lewis's ("The Wounds in Christ's Side and the Instruments of the Passion") essay on the gendered response to the wounds of Christ in late-medieval imagery of the Passion. Grounding her work in the desire for a personal encounter between the human and the divine, Lewis explicitly addresses the sexual content of piercing, penetration, blood,

nakedness and wounding to argue for the strong co-existence of mysticism and sexuality; yet she is also aware of the tensions between depictions of the wound as a place of parturition and later, often silencing interpretations which reveal a distrust of and distaste for sexuality.

Under the rubric of three subdivisions, "Images of Women," "Images and Books by Women" and "Images and Books for Women," this series of assessments covers a huge amount of territory, yet usually in discrete, self-contained ways. Because so many shared questions emerge (about the roles of class and gender in demarcating if not determining subject matter, about challenges to the aristocratic limitation, about the evidence of writing, illustrating and ornamenting in the mercantile and lower classes, about the possible emergence of a gendered subjectivity, to name only a few), I found myself longing for more conversation among the essayists. Perhaps such an interactive format is the next stage of the investigation, when this reverberant, charged "ocular proof" enters a larger cultural arena. (PATRICIA DEMERS, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*JONATHAN HART, ed. *Reading the Renaissance: Culture, Poetics, and Drama*. New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1996. Pp. x + 290. No price.

The subtitle of this medley of eleven essays names the anchor subjects while the main title suggests the general approach or attitude toward the variety that is to be unpacked from the portmanteau label "Renaissance." Seven essays principally address the drama in England, France, Italy, and Spain. The editor's introduction, spelling out the need for comparative studies of early modern Europe and justifying a revaluation according to current critical interests, is one of the most useful parts of this collective volume. There is nothing surprising for international comparatists in the key organizing concept, "cultural pluralism," which Professor Hart embraces as the natural lesson emerging from the essays themselves. This pluralism of the early modern period and the Renaissance is reflected in profuse detail in *L'Avènement de l'esprit nouveau (1400-1480)*, edited by Tibor Klaniczay, Eva Kushner, and André Stegmann, and published in 1988 as the opening volume of the subseries, *L'Époque de la Renaissance (1400-1600)*, in ICLA's Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages. Hart's mobilizing of mainly English and Romance scholars, including such prominent senior comparatists as Thomas Greene and the late Harry Levin, reconfirms the continued penetration of comparatist consciousness into North American English departments, a trend familiar in Germany if we think of stellar Anglicist-comparatists such as the exemplary Renaissance

scholars Claus Uhlig and Werner von Koppenfels.

In addition, Hart endorses the range of interests in contemporary "cultural studies." He is willing "to take into account as much the current theoretical context as the one being studied in the early modern period," on the grounds that "understanding ... the relation between past and present requires a multifold practice and theory." In this special pleading, the reviewer sees a potential perennial danger, one that luckily has not done damage here. If the reviewer were to add a codicil to Hart's obviously diplomatic, concessive introduction, it would go something like this: It is up to the qualified experts in the field to tell us honestly from time to time, upon considering any particular study about the Renaissance, whether the fascination of a set of critics of any period, including our own, for contemporary idols of the mind regrettably may not illuminate, but rather may radically displace the object of inquiry and actually darken or even block understanding of particular moments in culture. Practitioners of several discourses such as those bundled under the postmodernist label that make up "cultural studies" are not especially renowned for self-critical questioning of their own favorite paradigms. Thus, when the academic "market" happens to offer preponderantly "cultural studies" pieces as is currently the case in North America, an editor who feels compelled to "represent" such work runs exactly the same sort of risks as an editor of yesteryear who after surveying scholarship, would have recognized (let us say) that postivistic studies dominated the contemporaneous scene, and thought himself obliged to expand their "share" including the underpinning intellectual presuppositions in the constant process of evaluating past and present. Bringing in cultural studies is certainly no guarantee of scholarly virtue in itself; all too often, "representation" means asking the reader to carry a load of albatrosses. Happily, *Reading the Renaissance* escapes this danger. It blends so-called traditional or recent "old-historical" approaches of a very fine caliber with cultural studies topics. The aggregate suggests as Hart ably argues in his introduction (although some of his contributors may individually prefer a doctrinaire position) that, if the quality of research and analysis is high, all these categories can serve as complementary elements to enhance our understanding of a truly complex time.

The volume divides into four sections: "The Text, the Reader, and the Self," "Gender and Genre," "Continuities and Discontinuities," and "Anticipations." The essays on drama are concentrated in the third and fourth sections, with just one located in the second section. In section one, Thomas Greene leads in with a general study of the shift from a medieval ceremonial society and identity in Europe, an uneven process that then opens spaces for new ritual invention and, especially in literature, ludic consciousness of the tension which the desire for supporting ritual signification engenders. Steven Rendall follows with an exploration of "boredom" as a creative factor in

French Renaissance literature and finds it was interlaced with awareness of belonging to a textual community. Lisa Neal treats commemoration and friendship in Montaigne. In section two, Carla Freccero examines the situations and strategies of women writers seeking all-important patronage in Italy and France. Katy Emck argues that female transvestism in *As You Like It* and *La vida es sueño* functions to enable male self-fashioning in the highly mobile symbolic order of play fictions.

Section three opens with Hart's far-ranging essay on "The Ends of Renaissance Comedy" and the recurrent stresses between its aspects (e.g., romantic versus satirical). Although Shakespeare figures prominently as well as Jonson, Hart demonstrates comparative breadth with extensive insightful commentary on major Italian (Guarini), Spanish (Calderón), and French (Molière) authors. Robert Rawdon Wilson and Edward Milowicki dig into the Babel of voices in Shakespeare's polyvalent Troy, a favorite poetic obsession of the Renaissance, and show, among other things, "the intense scrutiny reason, will, appetites, and emotions receive" in *Troilus and Cressida*. With literary flair, they invoke Homeric comparisons to underscore Shakespeare's skilled play with generic conventions and his penetrating examination of human motivation. Harry Levin's essay is complementary in its consideration of Shakespeare's mastery of the drama as his medium in the example of *Richard III*. Keir Elam engages in a semantic analysis of dialectical impulses in *As You Like It*, which in his view reinvents pastoral romance so as to assert "the erotic, the ludic, and the magical potentials."

Section four is concerned with Renaissance literature as it seems to reach into our present felt reality. Paul Morrison compares *Hamlet* and *Phèdre* to illuminate the principle of "secret singularity" that pulsates in the need for acting out or bodying forth in both Oedipal stories. Richard A. Young looks at the relationship between narrative and theater in the Spanish tradition since the Renaissance and, not surprisingly, finds in it the roots of postmodern metafiction as we encounter this in writers such as Puig.

Reading the Renaissance maintains a generally high level of English, and the pleasure of staying on that level will do a lot toward motivating readers to circulate among the essays. Those who would like to browse in this collection which contains so many suggestive materials and careful exegeses, especially relevant for the British, French, Italian, and Spanish literary streams, will find two helpful appendices: a list of works cited and a name, work, and topic index. (GERALD GILLESPIE, STANFORD UNIVERSITY)

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*JONATHAN GOLDBERG, ed. *Queering the Renaissance*. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1994. Pp. viii + 390. US \$54.95 hardcover; \$18.95 paper.

Queering the Renaissance is an excellent collection of sixteen essays exhibiting some of the current range of queer studies, a field which encompasses almost as much variation as the term "sodomy" in early modern England which is a major focus of the volume. Roughly a third of the collection deals with plays by English playwrights, from John Bale to John Dryden; the rest covers a wide variety of topics, from the non-sense verse of fifteenth-century Italian poet il Burchiello, to seventeenth-century English religious poetry, to the discursive role of Sodom and homoeroticism in Puritan New England.

Despite the variety, the volume can boast a fair degree of unity, most notably in regard to a general emphasis on and interrogation of the problematic relationship of past and present. But there are also more specific connections between essays. Michael Warner's "New England Sodom" is framed by a brief discussion of the 1986 US Supreme Court decision upholding Georgia's anti-sodomy law, which is the central topic of "Bowers v. Hardwick" in the *Renaissance* by law professor Janet E. Halley; these two equally fine but very different essays, together with Goldberg's "Introduction" and historian Margaret Hunt's "Afterword," frame the volume as a whole. Dorothy Stephens's exploration of female-female erotic possibility in Spenser's *The Fairie Queene*, "Into Other Arms: Amoret's Invasion," is a useful counterpart to Valerie Traub's more wide-ranging essay on "The (In-) Significance of 'Lesbian' Desire in Early Modern England." And more than a few contributors refer repeatedly to the work of Alan Bray, whose 1982 book, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, broke much of the ground under cultivation here; Bray himself contributes an especially fine essay on "Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England," which examines crucial similarities between the sodomite and the male friend in the context of changing class structures and social relations.

I confess to some annoyance that, in a volume so devoted to the exploration of textual ambiguities in relation to social ideology and historicity and to the ideological work of terms such as "sodomy," there should be so little apparent awareness of the problems inherent in the term "Renaissance." However, nearly all the essays avoid more serious problems endemic to the field of queer studies, such as anachronism and preciosity. Even the neologism of Alan K. Smith's essay title, "Fraudomy: Reading Sexuality and Politics in

Burchiello," is arguably justified by the obscure puns and metaphors of his material. I am less certain about Elizabeth Pittenger's title, "To Serve the Queere": Nicholas Udall, *Master of Revels*; Pittenger herself describes the use of the word "Queere," meaning "choir," as a pun on "queer" in a modern sense, as "illegitimate, anachronistic, irresponsible ..." (163). The same accusation, moreover, could be levelled at other, apparently less deliberate misreadings in her essay: she argues, for instance, that the word "swinge" can mean both "to beat" and "to fuck;" it can, but not in the instance she cites from Udall's play, *Ralph Roister Doister* (181-82) and finds evidence of a "sodomitical scene" (180) in the same play, where I see the possibility of a far joke at most. I have no quarrel with anyone wishing to fill textual holes with some sodomitical playfulness, but these are holes of the critic's own making; she is playing with herself. Still, this proves the exception even within Pittenger's essay; the volume as a whole avoids such problems. Rather, it offers a rich and diverse survey of what queer studies and early modern scholarship have to offer each other, and that is much indeed. (GARRETT P] EPP, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

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*T. G. BISHOP. *Shakespeare and the Theatre of Wonder*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Pp. xiii + 222. US \$49.95.

Shakespeare and the Theatre of Wonder is part of a growing corpus of scholarship that looks at the relationship between the performance and perception of wonder. Bishop's "primary interest is in the transactions that occur between the stage and its audience, influenced though these must be by a whole range of cultural conditions and assumptions on both sides" (13). While most contemporary critics would argue that these cultural conditions and assumptions are important if we are to understand wonder in cultural terms as "a dynamic space of flux and intermediacy" (3), *Shakespeare and the Theatre of Wonder* is not a theoretically engaged book. Rather than picking up where people such as Stephen Greenblatt have left off with wonder, it shrinks from making analyses of wonder as a deconstructive phenomenon and shies away from historicism in favour of "a more formalist stance than has recently been popular in Renaissance studies" (13).

Beginning with the idea that "wonder becomes the conduit of truth [a term Bishop uses unproblematically]" (4), the introduction offers the main argument that "wonder" is central to what Bishop calls a "poetics of incarnation" (15). It is through a "poetics of incarnation" that Shakespearean

drama can "express the life of the flesh, and inform that life with its own vitality" (87); through "incarnation[...]" conceptions are made acts, desires are made bodies, and scripts are made actors" (174).

The first chapter provides a classical backdrop for the discussion of Shakespeare that will follow. Bishop's investigation of Aristotle and Plato's thinking about wonder concludes that each sees wonder as a kind of "switchpoint belonging at once to emotive and cognitive faculties" (23). For each thinker, wonder is a prelude to philosophic reason. A primary difference between the two thinkers, Bishop maintains, is that for Plato the emotional effects of tragic drama counteract any of the possible enlightenment or rational growth that tragedy might engender in its audience. Bishop's analysis might be more focused and clear if it challenged the usefulness of the emotion/knowledge dichotomy. Such a manoeuvre would fit in with the questioning of other dichotomies (for instance, boundaries between speaker and hearer, literal and figurative, and "here" and "not here") that Bishop effects through his discussion of Longinus.

At times, the first chapter seems disjointed, especially with the laboured yoking of "the Renaissance" into the discussion. Perhaps the most original and challenging idea (wedged among obvious statements about the Renaissance having rediscovered the classics, and Shakespeare having been influenced by them) is that wonder is a kind of "pharmaceutical" element in Shakespeare's theatre, that "the playwright was as a technologist of virtue" (40), that Shakespeare fulfils "the expectation of Renaissance theory that wonder and the final purpose of drama in emotional transformation of the audience will be intimately linked" (41).

The second chapter, instead of carrying on with what the book's title suggests is the actual topic (Shakespeare and the theatre of wonder), investigates image patterns and symbolism in medieval drama. Bishop sees "miracle" in the plays as a controlled "kind of theatrical 'incarnation' with the same general structure as the eucharistic Sacrament" (14) controlled in the sense that its transgressive potentials are carefully policed by the drama itself. Bishop maintains, then, that the cycle-plays depict tension between divine authority and a transgressive and potentially destabilizing self-imagining Lucifer (who, within the texts, is also ultimately self-containing). The York "Fall of Lucifer" uses "the very transgressive and boundary-breaking energies of wonder against themselves by containing their insistent 'newness' within a recognized order of familiar oldness" (52).

A brief but convoluted argument about how wonder and the perception of plenitude hinder intellectual and spiritual understanding among characters leads Bishop to maintain that "the divine" is often represented as spectacle in these plays; that the spectacle of the divine stuns, blocks, and confounds by perceptions of the dramatized disciples whose "failure to see is recuperated by the audience's success in hearing" (57); and that wonder, in such cases, is

expressed as confusion within the plays. Bishop's final point in this chapter is that "the medieval audience is invited to recognize its collective character and destiny as a Christian community ... through a dialectic of identification and detachment which is characteristic of the theatre of wonder" (62).

The third chapter finally brings us to Shakespeare. Before discussing *The Comedy of Errors*, the chapter offers a brief history of "the transition from late medieval to Elizabethan drama" (63), arguing that while "skepticism was becoming a posture that was generally available," Shakespeare was "a playwright of socially conservative preferences" (66), at least in relation to the more radical figures such as Ben Jonson, Phillip Stubbes, and Stephen Gosson. According to Bishop, "Shakespeare's brand of conservatism did not seek to root out the cultural forms of the past in order to assert its own claims. It preferred to absorb them" (67). The theoretical timidity and untidiness here about what many critics (formalist or not) would see as a very subversive challenge of Shakespearean drama generally is a problem that is perhaps the result of Bishop's inadequately contextualized argument about what he is calling absorption. Bishop's argument fundamentally implies ratification.

Apparently always conscious of the general weakness of an approach that sidesteps questions of historicism, Bishop mentions some of the difficulties of representing historicity and assessing what he calls "the dialectic of affirmation and critique in Shakespeare's theatre" (73), but in a disconcertingly distant and abstract way goes only as far as saying that "these plays use the dynamic of wonder to think through their impulse to absorb and adapt their own cultural history" (74). The rest of chapter three offers, first, a lengthy look at image patterns and themes and, then, a rather confused discussion about the "poetics of incarnation." Insisting that Shakespeare "puts flesh on" things, that the theatre "produces actual bodies that incarnate their stories in space and time" (108), Bishop makes little of what some would see as an irreducible textuality of the drama, performed or not. By this time, however, the reader is likely to experience a bit of unpleasant wonder at what Bishop himself notes: we "seem to have erred far in our turn from the matter of wonder" (89).

The next chapter looks at *Pericles* as an exploration of the theme of "transmission and revival" (93) biological, cultural, and political. While Bishop draws links between gender and the dramaturgy of wonder that are certainly interesting (though not always new), one wonders why he makes almost no mention of *The Tempest's* Miranda (the very name means "wonder"). He does speak at length about the wondrous Marina, whom he credits with "maintain[ing] the play's concern with verbal transmissions" (111); she is also, Bishop notes, a kind of midwife to the spiritual rebirth of her father.

As thematic formalism, Bishop's analysis is thorough at times, and his presentation of the imagery of doubling comes promisingly close to a

discussion of what he calls "the double activity of performance itself" (15). Rather than getting this, though, we get a careful delineation of the characteristics of wonder, its association with the virgin daughter at the play's end, and a few brief comments explaining that the image of a life-affirming virgin daughter balances the image of the deathwardly story-teller father. We get less about the operation, effects, and implications of wonder and more about its transcendental characteristics (unproblematic for Bishop) than we might have hoped for.

The final chapter, the longest, is a psychoanalytic surf through *The Winter's Tale*, along waves and waves of plot summary flotsam. Bishop's goal is to combine a psychoanalytic reading with an investigation of the ways that the play apprehends the nature/nurture debate. At times, it is a strained reading, even for psychoanalytic criticism. In this reading, Mamilius (the little boy who falls victim to his father's insane paranoia) becomes culpable for his own death because of his verbal dallying with his mother Hermione. At the same time, her statue performance epitomizes, for Bishop, the nature/nurture tension and, through the wonder that her "coming to life" evokes in the audience, Hermione stands in as the incarnation of Shakespeare's "therapeutic magic against the freezing of the world" (16). She is at once representative of a desire to arrest life and construe it in representations, and also of a dialectically opposed desire for "a kind of endlessly mobile self-reproduction" (156). The psychoanalytic and the nature/nurture strains Bishop follows do not really meet.

Thirty-five pages into the chapter, Bishop apologizes for having had to "traverse the whole play" (160) without discussing wonder; his excuse is simply that there are "many strands" in the play. The many strands of the final chapter, while they do not come together, do finally rearticulate "exultation, power, fear, and vulnerability" (167) as defining characteristics, key elements, of wonder.

Despite the book's disjointedness and general lack of theoretical panache, wonder remains important for precisely the reason Bishop notes: wonder is "a borderline 'between' knowledge and emotion" (167) and borders are significant, if only, as Mary Douglas has argued, because they are places of great danger, power, and meaning. (SIMON C. ESTOK, CHONGWON UNIVERSITY)

*JEAN-CLAUDE CARRON, ed. *Francois Rabelais: Critical Assessments*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. xxi + 227pp. US\$ 38.50 Hb.

This beautifully presented and precisely edited volume contains twelve chapters based on the 1991 Rabelais colloquium held in Los Angeles. Carron's

introduction asserts that they now represent "a rare, totalizing glimpse of general critical self-reassessment" (xiv) whereby historical critics have accommodated the principle of plural readings of an author whose more experimental critics here reveal "a strong referential and historical dimension" (xii) within their own discourse. The point is aptly confirmed in Allen's concluding chapter which refers Rabelais' serio-comic ambiguity back to Ficino whose work, particularly on the *Parmenides*, grants just such interpretative freedom as modern critics exploit when pursuing their readings: Allen would argue that though studies of Neo-Platonist influence on Rabelais have been, thus far, somewhat limited in their focus, they still bear the potential to enrich our understanding and appreciation of the ambiguities and paradoxes of his work.

Carron thus claims for his volume an "unexpected rapprochement" (x) between two hitherto opposed trends in critics whose debate, nay "quarrel" (xi), had marked previous gatherings of Rabelaisants and the publications issuing from them. It is a rapprochement borne out in three sections, entitled, with perceptible irony, "Bones of Contention", "Marrows of Discontent" and "Médullaires," headings imprinted with the subtext of disagreements which they both reflect and transcend.

First, in section one, comes La Charité's reappraisal of the "Framing of Rabelais's *Gargantua*" with the two enigma poems, which are seen as exemplifying and re-posing the problem of interpretation raised in the work's Prologue via its central metaphors of inner meaning as bone-marrow or as goods hidden within a container. The said problem is, moreover, less relevant to the "fairly straightforward" (10) narrative situated between the two poems and would not arise so patently were it not for Rabelais' insistent problematising of his own material. The next contribution sees Defaux problematising this same straightforward narrative, *Gargantua* being for him a "devious and deceptive book" (27) and that by use of the author/persona distinction. That textual pattern causes Alcofribas' "rattling of words" to sweep away "all those things Rabelais is apparently fighting for" (*ibid.*) so that ideology becomes the handmaiden, nay even the contemptible victim, of a "writing praxis" (26) which "respects nothing" (26), not even Erasmian Evangelism. This dubious reading, supported by ill-judged assessments of the limits of that same Evangelism (e.g. p. 28 on the "resolutely Lutheran" tone of Grandgousier's letter), still offers legitimacy both to those who "read *Gargantua* as a dialogic play of languages" (24) and to those who "isolate all of its ideological utterances" (*ibid.*). Yet, as readers, we remain "on a leash" (37: where now the freedom?) needing to be "taught ... to read" (38) a text which then disappears behind the author's back.

Cave's analysis of popular and erudite elements as contained particularly in two scenes of encounter (*Pantagruel* chs. 9 and 32) approaches the same problem more satisfactorily, allowing for coherent local meanings within an

overall dynamic structure where popular and erudite elements (and no doubt authorial control and interpretative freedom) interpenetrate rather than negate one another. Defaux would undermine these local meanings using the ludic context surrounding them in a strictly internal evidence to support his the appeal and advantage of producing new external accounts and language case, drawing particularly on Renaissance travel accounts and language manuals which, like Rabelais' work and its humour, connect the high with the low and help one to see better how fluid the intellectual (and indeed the spatial) contours of his period were.

In the final "Bone of Contention," Jeanneret links this same question of interpretative freedom with the exegetical debates of the period in which Rabelais wrote: Erasmus Evangelism must allow for uncertain and unstable readings given the ineffability of the logos which it was handling. This said, some of Jeanneret's own readings are surprisingly monovalent (Her Trippa is an exponent of "intellectual terrorism" /65/, Panurge one whose "understanding is based on allegory" /*ibid.*/: these cannot be their only identities), but the argument in its outline links aptly with Carron's prefatory comments and Allen's concluding paper on Ficino.

Opening up the "Marrows of Discontent," Freccero undertakes a Freudian deconstruction of Wayne Booth's re-reading of the *dame parisienne* episode in *Pantagruel*, responding to his response to feminist criticism, and questioning the (phallogocentric) principles on which the notion of reader-freedom is itself built. Rigolot supports her to the extent that in this same episode Panurge adopts a Satanic role, not in echo of the Fall, but rather of the Temptations in the Wilderness. When this reading then imposes an *imitatio Christi* on the lady, whereby the dogs' urine represents the scourging of the Saviour, one must ask if her rehabilitation has not gone far enough, but, to be fair to Rigolot, alternative readings of both Panurge and his victim are accommodated in his own conclusion.

The third section ("Médullaires") begins with Greene's perceptive treatment of Rabelais' curses, which arguably grow more negative through his works to the extent that by the time of the *Quart livre* they are infecting the author's own healthy *Pantagruelisme*. Duval perceives a similarly self-directed attack in two sections of the *Tiers livre* (Prologue and ch. 24) with their ironic comments on how to write such a book as the *Tiers livre* is not. His reading of Epistémon's digression on Monstrelet (*TL* ch. 24) is enlightening; however, the question of why the *Tiers livre* does "so deliberately subvert ... the forms ... of narrative history and of epic" (132) is easily answered by one who reads it as neither: need one recall that Rabelais owes more to Apuleius, Petronius and Lucian than ever he does to Homer, Virgil and Herodotus? It is left to Regosin to treat the same *Tiers livre* prologue more satisfactorily when seeing its paradoxical and anxious hesitancy as reflecting Rabelais' nervousness at making a new literary departure which might be condemned and/or

misunderstood by hostile and friendly readerships alike.

Margolin maps out anew the intellectual and literary links between Rabelais and Erasmus, a filiation relevant to the reading of *Pantagruel* ch. 8 given, in the penultimate chapter, by Bensimon, who is the more controversial of the two in seeing narcissism (not Renaissance idealism) as Gargantua's prime motive in addressing his son at this point and in arguing that the meeting with Panurge in the following chapter connotes a rejection by Pantagruel of that same ideal as mapped out by the epistle in favour of a "quest for a more real, albeit imperfect nature of man" (175). One is left asking where this quest is apparent and where and how it might be fulfilled.

Non-participants have had to wait four years for this appealing volume to appear, but in the meantime a number of significant links and inter-references have been inserted by the contributors who have, thus, helped to present something of an *état présent* of their collective and their individual thinking. At the very least, the resulting chapters cause one to regret having missed their original symposium. It is also welcome news that scholars who had in the past distinguished themselves with extensive book-length contributions still found themselves ready and willing to revise and refine their thoughts to their own and to our advantage. (JOHN PARKIN, UNIVERSITY OF BRISTOL)

*DAVID FAUSETT. *The Strange Surprising Sources of Robinson Crusoe*. Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1994. Pp. 229. HfL.70; US \$33.50.

Technical problems make this volume difficult to assess. Its accuracy and credibility are rendered questionable by diction and verbosity. The author is fond of neologisms, of inventing terms on single occasions without justifying them by definition or sustaining them by incremental repetition. The following cases are especially striking: "matricial" (18) and "speculary" (50), for they illustrate how the author makes rare and arcane terms operate as slogans, without taking polysemy into account. Curiously, given his wish to emphasize Defoe's authorial carelessness, Fausett confuses registers, mixing technical terms and slang with "gay abandon." Consider this sentence: "A hierarchical system of polygamy lubricates the system by providing rewards for public service" (111). Its mix of wordiness, jargon and slang leads to the strange collocation of "polygamy" and "lubricates." In a work fashionably trying to stress Defoe's dullness to Robinson Crusoe's sexual needs, it is surprising that Fausett writes without awareness of the sexual pressure "polygamy" exerts on "lubrication." His generalizations are unsubstantiated and vacuous because of his deafness to mixed metaphors and susceptibility to equivocation. Take this one: "[Crusoe's] absolute separation from society serves to absolutize the latter in his mind (in much the same way that the

uprooting of rural Europeans was creating the mental conditions in which political absolutism could flourish" (151). The empty verbal play heightens the clash of schemes and tropes. One wonders by what magic deracinated plants flourish, and one gasps before the breathtaking equation of personal fiction and continental social history.

Not seldom do mixed metaphors distance the author's world from that of intelligent readers. How else could one react to this sentence: "Heliocratic metaphors were used to legitimate the state's authority as it became massified and dissolved local cultures" (37). The physical law of what world, Alexander Pope might have asked in the spirit of *The Art of Sinking in Poetry*, permits a mass to become a dissolving agent? Faussett's lexical looseness owes something to anachronism and complacent modernity, as when he talks about "a polarity of right and left wing parties" in the British political scene from 1674 to 1688 (41) or, on the same page, in the phrase "rightist or Jacobite inspiration" which extends the breezy tone of a-historical categorization. The problem is that loose and slangy words are not merely anachronistic; they misrepresent history. Faussett says Dryden was one literary critic who "panned" the Selkirk story, the model for *Robinson Crusoe* Faussett depreciates (4, n.4). But could this be true when Dryden died in 1700 and Selkirk's story was not published by Captain Woodes Rogers until 1712? Biographical and contextual information on Defoe is contaminated by slang, overgeneralization, and conceptual weakness. Typical leaps over troughs of evidence are evident in the following sentence which would confirm that Defoe was familiar with Hendrik Smeek's *The Mighty Kingdom of Krinke Kemes*: "He himself had been involved with the Netherlands: in the Monmouth uprising against the Stuarts in 1685, then in the preparations for William of Orange's accession to the British throne in 1688" (137). A steady lack of evidence and fulsome overstatement emanate from the subsequent pages where Faussett claims to present Defoe's motives but offers only variable and implausible speculations (138-40).

Vague word usage is crucial to key concepts. There is one possibility Faussett seems never to confront in his vague source hunting: he often repeats without justification the claim that Robinson Crusoe is marooned on his desert island. But Robinson is not put on shore by a human agent; he is shipwrecked, everyone else on board perishing. Not only is the episode in Smeeks, which is offered as a paradigm for Defoe's island, a minor and digressive one, but it "involves" a marooning, as distinct from a shipwreck. Verbal and conceptual vagueness is aggravated by remarkable bibliographical errors. Twice when he cites Defoe's *Serious Reflections*, the third part of *Robinson Crusoe*, Faussett misnames the title, blurring it with *Farther Adventures*, the second part. Thus, he refers to "Defoe's *Further Reflections* on the life of Robinson" (125) and paraphrases what Defoe "says in the *Further Reflections*" (134). If the titles are given correctly in the bibliography, this

kind of error is not rare. When Faussett refers to "Defoe's poem *A True Born English-man*" as "an apology for William of Orange and for Dutch culture generally" (144), readers who know the poem is primarily a satire against English insularity will reject Faussett's generic account when they recall that its title is *The True-Born Englishman*, a fact they could not check in the bibliography because it is not listed. Errors in the bibliography sap Faussett's authority. Thus, we read that the well-known Canadian scholar-editor, David Blewett, is "Blewitt" (see also 170) and that one Defoe novel Blewett writes on is *Roxanna* (as distinct from *Roxana*).

To avoid boring readers of this review, I pass silently over scores of syntactical and printing errors. It remains simply to say that the series' editors must expect resistance from librarians, given this volume's poor quality. One problem that does require elaboration is the disservice done by Faussett to comparative studies. His instincts to see *Robinson Crusoe* and the robinsonades texts full of multicultural promise are sound. But his self-important superiority detracts from his scholarship. A. W. Secord may have conducted his pioneer source studies of *Robinson Crusoe* in a primitive way, but Faussett has no right to call Secord's views "absurd" (176) and to dismiss them as "pure guesswork" (177) since his own work suffers from the non-sequiturs he attributes to Secord. Faussett adopts politically correct stances without sustaining or verifying his method. Readers will find his generalizations second-hand, jumbled, and gratuitous. To be told the relation between God and matter was a "defining problem for the age" (51) after being instructed that politics transcended theology because of the "wholesale disaffection from religious metaphysics" (39) says little. If Secord was wrong to look for purely English sources for *Robinson Crusoe* and the Robinson story, why does Faussett employ the term "robinsonade" which semantically emphasizes Defoe's narrative agency and the originating power of English literary terminology?

Ignoring mixed metaphors in the following citations, consider their mindless relativism: the novel is "a bundle of Puritan ideology, worked into a narrative full of inconsistencies and coated with devotional jargon, beneath which lurks [sic] imperialism, racism and misogyny" (183), whereas Defoe's "sophistication on the rhetorical and aesthetic planes was a necessary ingredient enabling the symbolism in question to achieve its fullest expression" (198). Apparently, *Robinson Crusoe* arose from "diffuse historical factors ... beyond Defoe's ken," motifs his predecessors turned into narrative models which he used "for his first attempt at novel writing" (193). Thus, "non-British traditions ... clearly foreshadowed the literary and intellectual response that Defoe's work represents" (196). Defoe's English sources mainly concern the sequels to the basic Crusoe story (197), but the "Robinson-story has universal value, and its creation was a similarly global enterprise" (195). Faussett's final sentence equates Defoe and Smeeks: "the significance of their

joint achievement remains undiminished" (203). This jumble shows that Fausett devalues Defoe's creative agency inconsistently and illogically. He praises collective enterprise when bent on elevating Smeek's reputation. In this he fails, just as he fails to argue convincingly that narrative motifs are narrative models. Despite the mass of information in this book, it lacks the intellectual discipline and substance of a sound article. (ROBERT JAMES MERRETT, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*RUTH B. EMDE. *Schauspielerinnen im Europa des 18. Jahrhunderts. Ihr Leben, ihre Schriften und ihr Publikum*. Internationale Forschungen zur Allgemeinen und Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft. 26. Hg. v. Alberto Martino, Amsterdam-Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1997. XV + 368 pp.

Die Autorin verweist in ihrem einleitenden Forschungsbericht daraufhin, daß die Schauspielerinnen des 18. Jahrhunderts "als erste die Stellung eines modernen Individuums zwischen Selbstbehauptung und Selbsterkenntnis bezogen hätten, daß ihre Erfahrungen sich jedoch "prinzipiell nicht von unseren heutigen ... Erfahrungen" (xv) unterscheiden, da es 200 Jahre nach ihren Protesten und Kämpfen um bürgerliche Emanzipation "nach wie vor noch nicht möglich [sei], über Frauen zu sprechen, ohne auch gleichzeitig von Fiktion zu sprechen" (xv).

Sie verweist in ihrer Restrospektive zum Rollenbereich der Frau auf das Theater als Ort eines intellektuellen und künstlerischen Arbeitsbereichs für Männer und Frauen der Zeit, der gleichzeitig Raum bot für eine neue breite Öffentlichkeit, die den Theaterbesuch als Teil ihrer Lebenserfahrung verstand. In diesem kreativen Raum hatten die Schauspielerinnen bis hin zum 18. Jahrhundert als Protagonistinnen der Aufklärung die Botschaft von Tugend und Vernunft verkündet. Sie waren es auch, die nicht nur der Bewunderung des Publikums sicher waren, sondern auch auf Grund ihres Berufsbildes und traditionellen Rollenfacts bis dahin "die gelehrte und schöne Rede" vermitteln durften.

R. B. Emde will mit ihrer Untersuchung nicht eine weitere der bereits zahlreichen Abhandlungen zum Thema "Schauspielkunst im 18. Jahrhundert" liefern (s. dazu ihre detaillierte Liste der Forschungsliteratur, 353 ff.). Sie versucht vielmehr mit wissenschaftlicher Genauigkeit und interdisziplinärem Interesse die sozialgeschichtliche Perspektive ergänzend zu der literaturwissenschaftlichen und theaterästhetischen einzusetzen, um die Bedingungen zu erhellen, unter denen Frauen aktiv bei der Produktion des theatralischen Ereignisses beteiligt waren. Doch nicht nur als Geschichte von Frauen auf dem Theater (von ihren Anfängen bis ins ausgehende 18. Jahrhundert) will die Autorin ihren Beitrag verstanden wissen, sondern sie möchte vielmehr deren Texte sowie die Texte über sie als Auseinandersetzung

um die sich neu etablierenden Machtverhältnisse und Wahrnehmungsweisen im 18. Jahrhundert deuten. Dazu gehört für sie neben der Analyse der besonderen Produktionsbedingungen von Texten von Frauen auch die Analyse ihrer Rezeption unter den speziellen Aspekten der Theatromanie der Zeit.

Daß die europäische Theaterkultur des 18. Jahrhunderts international war und die Diskurse der Zeit ein Selbstverständnis der Schauspielerinnen erkennen ließen, die "eine eigene weibliche Tradition in der Schauspielkunst" deutlich machten, entnahm die Verfasserin einem Materialkorpus, der England, Frankreich und Deutschland einbezog. Vor diesem internationalen textgeschichtlichen Hintergrund greift sie das Zusammenwirken von Motiven, Figuren, Fiktion und historischen theatergeschichtlichen Persönlichkeiten auf, um sie unter verschiedenen Fragestellungen zu untersuchen. Dazu gehören u.a. "das Schicksal der Neuberin, die Ideen von Hippolyte Clairon, der Sarkasmus der Kummerfeldt, Iffland, Henry Fielding, *Wilhelm Meister, Hamlet, Emilia Galotti*, die *Comédie Française*, das Theater in der Drury Lane ..." (xii).

Sie kommt in ihrer faszinierenden Untersuchung zu erstaunlichen Ergebnissen, die sie in drei Kapiteln vorstellt. Primär und Sekundärliteratur Verzechnisse, sowie die beigefügten 42 Abbildungen, weisen die Autorin als fachkundige Wissenschaftlerin aus, die Textinterpretation, Theatergeschichte, feministische und gesellschaftskritische Fragestellungen gleichsam spielend in ihrer internationalen Forschungsarbeit verbindet.

Den drei Kapiteln geht ein Vorwort (1-34) voraus, in dem sie von Virginia Woolfs Überlegungen ausgeht, die diese in ihrem berühmten Essay *Ein Zimmer für sich alle* in dem Thema "Frauen und Fiktion" widmet. Zum Thema "Schauspielerinnen im 18. Jahrhundert" scheint die Fragestellung nach der "wahren Natur" von Frauen und nach der "wahren Natur" von Fiktion unentwirrbar mit der Frage nach der Autorschaft von Frauen verbunden zu sein. Dabei ist es sicherlich erneut wichtig festzustellen, daß die Schauspielerinnen als Künstlerinnen bis zum 18. Jahrhundert eine besonders in der Öffentlichkeit anerkannte Wertschätzung erfuhren, denn "ihre Kunst war nicht anzuzweifeln, sie war auf keine männliche Urheberschaft zurückzuführen" (3). Als Frauen auf der Bühne verkörperten sie "die Frau" schlechthin als private und öffentliche Person. Aus ihren Geschichten läßt sich neben der persönlichen Vita deshalb auch der Kampf gegen eine patriarchalische Gesellschaft ablesen und der Verlust des bereits erreichten Emanzipationsverständnisses und Selbstentwurfs, d.h. ihre Niederlage gegen diese Gesellschaft am Ende des Jahrhunderts (5).

Mit dem sich entwickelnden Markt von Druckmedien eröffnete sich den schreibenden Schauspielerinnen "ein Forum für einen schriftlichen, überregionalen, sogar internationalen Austausch von Erfahrungen, Texten und Meinungen über das Theater" (4) und die weibliche Existenz in diesem

Raum. Es geht R. B. Emde vor allem darum diese bislang unbekannten Texte sprechen zu lassen als Fiktion über ihr Leben. Eine vergleichende Betrachtung der Texte von und über Schauspielerinnen des 18. Jahrhunderts setzt die historische Retrospektive voraus. Und so beginnt denn auch die Dokumentation mit einer kurzen Darstellung des Eintritts der ersten Schauspielerinnen auf die Bühne. Die Voraussetzungen für das Auftreten der weiblichen Bühnengehörigen, ihre Qualifikationen, ihr Publikum, Image und ihr Selbstverständnis im institutionellen Theaterbetrieb (33 ff.) werden skizziert. Am Beispiel der wichtigsten Rollenfelder der Väter und Töchter auf der Bühne beschäftigt sich das erste Kapitel (*Zärtliche Töchter polternder Väter* 47-141) mit den Schauspielerinnen und ihrer Rolle als Tochter in Fiktion und Wahrheit. Die Darstellung und Bühnenwahrheit der Tochter als Besitztum des Vaters, ihr konkreter materieller Wert auf dem Heiratsmarkt, die Geisteswelt des Vaters als einzige akzeptable Heimat der Tochter, eingebettet in die Tugendauffassung der Zeit, darin sieht die Autorin den "zündenden Konfliktstoff für fast alle Stücke" (87) in der Fiktion des 18. Jahrhunderts.

Überzeugend führt sie den Leser durch die zeitgenössische Literatur, in der die "Tochterrolle einem erheblichen Wandel unterliegt." War die Tochter in der Komödie der Frühaufklärung noch Kontrastfigur mit wachem Verstand zur defekten Männerwelt, so überzeugt sie in der Mitte des Jahrhunderts durch Schönheit und Tugend und gewinnt zum Jahrhundertende zunehmend an erotischer Attraktivität (87).

Lessings *Emilia* zeigt für die Autorin bereits eine Aporie auf: "In diesem Stück, in diesem System, können sie nicht weiterleben" (86). Doch Diskurse von Tugend, Liebe und Gehorsam zwischen Vater und Tochter zeigen den Kampf, "in dem die Fiktion das von beiden beherrschte Machtmittel ist, um sie ihren eigenen Interessen gemäß Wirklichkeit werden zu lassen" (87).

Am Beispiel der Engländerin Charlotte Charke und Colley Cibber entwirft die Autorin anschließend die Tochter Vater Antagonisten, von denen literarische Zeugnisse erhalten sind. Als Schauspieler, Theaterleiter und Stückeschreiber waren sie im London der ersten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts bekannte Persönlichkeiten, die auch beide ihre Biographie als Dokumente der Zeit hinterließen. Auf 53 Seiten gelingt es der Autorin zu beweisen, wie Charlotte Charkes privates und öffentliches Leben einerseits in Abhängigkeit von Patriarchat und väterlichen Machtstrukturen erfolglos blieb, wie sie in immer wieder neuen Rollenverwandlungen den Bühnenerfolg suchte, und wie sie andererseits als Autorin auf der Ebene der Fiktion den Kampf gegen den Vater gewinnt. R. E. Emde sieht ihr Schicksal als repräsentativ für das der Schauspielerinnen der Zeit. Wie Väter, der Staat, Gesetze, Zensur und Polizei in ihrer unerbittlichen Allianz den Emanzipationsanspruch der Töchter in den Diskursen auf und hinter der Bühne kaltblütig im Keim ersticken, zeigt die Biographie der Charke. Der Ausbruch aus den Grenzen der diktierten Weiblichkeit in der Fiktion zeigt einerseits die Kreativität und andererseits

wie hoch der Preis war, mit dem Künstlerinnen wie die Charke diesen Grenzübertritt bezahlen mußten: "Sie mußte teuer dafür bezahlen: ihre Werke wurden vernichtet, als Schauspielerin wurde sie entlassen, als Ehefrau verlassen, als Wanderschauspielerin verhaftet, als Tochter verstoßen" (140).

In ihrer autobiographischen Darstellung allerdings löst sie sich von den vorgeschriebenen Rollenmustern und Abhängigkeiten einer Frau des 18. Jahrhunderts und entwirft *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Charlotte Charke – Youngest daughter of Colley Cibber, Esq. – written by herself* (London, 1755). In diesem Zwiegespräch mit sich selbst "rettet sie ihr Leben ... und ihre Identität vor dem Untergang im Gewirr der Diskurse" (141).

Das zweite Kapitel (*Tragödiinnen, Tragödien und tragische Rollen* 142-92) handelt von dem beruflichen Selbstverständnis dreier großer Schauspielerinnen und der Übereinstimmung auf internationaler Ebene: der Neuberin (Deutschland), der Charlotte Charke (England) und der vielleicht berühmtesten Tragödin der Geschichte der Hippolyte Clairon (Frankreich). Die Autorin interessiert vor allem beim Vergleich der drei großen Frauen wie sie ihr privates Leiden am Patriarchat mit ihrem beruflichen schauspielerischen Können gestalteten (142 ff.). Stellungnahmen zu diesem beruflichen Selbstverständnis sind trotz mangelnder Quellenbestände aufschlußreich für den Wirkungsbereich der Schauspielerinnen auf ihr Publikum. Ihre Reformen bezüglich des Kostüms und der Deklamation zeigen u.a. Abweichungen von der variationsarmen, aber vorgeschriebenen höfischen Etikette, an der sich Sprache, Haltung und Gestik der Schauspieler orientierten. Aufschlußreiche Abbildungen in der Dokumentation von R. B. Emde machen die Veränderungen diesbezüglich auch für das Lesepublikum nachvollziehbar.

Die Autobiographie von Hippolyte Clairon erscheint 1822 in Paris unter dem Titel *Mémoires écrits par elle même*. Nouvelle édition, mise dans un nouvel ordre, et contenant: 1. Mémoires et faits personnels; 2. Reflexions morales et morceaux détachés; 3. Reflexions sur l'art dramatiques et sur la déclamation théâtrale (343). In dieser dokumentiert sie wie bereits ihre große deutsche Schwester Caroline Neuber und die englische Leidensgefährtin Charlotte Charke die Utopie eines kreativen, intellektuellen Austauschs zwischen Theater, Literatur und Wirklichkeit. Obwohl sie zur geistigen Elite der Zeit gehörten, ihr berufliches und privates Selbstverständnis verteidigten, so waren sie dennoch nicht in der Lage die öffentliche Anerkennung zu erreichen. Während der männliche Adel sie hoffierte und bezahlte, ernteten sie vom aufstrebenden Bürgertum meist Verachtung. Im Kampf um den patriarchalischen Herrschaftsanspruch diktierte dieses den Schauspielerinnen die Rollen, die sie für es spielen mußten und zwar oft wie die Autorin kritisch bemerkt "mit einer Finanzspritze des Adels, der sich so ... die letzte politische Kontrolle vorbehielt" (192).

Bevor die Schlußbetrachtung sich mit dem vergessenen, oft

unterschlagenen Erbe dieser Frauen beschäftigt (*Schauspielerinnen und was von ihnen bleibt* 331-36), wendet sich R. B. Emde im dritten Kapitel (*Buhlerin oder aufrichtige Liebhaberin?* 193-330) ihren Rollen, den Kennern, ihren Liebhabern, den Skandalen um sie und dem Publikum zu. Konfrontationen zwischen letzterem und den Schauspielerinnen zeigen wie nicht nur der Vater, der Landesvater, die Institutionen der Zeit das Recht der Machtausübung für sich reklamierten (193 ff.). So wurde in den Druckerzeugnissen nichts weiter reflektiert als die Machtverhältnisse im öffentlichen Diskurs um das Theater, der von Männern und nicht von Frauen, von Zuschauern und nicht von Theatermachern geführt wurde. Exemplarisch führt sie hier wie in den vorhergehenden Kapiteln Goethes *Wilhelm Meister* Romane an, die sowohl die dramaturgischen wie auch die trivialen Diskurse der Zeit enthalten und die wesentlichen Elemente der Theaterromane widerspiegeln. Letztere zeitige Texte, die in der Form von Abenteuerromanen vor allem Schicksale von Schauspielerinnen kolportierten. Deren angebliche sittliche Verkommenheit wird zum zentralen Thema dieser gegen Ende des 18. und am Anfang des 19. Jahrhunderts anwachsenden Trivialliteratur. Die Problematik der Schauspielerin als öffentliche Person im Kontrast zu ihr als Rollenträgerin auf dem Theater weist nach Meinung der Autorin ein Paradox auf: "Sie sollten repräsentieren ohne als repräsentabel betrachtet zu werden, sie waren Bedeutungsträgerinnen von etwas Bedeutungslosem der Rolle der Frau" (329).

Da in den Texten der Autorinnen eine einsame Erfahrung aufgezeichnet ist, die Lebensläufe voller Rollenverstöße spiegeln, die den Erwartungen und Tugendmustern der Zeit widersprechen, so liefern sie einen wichtigen europäischen Beitrag zum Thema Fiktion von Frauen und Fiktion über Frauen. Es ist das Verdienst der Autorin für den Beitrag von Theaterfrauen im 18. Jahrhundert ein wichtiges neues Sehrastr entwickelt zu haben, das uns heute 200 Jahre später ihre Schicksale und Texte völlig neu einschätzen lässt. (TRUDIS E. GOLDSMITH-REBER, MCGILL UNIVERSITY)

*ELLIS SHOOKMAN, ed. *The Faces of Physiognomy: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Johann Caspar Lavater*. Studies in German Literature, Linguistics, and Culture. Columbia: Camden House, 1993. Pp 250. US\$ 59.50.

This anthology consists of ten articles based on papers originally delivered in November of 1991 at a Dartmouth College conference commemorating the 250th anniversary of the birth of Johann Caspar Lavater (1741-1801). The essays reflect on the Swiss theologian's physiognomical work and intellectual personage from various academic viewpoints ranging from literary and art historical studies to concerns of more philosophical, psychological, or

sociohistorical import. Consequently, the collection provides both a basic overview of the place of Lavater and physiognomy in cultural history in general, as well as a series of more enlightening detailed insights into how the Swiss's physiognomical excavations towards the end of the eighteenth century specifically relate to particular cultural figures and interconnect with, even abet, certain social perceptions or artistic themes of his time.

Ellis Shookman sets the scene of inquiry by accounting for the popularity of Lavater's work in four ways. First, the supposedly scientific undertaking of physiognomy succeeded in reaching several diverse audiences because it was transdisciplinary in nature, thus also having a broadly philosophical and artistic, as well as a peculiarly theological appeal. Second, the socially discriminating phenomenon won much fanfare as a direct result of the author's self-promoting personality and the full endorsement he seemed to give to the importance of his intended clientele, the rich and educated. Third, the topic was already a perennial source of or theme for literary characterization whose reception ran the gamut from amusement and satire to Lessing's soberly doubting use in his *Nathan der Weise*. Finally, it was an established component of a tradition of moral aesthetics, traceable to Socrates, that links outward beauty and human worth and that had just gained new momentum from the recent art histories of Johann Joachim Winckelmann.

The articles by Christoph Siegrist and Carsten Zelle pursue similar criteria for comprehending Lavater's immediate appeal among his contemporaries. Siegrist insists that one must bear in mind the interrelated criteria of the social context of the Zurich intelligentsia, the religious-semiotic definition of faces as a language-system of the soul, and the ambivalent reception of the inventive potential of the discipline. He draws particular attention to the fact that Lavater was a student of Johann Jakob Bodmer, that he was influenced by the Storm and Stress movement and Leibnizian individuality, and that he held a relatively close acquaintance with Goethe for five instructive years. Yet by way of conclusion Siegrist offers the reader the bland implication that Lavater was a somewhat unfortunate and maladministering product both of the prevailing thought of his time and of his intention to see only the good in people while being unaware of the limitations of his methods. Zelle also situates and explores Lavater's physiognomy within the rubric of physioreligious pietism and social semiology that holds the portrait of a human face to be the analytical surface (text) of the soul (inner meaning) — a point which, as Zelle indicates, is expanded by Goethe and Georg Christoph Lichtenberg by their inclusion of clothing and social manners. But Zelle does this only after having first explored the overriding transhistorical nature of the desire of humans to see into each other's souls, a phenomenon he evidences by rapidly listing references that start in mythology and extend to various kinds of semiological texts at the end of the eighteenth century — in which Lavater's physiognomy takes its place — via the remark that "the need

for a knowledge of people that confers superiority persists even in our own ever-so-modern times" (43). According to Zelle, what distinguishes the interest of Lavater and his time in physiognomy is the fact that it seems to be a reaction "to a sense of individual crisis connected to the modernization and accelerated pace of a transitional period"; the revival of physiognomy thus serving to console Marx's newly born 'isolated individual' who while celebrating its independence was jittery from the simultaneous realization of its codependence on the rest of society (43-4).

Siegfried Frey's excellently researched article traces the endeavours to have Lavater write and publish his physiognomical treatises, as well as the private and public reception of these writings by "some of the most prominent people of his time" (68). Frey reveals Lavater's professed insecurities and flattering strategies, which combined to coax many learned persons into lending him a helping hand with his mammoth project — the most persistent and enterprising being Johann Georg Zimmermann, whereas Goethe was to become the most famous. Frey skillfully lays out a vast web of writers, scholarly journals, and members of the privileged classes whose initial unqualified and unified praise was met with equal enthusiasm across the general German populace, thus amounting to a veritable craze already predicted and dubbed "physiognomania" by Zimmermann. Frey regards this (mistakenly, I believe) as an historical moment when a society, otherwise divided along class lines, comes to understand a "common language" facilitated only by "the universality of physiognomic sentiment" (88), that intuitive ability to interpret another's facial features paradoxically only to be learned from Lavater. Frey then casts Lichtenberg as the lone detractor of a culture's preoccupation, who recognized how physiognomical diagnoses that relied more on the descriptions composed by the physiognomist than on the image before the observer played directly into "the formation of prejudice" (97). Frey points out how Lichtenberg's observations initially earned him much criticism from the very same educated and influential people who had supported (and, I would add, most stood to gain from) Lavater's work, but these people soon retreated one by one. Judith Wechsler's article continues the discussion of prejudice in her treatment of the national and racial stereotypes found in Lavater's original German-language work and its translations into French and English. She observes how prejudicial descriptions promote the cultural standing of one ethnic group over another by enabling the appearance of the superiority of one over the other, how generalizations increase with the geographical distance from Western and Central European or Christian peoples, and how in the different language editions there are subtle variations — ascribable to the translators, not Lavater — in the degree of hatred meted out particularly to Jews. However, in a case study of Lavater's treatment of Moses Mendelssohn, Wechsler demonstrates how the Swiss physiognomist's positive personal impression of the German-

Jewish philosopher is inconsistent with the stereotype of the Jew found elsewhere, thus revealing the fact that personal or emotional proximity to the subject was also to play a decisive factor.

While considerations of space prevent me from discussing all the remaining articles, one in particular deserves mention. Christopher Rivers's compelling essay proposes Honoré de Balzac's *Comédie humaine* as an extended exercise in Lavaterian physiognomy since it gives special credence to superficial details as signifiers and renounces "the arbitrary in human existence through the medium of corporeal reading" (147). Rivers then abandons theorizing — though it would have been instructive to have included more than just a footnote on Balzac's critiques of social manners *Traité de la vie élégante* and *Théorie de la démarche* — in favour of a didactic case study of the novel *La Vieille Fille*, proving convincingly that the physiognomical illiteracy of the character Mlle. Cormon, itself legible on her face, is the reason for her comic inability to escape her lot. This study enables a return to the theme of the role played by fictional works in physiognomical education, that is, whether physiognomical sentiment is an acquirable art, as Lavater and Balzac suggest, or a genial talent possessed by a few, as they likewise both seem to contend. Either way, it is by physiognomizing that one takes charge of the fabrication of meaning.

Though the contributions vary in acuity and breadth, though they occasionally draw upon or arrive at the same points, Shookman's illustrated edition offers the interested reader a valuable interdisciplinary look at the various 'faces of physiognomy' of Lavater's day, its background, reception, implications, and influence. It is also commendable that the work has not gained accessibility at the expense of faithfulness, since the English translations of all quotations provided in the text are accompanied by the original German (or French) in the footnotes. (JOHN L. PLEWS, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*HARRY REDMAN JR. *Major French Milton Criticism of the Nineteenth Century*. Duquesne University Press, 1994. Pp. 404. US \$48.00.

Il s'agit d'une étude de réception concernant l'oeuvre de John Milton, dans la France du XIX^e siècle. Le champ de la recherche englobe l'ensemble des textes critiques parus tout au long du siècle, ce qui constitue un vaste corpus particulièrement riche et varié comprenant articles, biographies, essais, travaux universitaires... Après avoir rappelé dans l'introduction l'influence déterminante de Milton sur la littérature romantique française, Harry Redman centre l'analyse sur les commentaires critiques, qu'ils émanent d'écrivains, de journalistes, d'historiens, de poètes, de traducteurs, de professeurs... Les

auteurs sont retenus non pas en raison de leur notoriété auprès de la postérité, mais en fonction de l'impact de leurs écrits sur le public-lecteur de l'époque. C'est ainsi que Pongerville, auteur d'une traduction en prose de *Paradise Lost*, et d'un essai sur Milton, se voit attribuer un chapitre au même titre que Chateaubriand, parce qu'une partie non négligeable du lectorat a pu prendre connaissance de son appréciation de l'oeuvre miltonienne et du jugement qu'il a porté sur l'homme. La prise en compte du *medium* assurant la diffusion de telle interprétation de l'oeuvre étudiée est, en effet, un critère essentiel à la pertinence et à l'efficacité d'une étude de réception. Un autre mérite consiste à exposer en toute impartialité des points de vue souvent très discordants sur le même objet d'analyse, ce qui invite le lecteur à méditer sur le caractère très relatif et précaire des constructions échafaudées par l'esprit critique et ne peut que l'exhorter à la prudence dans ce domaine. Nous verrons que cet ouvrage est riche d'enseignements non seulement pour la somme de connaissances qu'il apporte sur l'objet de l'étude: Milton et son oeuvre, mais aussi parce qu'il nous renseigne sur l'évolution de la critique littéraire française, qu'il s'agisse des idéologies ou des méthodes.

Tous les aspects de l'homme et de l'écrivain sont explorés dans cette ample compilation puisqu'elle réunit sous les yeux du lecteur les diverses facettes privilégiées par chacun des auteurs. L'impression d'exhaustivité qui en résulte tient à la construction de l'ouvrage, Harry Redman ayant pris le parti de mener son étude de manière systématique: quinze chapitres énoncent les positions des quinze critiques retenus, dont le nom apparaît très clairement dans le titre, le seizième et dernier faisant la synthèse des réflexions suscitées par ce panorama qui couvre tout le siècle. L'auteur est brièvement présenté et situé, puis ses commentaires sont passés en revue, suivant l'ordre générique des productions de Milton ou en fonction de la chronologie des événements biographiques du poète. Une conclusion résume les positions énoncées et en souligne l'intérêt. Les exposés successifs sont eux-mêmes soumis à l'appréciation critique de Harry Redman, qui rectifie les erreurs concernant la biographie de Milton ou le contexte historique, dénonce la partialité manifeste de certains jugements, émet des réserves sur la confusion du propos, ses incohérences ou ses lacunes éventuelles. D'abondantes citations en français (les plus longues sont traduites) permettent de mieux prendre la mesure du jugement rendu, en respectant la fidélité du ton, du style des interventions.

Une telle moisson de commentaires invite à prendre conscience de l'ampleur de l'oeuvre miltonienne, que le lecteur moderne réduit trop souvent au seul *Paradis perdu*. Selon le centre d'intérêt de chaque critique, un texte singulier est mis en valeur, ce qui donne un étonnant relief à l'ensemble dans lequel il s'inscrit. Aucune production, fût-elle mineure, n'est négligée: la poésie latine est prise en compte par Villemain; les poèmes de jeunesse, bien connus de Chateaubriand, sont mentionnés par Edmond de Guérle, admirateur des sonnets; Véricour et Alfred Mézières, s'attardent sur *Comus*, drame pastoral

(*masque*) de 1634. Les pièces italiennes sont mentionnées, éclairant la richesse de la langue miltonienne à venir, nourrie d'emprunts à d'autres idiomes que l'anglais. L'oeuvre en prose est abondamment commentée, en particulier dans le chapitre consacré à M. A. Geffroy, auteur d'une *Étude sur les pamphlets politiques et religieux de Milton* (1848). Cette étude globale fait apparaître la diversité des sujets abordés par l'écrivain: traités sur la religion, l'éducation, le divorce, la presse, pamphlets sur l'exécution du roi Charles I^{er}, travaux d'histoire et d'érudition... car, comme le rappelle Chateaubriand, si Milton était un géant en poésie, il fut aussi un géant en prose (65). *Areopagitica* (1644), plaidoyer pour l'abolition de la censure, est distingué à plusieurs reprises et considéré comme représentatif de l'idéal de liberté poursuivi par Milton, d'après Geffroy. L'oeuvre poétique majeure, *Paradise Lost* (1667), demeure au centre des analyses critiques et ne recueille pas forcément tous les suffrages. Si elle est unanimement qualifiée de "sublime," elle n'est pas épargnée par les réserves sur l'excès de l'érudition et la froideur de ses "dissertations." Cependant, tous les commentateurs s'accordent pour retenir la figure de Satan comme la création la plus aboutie de Milton. C'est sans aucun doute cette oeuvre qui inspire les commentaires les plus lyriques et les plus passionnés. Quant aux poèmes plus tardifs, ils sont souvent passés sous silence ou peu estimés, à l'exception de *Samson Agonistes* (1671), admiré par G. E. Stroehlin.

On ne peut qu'apprécier la qualité de cette étude à laquelle on pourrait tout au plus reprocher une tendance à la répétition, chaque chapitre reprenant le parcours de Milton, mais ce défaut est la rançon de la clarté et de l'aspect systématique de l'entreprise. Retenons en premier lieu son intérêt historique. Le classement chronologique adopté fait apparaître nettement deux images de Milton, celle de l'idéaliste pathétique composée par les Romantiques et celle du génie rationaliste qui prévaut dans la seconde moitié du siècle, sous l'influence de Taine. L'exégèse de l'oeuvre miltonienne est donc le reflet de l'évolution littéraire. Les réactions des divers auteurs face aux engagements de l'homme d'action que fut Milton permettent également de reconstituer le panorama politique de l'époque. Les méthodes et les théories adoptées par la critique littéraire du XIX^e siècle ont l'avantage de se dégager clairement à la lecture de l'ouvrage, depuis le romantisme invétéré de Barbey d'Aurevilly jusqu'au déterminisme de Taine, qui voit en Milton le produit de la Renaissance et de la Réforme. L'intérêt littéraire de l'ouvrage consiste à souligner la portée de l'oeuvre étudiée et la dimension de l'écrivain: unanimement tenu pour un génie capable d'inventer "une parole nouvelle de politique et de poésie" (Chateaubriand 64) et un précurseur du siècle des Lumières, de la Révolution française, de la poésie romantique. Enfin, l'ouvrage de Harry Redman présente un grand intérêt pour les comparatistes, en ménageant des analogies entre le destin de Milton et celui des hommes de lettres français (Lamartine, Chateaubriand), en replaçant l'oeuvre dans la tradition anglaise (comparaison établie par Mézières avec la production

élisabéthaine et jacobéenne) ou européenne (intéressants développements sur l'épopée en particulier). La reconstitution fidèle et méthodique des images successives du poète anglais sous le regard de la critique française peut sans aucun doute éclairer la recherche en littérature comparée. JOËLLE PRUNGNAUD, UNIVERSITÉ CHARLES DE GAULLE LILLE III

*LEONARD E. DOUCETTE, trans. and ed. *The Drama of Our Past: Major Plays from Nineteenth-Century Quebec*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997. Pp. xii + 327. CDN \$60.00 cloth; \$24.95 paper.

In his introduction to *The Drama of Our Past*, Leonard Doucette notes the survival of 175 nineteenth-century Quebec plays in French. Most have never been translated into English to make them more broadly available for study as part of the theatre history of Canada; furthermore, it has always required a major library to find many of these plays even in the original French. He offers this selection of five full-length dramas and five politically satirical playlets as a partial remedy, to make a sampling of Quebec drama of the period something scholars and students can read, rather than read about.

The adjective "Major" is somewhat misleading at first reading. It is not fixed, but overall, refers more to genres and to themes than to theatrical inventiveness and dramatic complexity. Even within this collection, many of the early works and the political satires are relatively much slighter than others.

Of the five full-length dramas, four feature some aspect of French-Anglo relations. Two Joseph Quesnel's *Anglomania, or Dinner, English-Style* (date of origin uncertain, but extant in the first decade of the century) and Pierre Petitclair's *A Country Outing* (1856) satirize French characters who affect English habits and attitudes.

Two others deal with political and social issues that remain problematic even today. *Archibald Cameron of Lochell, or an Episode in the Seven Years' War in Canada* (1759) (1868) asks whether a person of non-French background can be loyal to Quebec. Adapted by Camille Caisse from the novel *Les Anciens Canadiens* by Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, the play depicts dilemmas of a Scottish-born officer in the British army as Quebec falls. Archibald Cameron has loyalties and connections with Quebec as well. He had been raised by the d'Haberville family in Canada when he was forced to seek refuge from British persecution of his family in Scotland. Later, as a member of the British army, he is ordered by a villainous senior officer to burn the d'Haberville estates. He passes the loyalty test to his Canadian benefactors, earns a promotion in the British army, and resigns his commission to re-establish his friendship with the d'Habervilles.

Doucette claims that *Félix Poutre* (1862), adapted by Louis-Honoré Fréchette from Poutre's memoirs, is the most popular play to come out of nineteenth-century Quebec. It relates the misadventures of a patriot who escaped the gallows for his part in the uprisings of 1837-38. To a late twentieth-century reader from outside Quebec, the play is full of ironies. Poutre plots the violent deaths of his "oppressors," yet feels it "unfair" to be sentenced to death for such plotting. He addresses his fellow prisoners, trying to bolster their courage and promising them the rank of martyrs to liberty as they go to their deaths. At the same time, he rather cravenly seeks to escape their fate by faking insanity. To judge from popular reaction to the memoir and the play, he evidently succeeded in gulling not only his British captors, but the public as well, who overlooked what might easily be seen as his hypocrisy towards his fellow patriots to celebrate the escape itself. This is the one play in the collection that could probably sustain a performance for more than historical interest, if only to see how a modern director and cast might deal with the contradictions in character and motive, and how audiences in various parts of Canada would respond.

The other full-length play is Petitclair's *The Donation* (1842), the first play by a native of Quebec to be written, produced and published in this country. This melodrama of comic intrigue traces duplicity within Quebec society as a villain tries to come between two young lovers, and to undo his virtuous benefactors for his own profit.

The word "major" applied to the five "paratheatrical" "Status Quo" comedies (so named for the pseudonym of the writer of most of these pieces, "Friend of the Status Quo") refers almost entirely to the scope of the genre itself. Even Doucette writes of the need to be careful "not to exaggerate the importance of the *Status Quo Comedies*" in the evolution of mainstream drama in Quebec" (40). Indeed, without a fairly broad understanding of the issues and historical figures, these plays are a chore to read, a chore not helped by constant reference to the large body of explanatory notes at the end of the volume.

Doucette's scholarly apparatus and introductory commentaries are models of their types, as he explains the historical and cultural contexts for each work, provides a reading of the structures of the plays as part of the evolution of Quebec drama, and explains the problems and challenges inherent in the original language(s) of the plays.

But as seems almost inevitable in a work of this sort, Doucette's translations still contain tracings of the difficulties he encountered trying to find English equivalents for the several levels (or class distinctions) expressed by the original "French." Some of the servant and working class speeches, in particular, seem to owe a debt to Mark Twain and *Huckleberry Finn*, or to deep South dialects reminiscent of *Gone With the Wind*, and as a result have a rather wooden thump of artificiality about them. An oath translated more

than once as "bloody damn!" for example, comes across as rather silted at best.

Doucette's work as translator is probably at its best in *A Country Outing*, where he develops a form of broken English to represent the earnest but broken French of the stumbling anglophone Brown, and adds a level of linguistic interest and comedy to the piece.

What place will this volume occupy in the ongoing study of Canada's and Quebec's theatrical past? For classroom use, Doucette's collection would have been a significant addition to volumes in the now out-of-print series, *Canada's Lost Plays*, particularly as a companion to Anton Wagner's volume on the drama of colonial Quebec, and to the volume on nineteenth-century drama that Wagner edited with Richard Plant. For individual research and study, for those who have access to parallel or complementary works, it still will be such a companion volume. For any kind of large group study, it holds a major position as *the* book in print, a solitary and isolated window into a period that seems to be found, then lost again, in a frustrating cycle. (DON PERKINS, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

* LAURA OTIS, *Organic Memory: History and the Body in the Late Nineteenth & Early Twentieth Centuries*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1994. Pp. 297 + xvi. US \$40.00.

The relationship between memory and history has been recently the focus of increasing critical attention. As a valuable addition to an expanding body of literature, Laura Otis's *Organic Memory* offers a comprehensive account of how the idea of organic memory developed as part of a larger cultural discourse in Western Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The book draws on both literary and scientific writings to investigate the historical significance of memory in the individual, in the collective, and as a hermeneutical means. In Otis's definition of the focus of her book, "The nineteenth-century organic memory theory ... proposes that memory and heredity were essentially the same and that one inherited memories from ancestors along with their physical features.... It located history in the body" (2).

Such a definition evokes a long-drawn debate, which gathered momentum largely in mid- and late-nineteenth-century Europe, particularly in France, Britain, and Germany. In its early stage, the contention was centred on Lamarckianism, i.e., the hypothesis that acquired characteristics can be transmitted, and on Ernst Haeckel's suggestion that ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny. The complexity of the initial debate consisted in the urgent need for clarification and definition of certain related notions and concepts. Several

key words in Otis's definition reflect such a complexity. Questions were raised, with regard to "heredity" for instance, not just about what could be inherited but also about how certain features, tendencies, traits, and characters were transmitted, whether merely culturally or physiologically as well. Other notable theories of memory and recapitulation had also been developed throughout the nineteenth century, which included the German tradition of *Naturphilosophie* (especially as propounded by Johann Gottfried Herder), Alexander Bain's associationism, Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection, evolutionary physiological psychology that tried to compromise physiological and metaphysical epistemologies, and diverse theories by philosophers, literary figures, and scientists such as Herbert Spencer, Théodule Ribot, Henri Bergson, Thomas Hardy, and Samuel Butler. What emerged from such a long-drawn and wide-ranging debate was a sustained effort on the part of *bona fide* scientists and literary authors to search for the mode of "heredity" which often eluded precise explanation.

To examine, as Otis sets out to, this whole tradition of "mnemonic" thinking and its development into the early twentieth century in both literary and scientific writings poses an enormous challenge. The book's scope is ambitiously wide. By tracing how organic memory developed as a "way of thinking" (viii), Otis has managed to explicate and discuss writings by literary writers (including Emile Zola, Pío Baroja, Thomas Mann, Miguel de Unamuno, Emilia Pardo Bazán and Hardy) and by scientists and thinkers (including Darwin, Ernst Haeckel, Ribot, Ewald Hering, Butler, August Weismann, Moritz Lazarus, Heymann Steinthal, Wilhelm Wundt, Freud, and Jung). She examines, one by one, a good number of novels, some in greater depth than others, and gives accounts of the novelists that set out the contextual and theoretical parameters. Of Zola's six Rougon-Marcquart novels treated in the book, each is given an average of about two and half pages. Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* fares best and enjoys a good eleven pages. It is a pity that given Otis's thematic interest, apart from one half-line casual appearance, Marcel Proust has hardly a place in this book. The wide range of material is certainly important in generating a sense of a "Kuhnian paradigm" (viii). The drawback, however, is that treating such material only cursorily makes it difficult, if not impossible, for the reader to understand accurately the thinking of these many figures in their own contexts. Brief mention of a large number of other scientists may also blur different weightings and emphases. For instance, of the three series in George Henry Lewes's *magnus opus*, *Problems of Life and Mind*, Otis chooses to use its First Series, *Foundations of a Creed*. But the Third Series has a volume devoted entirely to the study of psychology, and his theories are improved and better developed in that series. It also contains a substantial section on "The General Mind" or the collective (including national) sense of organic memory, which is most germane to Otis's focus.

Otis intends this book to be "case studies" (viii): "The motivation of those who formulated [the theory of organic memory] becomes much clearer in the light of Foucault's analyses" of how the "new concept of knowing involved a focusing on the individual body, which was thought to conceal a hidden essence or truth" (30). To this end, the book has been successful. One clear message that emerges out of its discussion is that the physical or bodily dimension of memory has, in many ways, been overlooked or suppressed by a metaphysical epistemology in the representation of memory in general. Reaffirming the importance of locating memory back in the body constitutes the critical value of this study. The book rightly detects a tendency in "idealists" such as Moritz Lazarus and Heymann Steinthal to exclude materialism from their theory of cultural inheritance while unconsciously depending on it.

Nevertheless, locating memory back in the body does not necessarily entail that the body is all there is to memory. According to Otis, "The theory of organic memory placed the past *in* the individual, *in* the body, *in* the nervous system; it pulled memory from the domain of the metaphysical into the domain of the physical with the intention of making it *knowable*" (3, original emphases). The individual, the body, and the nervous system: these three terms in sequence no doubt indicate the transition from the metaphysical to the physical, but such a putative shift of emphasis can be somewhat too neat and unproblematic. The various uses of the organic sense of the "body" in the late nineteenth century, especially in France and Britain, may conjure up a more complex and ambiguous picture. Otis's own analysis of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* demonstrates this well: Tess's "life as a d'Urberville begins not so much when she is born into the family as when she receives the family name" (162). Naming here may identify a physical existence, but just as significantly, it may also define the mindset such a name may force Tess to adopt so as to interpret her own conditions of existence. Herbert Spencer's focus on the body is either physiological, when he deals with individual memory, or half-heartedly metaphysical, as is particularly evident in his appreciation of the *a priori* basis of collective memory. Auguste Comte, who is briefly mentioned for his recognition of the promise of physiology for understanding heredity and behaviour, paradoxically excluded psychology from his system of knowledge because it was, in his view, based on instincts. Herder's *Volksgeist* is another concept that implies a negotiation between the physical and the metaphysical domains without excluding either. George Eliot highlighted the tensions and interactions between the physical and metaphysical origins of memory precisely to make memory less Cartesian and more "organic." Likewise, Lewes's life-long commitment to a Romantic and historical understanding of physiological and psychological phenomena can also be an interesting and useful point of reference. In this connection, to use the postmodern sense of the word "body" for its topicality should not cancel

out the complexity of its original nuances which become meaningful only when read in their nineteenth-century contexts. Otis is thorough and painstaking in following through the ramifications of the initial debate on organic memory, especially how later nineteenth-century psychologists used experimental biology to "locate" the mnemonic faculty. But it appears that the nineteenth-century theory of organic memory "located history in the body" sooner and with a more complex theoretical awareness in its earlier stage than is suggested in Otis's study, and had since helped define the nature of subsequent debates and speculations. The structural flow of the book moves quickly from the origin of the idea to its later "mutations," which is understandable given the chronological range of this book. As a result, the contribution of late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century writers is sometimes magnified and that of their predecessors simplified. For instance, there may need to be more justification for claiming Lazarus and Steinthal's theories as the "first *Völkerpsychologie*" and finer distinctions need to be made to differentiate them from their predecessors.

Otis elucidates scientific writings with ease and confidence. But since she intends to approach scientific writings in the same way as she does the novels, describing a certain scientific conception is often tantamount to analysing it. For instance, if Haeckel relied on words such as "represent" and "resemble" to describe the "analogical" relationship between phylogeny and ontogeny (7), these words would certainly deserve more substantial analysis; they reflect precisely the futility Haeckel faced in identifying the specific modes of analogy he was trying to describe. Again, if nineteenth-century organic memory theory proposes that "memory and heredity were essentially the same" (2), then one has to explore the sites where various forms of memory and diverse modes of heredity not only merge but are transformed, or perhaps transfigured, into the same "essence." What, in the final analysis, is the nature of this essence then?

Otis's book is fascinating in reconstructing the paradigm of organic memory as a way of thinking in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The mode of each novelist's engagement with the theory of organic memory is clearly identified: the pathological implications of heredity in Zola and Baroja, cultural identity in Mann and Unamuno, cultural conservation and its interpretation in Pardo Bazán and Hardy. The chapter on organic memory and Freud is particularly thorough. In several places, the book offers insightful discussions of how national culture may operate as organic memory. Chapter Four, which examines the novels of Hardy and Pardo Bazán, is sustained and accomplished, and stands out from the rest of the chapters.

Of course, more than elucidating the emergence of theories of organic memory, projects like Otis's have the potential to demonstrate how these ideas are transformed and developed through interchanges between literary

and scientific epistemologies. Her analyses of novels intimate such an awareness, which ultimately pertains to the issue of negotiating disciplinary boundaries in cultural studies. While it is absurd to restore a disciplinary boundary that was not there, it is equally questionable to read a novel as a scientific text. Ouis rightly points out, "Analysing scientific and literary texts in combination leads to valuable insights about cultural convictions and the metaphors that reveal them" (220). But if "combination" here means, as she declares, that "the cultural concerns that motivate persistent ideas like organic memory emerge most convincingly when one studies discourse *without regard for* traditional disciplinary boundaries" (220, my emphasis), such a position tends to suggest that literary language and scientific language need no differentiation. If the approach of this book is, as declared, "interdisciplinary" (xii), "inter" necessarily assumes the existence of disciplinary boundaries; as Gillian Beer has aptly observed, "[i]f we attempt to translate a concept too directly from one discourse to another we shall fail to recognize the differing weighting of elements within it ... or perhaps too readily satisfied with apparent identity between them.... It is by placing them athwart each other that new patterns are discovered" (24). This is to say that if we look into what literary and scientific writings both share, we do this in spite of, and more importantly because of, their differences and distinctions, as these writings may reveal different types of sensibility and emphasis which have origins and histories of their own. (HAO LI, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO)

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*IRENE GAMMEL. *Sexualizing Power in Naturalism: Theodore Dreiser and Frederick Philip Grove*. Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1994. Pp. x + 262. CDN \$24.95.

Irene Gammel's study of engendered power in naturalism provides insights for those interested in how this genre survived in and was transformed by the North-American context, co-existing alongside the emerging traditions of modernism and expressionism. Gammel's exploration of the relationship between inscribed sexuality and power is first deployed in theoretical terms, then applied to representative works by Dreiser and Grove. The reason for this choice was her desire to cover the first four decades of the twentieth century and three cultures: German, American, and Canadian (she also pays

attention to several prominent French texts in her opening chapters); Dreiser, the son of a first generation German immigrant, was canonized as the American Zola, while Grove, a German immigrant, was hailed as the Canadian Dreiser. Following David Baguley's 1990 work, *Naturalist Fiction: The Entropic Vision* (and implicitly, although Gammel does not directly acknowledge it, the 1981 work *Ways of Seeing*, by John Berger, on the objectification of the female body), Gammel uses his notion of the "male club" confronting the dangers of feminization, and borrows the theoretical constructs of *écriture féminine*, to show how naturalist fiction presents male authors, narrators, and characters looking at, inspecting, and framing female sexuality and the female body. Her second project is a "study of the specific ruptures in naturalism's representation of sexuality" at the turn of the century, focusing on the "crisis of masculinity" which resulted from historical changes like the arrival of the New Woman, with her claim of professional and sexual rights, and the expansion of the urban consumer market. She examines such naturalist prototypes as the iconic prostitute (who becomes the "imaginary prostitute" in North-American naturalism), showing how the shift onto this continent resulted in regarding female sexuality more as a marker of social difference than the strictly commercialized female body of European naturalism.

As its starting point, this study takes Michel Foucault's claim, in *The History of Sexuality*, that power and sexuality support and condition each other since power seduces, co-opts, and requires the complicity of its subjects through its main "arm of power," sexuality. Gammel argues that the rupture which Foucault detects in the scientific shift from hereditary physiology to psychology at the turn of the century is implicit in the development of naturalism during the same period; she sees this notion intersecting with French feminist theory in its emphasis on the material body as it is shaped by culture and history, the roles of the institution as determining forces in an individual's life, and the role of sexuality as a social construct and determining force in human life. This critical position is problematic and is not addressed in detail; Foucault's notion of power, particularly in his discussion of the "panopticon" upon which Gammel draws heavily, is that subversion is always generated from within power structures, while *écriture féminine* has as its premise the idea that power comes from without, to "erupt and contradict," as Gammel states it (10). While there is passing reference to the contradictions involved in combining two such antithetical critical approaches, I would have liked more discussion on this. Gammel is quick to point out that, far from the ostensible emphasis which naturalism places on the new "liberation" and "frankness" in the discourse on sexuality at the time, it is, nonetheless, a discourse shaped by the dominant male power. "How is sexuality put to work in the social machinery of power?" (7), thus, becomes Gammel's main focus in this study.

The author begins by looking at Foucault's observations about the Marquis de Sade's eighteenth-century fiction of libertinage, and identifies naturalism's predilection for excess, for associating sexuality with pain and death, although its ideological concerns developed in opposition to de Sade. She also examines Rousseau's insights on the corruptive influence of the city and Zola's genetic determinism in the context of several European novels. While the latter stressed the medicalization of sexual perversions, Freud's psychoanalytic theories paved the way for the psychological problematizing of the female body, biological determinism being replaced by skepticism. This is where Gammel identifies the difference between European and North-American forms of naturalism: Grove and Dreiser dissociated themselves from Zola's emphasis on "perversion-heredity-degenerescence" in favour of Flaubert's social realism (Grove was a translator of Flaubert's letters).

The remainder of the study looks at specific examples of male power inscribed on the docile female body and the sexually active woman in Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*, *The Titan*, and *The "Genius,"* and in Grove's *Fanny Essler*, *A Search for America*, and *The Master of the Mill*. Gammel illustrates how the male "body of power" is conceptualized by Dreiser and Grove as centralized capitalist power, in Dreiser, in terms of male promiscuity, and, in Grove, as family patriarchy seeking to consolidate power. In the final section, entitled "The Father's Seduction and the Daughter's Rebellion," she demonstrates how Grove's women's voices "erupt and contradict" the dominant male voices, for which he longs nostalgically, in his fiction. The conclusion contextualizes Grove's and Dreiser's contributions in terms of other novels published at the same time; this is constructive and helpful in situating the texts Gammel has chosen.

This is a thorough, provocative, well-researched, and engaging scholarly study of naturalism as it was transplanted to North America. It is well-grounded in theory, and Gammel explains her terms of reference well, sometimes too well, since certain sections are repetitive except for the contradictions implicit in her choice to elide Foucauldian and feminist theories. She is obviously well-read in French, German, and North American literature of the period. If there is one minor complaint, it is that Gammel raises sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly many comparisons with contemporary ideological concerns but does not follow them through: for instance, the sexual "freedom" of the New Woman finds many parallels in the permissive 1960s; the prostitute's confessional mode has resurged in narratives like those by Evelyn Lau; the abortion rights issues which are openly addressed in naturalist fiction continue to be debated in the same context presently; the fascinating discussions of compulsive shopping in response to mass marketing or the figure of the anorexic also have contemporary applications. Gammel's discussion of *Sister Carrie* includes the following comment: "Like Madonna in our own *fin de siècle*, Carrie offers her audience

a 'material' body as an object of desire, for men to be desired as a sexual object, for women to be desired as an object of imitation" (75), and although this is an insightful observation, it is not pursued. Of course these parallels go beyond the stated scope of Gammel's study, but such titillating observations and speculations might have made the work even more engaging and persuasive to a contemporary audience. (LIZA POTVIN, MALASPINA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE)

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*WALTER LAQUEUR. *Fascism: Past, Present, Future*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Pp. 263. CDN \$34.95.

Professor Laqueur's book is nothing less than what we can expect from one of the most prolific and judicious historians of contemporary Europe and of the world.

Although there may be a vast literature on Fascism (which Laqueur consistently spells with a lower-case "f") and national socialism, I am not aware of any that encompasses as much in terms of both geography and chronology, and even in terms of ideology: the history of what we all have come to identify with Fascism in the period 1922 to 1945, the history of neo-Fascism, and the history of "post-Fascism." Geographically speaking, the book goes well beyond Europe to seek Fascist equivalents in other civilizations, on other continents and, ideologically speaking, beyond the realm of politics, among what many readers would view as obnoxious aspects of the human spirit (maybe all readers, since Fascists do not read), including fanatical religious movements.

Throughout the book Laqueur grapples with definitions; fortunately, we are warned that an "exact definition and a good theory" may not be necessary to begin the study (6, 222). Fascism was, we are told, "above all, nationalist, elitist, and antiliberal" (22). On page 90, Laqueur talks about a "fascist minimum," to include "national, hierarchical structures, and the 'leader principle.'" On page 96, the author tells us that the "basic tenets of fascism were (and are) self-evident: nationalism, social Darwinism, racialism...." If the definitions of Fascism in Italy and of National Socialism (i.e., the German variant of Fascism) remain suitably vague and even not entirely consistent, when it comes to both neo-Fascism or post-fascism, we are totally at a loss. The last segment is largely an analysis of Islamic fundamentalism, sometimes known as Moslem Brotherhood.

Post-war Fascism or Neo-fascism, while never in charge (those extreme right-wing regimes that did come to power, such as the Pinochet regime in Chile, are dismissed as not Fascist at all) spread over many countries and several continents, but remains most prominent in Europe. Perhaps the common denominator (although this does not apply to Spain) is the hatred or fear of the foreigner, the tens of thousands of pouring in from the East and the South, legally or otherwise, to find economic refuge and employment, mainly menial jobs, in the Western world.

While the analysis of population movements is beyond the scope of Laqueur's book, its scope is broad enough as it is. He has broached a subject that requires further analysis. Anti-immigrant legislation and growing prejudice against those that used to be called *Gastarbeiter* notwithstanding, the escape valve from the so-called Third World has not been shut off, and perhaps cannot be shut off. The people of the Balkans and beyond find their way into Central Europe. The people of Africa and the Caribbean find their way into France and Great Britain. All the barbed wire fences, balloon barrages, and border patrols cannot create an iron curtain to keep Mexicans and other Latinos out of the United States. The mass movements of Asians, Africans, and Latinas/Latinos to the industrially developed world is creating a demographic revolution which, at the moment, seems to be the only social structure bridging the widening gap between the industrial haves and the havenot nations.

Another common denominator between some of the Fascist movements is anti-Semitism which sometimes manifests itself as "denial of the Holocaust." This raises an issue, however, at least in my mind. If individuals and movements refuse to believe that millions of Jews were deliberately murdered during World War II, are they not on our side? Are they not, in fact, saying that such a monstrous crime could not have been committed, even by Nazis? Are they not in fact rejecting the banality of evil? Nevertheless, it was not necessary for Professor Laqueur to demonstrate that the Holocaust actually took place (139)!

It is not clear why Laqueur is so grudging with disclosing his sources. Although the book contains interesting, even fascinating statistics and details, as well as generalizations that are often subject to challenge, I counted, altogether, twenty-four footnotes. There is an annotated bibliography at the end, but it too is rather selective, especially if we consider that "books related to fascism, neo-fascism and the extreme Right can be measured in the hundreds of thousands" (241). For instance, Nicholas Nagy-Talavera's *The Green Shirts and the Others*, despite its awkward title, offers penetrating insights that explain the populist appeal of some Fascist and racist movements, even to persons and groups that are not essentially racist.

I find it somewhat irritating that Communism and Stalinism are constantly used as points of reference, especially since some of the basic

differences are clearly spelled out, on pages 15 and 222. In any case, all Fascisms are described as anti-Marxist (90, and *passim*.) The comparisons and contrasts might serve a purpose only if we assume that the general reader in the United States is more familiar with communism and its Stalinist aberration than she or he may be with Fascism; but, given the lasting impact of the Cold War and the shortage of a balanced view in the United States, I doubt if this is the case.

In any study that indulges so freely in generalizations, we are likely to encounter some that appear surprising, not to say shocking. For instance, I am sure that upon reflection Laqueur knows better than to say that there were no "communists or socialists" among leading writers, composers, artists, philosophers in Europe before the triumph of Fascism or National Socialism (64): are we to assume that Bertolt Brecht, John Piscator, György Lukacs, Fernand Léger, André Gide, George Orwell, Pablo Picasso, etc. are not leading artists and writers or do not qualify as socialist? Surely, it cannot be argued that there was little expansion by Europeans between 1890 and 1914 (23), the heyday of western imperialism? Thomas Wolfe may have written a best-seller with *Look Homeward Angel*, yet the book cannot be described as a contribution to "mass culture" (74). The Germans did not occupy Hungary after the Regent was forced to resign in October 1944 (as implied on page 85), but rather a few months earlier, in March 1944.

Nevertheless, Laqueur's work is a bold undertaking, requiring of its author wide erudition and a polyglot approach, a culture that goes beyond being "cultured" or "Renaissance" in the western sense of the word. Indeed, we may assert that Laqueur has this rare combination of assets. He seems to understand every language and I mean this strictly in a positive sense and to have experienced living in every culture. Indeed, his book may provide background information about the twentieth century to anyone doing literary criticism that cuts across borders and across ideologies, that is either comparative or interdisciplinary. (MARIO D. FENYO, BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY)

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*DAVID S. FERRIS, ed. *Walter Benjamin. Theoretical Questions*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996. US\$ 39.50 cloth, \$14.95 paper.

At the beginning of his introduction to this excellent volume of essays, Daniel Ferris speaks of the widespread appropriation of Benjamin's work from a variety of directions. He also argues, correctly, that each direction has its

locus, its point of primary focus, within the remarkable range of Benjamin's concerns. But there is something more at play here than multiplicity, and that is hinted at in Benjamin's description of his work as Janusfaced (*Janusgesicht*; see p. 10, fn. 1). The Janus head has two faces pointed in opposite directions, an apt and pertinent image for figuring ambiguities of the sort endemic to Benjamin. Ferris suggests that the question of the relation of history and criticism is central to Benjamin's thought. Though his point is surely accurate, it can be put in other, more fundamental ways that help to indicate (if not completely to figure out) the radical ambiguity, shading to ambivalence, that seems to be at the ground of Benjamin's ways of being.

The image of Benjamin that emerges (sometimes struggling) from this important collection accepts such ambiguity, expects to live with it. Indeed he considers such dialectical living to be a necessary condition of our modernist being-in-the-world, with ambiguity as one of its fundamental demands. He wields a materialist reading of that condition based in classic Marxism. At the same time (that simultaneity is the key), he argues for a messianism no reading could convincingly make purely materialist, exclusively profane. That aspect of Benjamin's thought takes elements from old theology revised in our time (Scholem plays midwife here but his is hardly the only influence). Especially involved in thoughts about the Messiah, Benjamin uses them in a way one can read as purely materialist only if one seeks to erase the trace of messianism's claims, especially its stubborn vision of an irruption by the necessarily other. Benjamin knows enough about the workings of aura to recognize the hold that history always has, its embodiment of the trace that cannot be erased; in this case, much of the meaning messianism developed and which turns up wherever the idea does. And yet, Benjamin though frequently obsessed with the redemption that takes part in every messianism, figurative or otherwise tends to be scornfully suspicious of the usual claims for transcendence. Given such a condition, none of the critics who wrote for this collection would reject a general argument for Benjamin's ambiguities, though some would differ strongly on that condition's components, as well as this reading of the function of messianism's trace. When one looks through this collection as a whole, ambiguity emerges at a number of key points in readings of Benjamin's work by critics of varying persuasions.

To argue for hard-headed consistency in Benjamin most popularly, to argue that he must be read as finally profane makes for other problems as well, makes him foreign to that modernist literature and art of which he was one of the greatest exemplars as well as one of the greatest critics. Benjamin fits precisely within modernist ambiguities and modernist ambivalence. He takes part in, illuminates, aspects of modernism from, say, Henry Adams and Steichen and every stage of Yeats, through the Kafka and Proust he understood so profoundly, to aspects of modern music and popular cinema, some of which appeared long after his untimely death. His work is not only

one of the great readings of modernism; it is also one of modernism's great, defining products. He is what he speaks of, exemplifies what he explains.

Reading from that perspective, one can see particular arguments emerging in this collection which confirm Ferris's point that his contributors share an interest in the relations of history and criticism. One can also watch certain modernist themes emerge, for example, the question of the image. Benjamin and his commentators explore not only the image as a concept but as figured in history, subject to history but also defining history's stages (in fact the defining is mutual). For Ferris the image that ends dialectic, stressing the simultaneous rather than the successive, has its counterpart in the technical reproducibility that marks the end of historical continuity (though not, surely, the end of history) and, thus, the overcoming of aura (18). For Samuel Weber, in a fine essay on the auratic, the image is even more central. Quoting Rolf Tiedemann on the concept of the image as basic to the Arcades project as well as "a certain particularity or figurality (*Bildlichkeit*)," Weber sees the question of the image as essential to Benjamin, and that links his thought to the centrality of the image in Heidegger's work (28). In Carol Jacobs's subtly defined reading of Benjamin's mappings of Berlin the question of image emerges in her analyses (De Manian in mode, sometimes formalist in method) of image patterns and relationships, their radical intertwinings (e.g. 99-101). Benjamin was not only an articulator of ambiguities but a master of figuration, practically and theoretically. He was a maker of images who deeply understood the play of image, criticism and history, each one's play with the others. One could go farther, working those relations back to Benjamin's long-standing interest in romantic theory and the passion for image endemic to its every phase, however imageless (to quote Shelley) the deep truth might be. (Rodolph Gasché contributes a probing essay on Benjamin and romanticism and the question of the Absolute.)

Of course, image has to be taken in terms of criticism and history, the criticism that also defines and seeks to explicate myth, the history within which myth gets embodied, which knows how to fracture myth while rendering its manifestations. Myth, as narrative, is something more than image: its images take part in sequence or what looks like sequence, what might have once been sequence. Sequence, like the conditions of the Messiah's trace, stays on in stubborn residue, no matter how fractured its state, however much the residue might reside only in shards. Myth is made of archetypal figures and narratives shown to be victims of history (history makes them different wherever they appear) and, therefore, pits the trace against the ravages of time. That links significantly with Benjamin's concept of allegory, strangely ignored in this collection though relevant at every point.

All this, it seems to me, is basic Benjamin, radically dialectical because emphatic on history yet defensive of the trace. That too is part of the context of modes of modernist speech. For a number of good reasons, myth appears

at various points in this collection. Rainer Nägele speaks of *Lebensphilosophie* and Benjamin's critique of its "mystificatory retreat to poetry, nature, and myth" (128). Tom McCall's reading of myth in Benjamin focuses on its violent ways of articulating and compelling narration. That links myth and related narratives to Benjamin's critique of violence, implicitly to Fascism, and, therefore, to politics. (Alexander Düttmann's essay speaks on related issues in the critique of violence.) But there is violence and violence: the appearance of the Messiah, with all those attendant sounds of thunder and drums that tradition has long expected, might well be violent. (It might be even more violent for him (?) to slip in quietly, suddenly be there). Surely there will be some mode of violence in not only that greatest epiphany, but in all others as well, however sneakily they appear: epiphany is by nature irruptive. That surely helps to explain the persistent concern with forms of epiphany that appears throughout this volume and many similar readings of Benjamin's work. Hans Joseph Frey, for example, speaks tellingly of discontinuity (another persistent theme throughout this volume) and its arrangement of "fragments of thought" . . . whose coherence lies outside knowledge and flashes forth in gaps and breaks" (140). What flashes through in any such instant is surely the purity of the element, the element in its purest state, beyond the profane and history but surely also beyond anything we confine within terms like "transcendent." That is why purity so fascinates these critics, as it does many other readers of Benjamin. We watch him watching for purity, looking for ways to describe it, fascinated as he is by the potential of manifestation, knowing how it must irrupt into what surely will be negation the negation of all not part of the pure, the negation the pure must cause in order to go beyond affirmation and manifest itself purely. That is where Benjamin was going and that is where we follow him. Our critiques seek those absolute distinctions through which we must grow aware of the Absolute's distinction. This volume of theoretical questions on Benjamin contributes significantly toward the readings our work requires. (FREDERICK GARBER, STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT BINGHAMTON)

*JOHN XIROS COOPER. *T. S. Eliot and the Ideology of Four Quartets*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995. Pp. 235 + xiii. US \$49.95 cloth.

"In my beginning is my end."

So here I am, in the middle way, having had twenty years
Twenty years largely wasted, the years of l'entre deux guerres
Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt
Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure ("East Coker" V)

So wrote Eliot in "East Coker," the second of his *Four Quartets*, published in 1940. But where was Eliot in 1940? According to a sketch presented in John Xiros Cooper's new book, Eliot was enjoying the social stature of a literary giant, a position won in the 1920s largely on the modernist merits of *The Waste Land*. He had also become the spokesman for a new English and American intelligentsia, what Cooper calls the "Atlantic mandarin." This mandarin was a loose collection of writers, journalists, clergy, and academics who had come from and identified with the so-called "ruling class." The Great War had ravaged these mandarins' faith both in liberal humanism and the traditional centres of power within their own countries. And so like the shades of Dante's *Inferno* and Eliot's ghost crowd flowing over London Bridge, they were left adrift: "Eruption of unhealthy souls / Into the faded air, the torpid / Driven on the wind that sweeps the gloomy hills of London."

When they first read *The Waste Land*, these alienated mandarins immediately felt that Eliot was one of their own, that his words were their words. Little did they know then that his words were not properly his own, that there existed behind his many poetic facades what Stephen Romer calls a "submarine" Eliot. Nevertheless, the mandarin found in *The Waste Land*'s fragmentation of identity and modulations of voice the only words they could apply to their shattered selves. Eliot emerged from the margins of London bohemia and ascended to the throne of mandarin modernism. These intellectuals, in whose ears the bombs still rang, sought in Eliot a calming voice that would make sense of Europe's remains, their waste land. Cooper opens his book with these words of Auden on Eliot: "... it was you / who, not speechless from shock but finding the right / language for thirst and fear, did much to / prevent a panic." After *The Waste Land*, Eliot devoted more and more of his energies to treating the paralyzing nihilism that modernism had so acutely described. And so Eliot put on the minister's frock.

Eliot had first found refuge from the infernal winds of the age in the spirituality of Anglo-Catholicism and the cultural inheritance of Elizabethan England. He tried to share this haven with his disaffected brethren in his social and cultural polemics of the late 1920s and 30s. This period of criticism produced such infamous collections as *For Lancelot Andrewes*, *After Strange Gods*, and *The Idea of a Christian Society*. For the most part, these polemics were met with suspicion; though adrift, Eliot's readers were unwilling to give up their modernist schooling and affirm his Christian Tory vision.

Nor was Eliot's poetic ministry entirely successful during this period. "Ash-Wednesday," published in 1930, marked the beginning of what Cooper calls Eliot's "late candour." From the mouth of the poet whose place in literary modernism was forever fixed by *The Waste Land*'s "poetics of impersonality" comes a new voice, "a wholly new start." The "I" of "Ash-Wednesday" is no longer a character, no longer a Prufrock or a Tiresias, but is

the voice of the poet himself. It is here in "Ash-Wednesday" that Eliot first began his poetic ministry to the souls of the Atlantic mandarin. He shares with these lost sheep his mystical vision of a woman in a garden, "White light folded, sheathed about her, folded." Just as Dante found in Beatrice the strength and inspiration to climb to paradise, Eliot hopes that his vision of the woman in the garden will turn his readers' hearts inwards and upwards. The parallel here between Eliot and Dante is well known, but Cooper highlights how this poem and particular image mark an important change in Eliot's poetic voice. First, Eliot lays at the feet of his readers the outlines of his own fragile spirituality, a spirituality with which he had been struggling during the 20s. Second, there is evidence that the vision of the woman sheathed in light is meant to be Eliot's first wife Vivian, who he had put into an asylum for erratic behavior. Although few of his readers would catch the autobiographical tenor of this image, it supports Cooper's claim that in "Ash-Wednesday" and the later poetry, Eliot makes himself present to his readers with unprecedented candour.

So this is the Eliot of "Ash-Wednesday": "Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt / Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure." But how and why did this new start fail? Just as his mandarin charges were unwilling to affirm Eliot's vision of a neo-conservative society as presented in his polemics, they were reluctant to follow him into the garden of Christian belief, "the Garden / Where all love ends." Eliot sought to pluck the mandarins from the ashes of post-war Europe and, as Virgil did Dante, guide them on a journey through poetry to a place beyond poetry (a place the edge of which Eliot in "Ash-Wednesday" and Dante in his "Purgatorio" both seem to think is marked by a garden). But, Cooper argues, Eliot's readers were lost along the way of this spiritual journey; in the language of the poem, they fell prey to a dionysian "Distraction, music of the flute." Unprepared to accept the austerity, guilt, and supplication of Eliot's religious vision, his mandarin readers instead again took refuge in the aesthetics of the poem (this movement was to be repeated years later with *Four Quartets*). However, the blame cannot be placed entirely on the shoulders of the aestheticized mandarin. Eliot was experimenting in "Ash-Wednesday" with a new voice, an immature voice he was "Trying to learn to use words." If this voice in 1930 failed to convert his readers, then he would work to develop that voice. Ten years later Eliot would give birth to *Four Quartets*.

For years Eliot's reputation was constant; he was seen as the greatest living literary figure who unfortunately held rather embarrassing and anachronistic social views and was possessed by a baffling religious austerity. In short, the congregation was listening to the minister with only one ear. And then came the Second World War. Again Europe was ravaged, and such apocalyptic episodes shattered our conception of human nature. Now perhaps the congregation would listen more attentively.

Eliot again put on the minister's frock, never far from hand. He called upon the authority of his voice, a stature that he had built up over twenty years of publishing and lecturing. But the purity of Eliot's poetic voice had been poisoned by his controversial ideology. There were essentially two Eliots: the literary Eliot, to whom the mandarins clung; and the critical Eliot, whom they respectfully tolerated but tried to forget. In his brilliant chapter, "Representing *Four Quartets*: the canonizers at work," Cooper explains how *Four Quartets* was elevated above "the issues of the day, ... questions of religion, society, and politics." Eliot and his coterie of critics reckoned that the mandarins had had enough of these "lesser engagements," that modern man did not live on bread alone. Cooper writes: "The first step, then, was to rescue the poetry from the author's own reputation and, in this task, the role of the academic literary criticism played a decisive role. *Four Quartets* entered the world as the text of an ideologue and by the time of Eliot's Nobel Prize in 1948 had been transformed into the work of a sage." This transformation was made possible largely by a group of literary critics whom Eliot had met (and often helped) throughout his years as an editor at Faber & Faber. Freed from the "gravitational pull of superficial socio-political allegiances," *Four Quartets* could be repositioned as a work of timeless wisdom.

It is with candour and sensitivity that Eliot addresses his mandarin charges in "East Coker," where with his "I" he stands for each and every alienated intellectual: "So here I am, in the middle way, having had twenty years / Twenty years largely wasted, the years of l'entre deux guerres." Yes, Eliot is preaching, but he is preaching by association with, not differentiation from, his mandarin congregation. Eliot too had occupied the middle way, "Neither plenitude nor vacancy," neither the "daylight" of art's "transient beauty" nor religion's "darkness to purify the soul" the darkness of the negative way presented by St. John of the Cross. Eliot too could understand having spent twenty years largely wasted. Seen from the austerity of his late religiosity, he could easily be making a pun on his first poetic masterpiece: twenty years "wasted" in and on *The Waste Land*.

Eliot was willing to acknowledge not only his own misdirection, but his failures as well, for "every attempt / Is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure." Failure there was, though not of a wholly different kind as with "Ash-Wednesday." Although *Four Quartets* had been loosed from Eliot's ideology, it was left unprotected, as all literature is, from the violence of its audience. The Atlantic mandarin was looking for a refuge from the shifting sands of world politics. They found in *Four Quartets* the makings of a new post-war inwardness, "the still point of the turning world" where they could find "release from the inner / and the outer compulsion." Many understood this inwardness not religiously, not as the soul's descent "Into the world of perpetual solitude," but artistically. Understood in this way, *Four Quartets* offered the mandarin a path away from and towards the world of power

and politics (ironically echoing Heraclitus' fragment which opens "Burnt Norton": "The way up and the way down is one and the same"). These intellectuals placed ultimate meaning and value in the interior world of art. Although this haven allowed them to withdraw from politics, it also allowed them to tolerate the current systems of power, systems in which they were well-placed and well-rewarded. No longer was the mandarin committed to the frustrations of humanist politics; instead, he hovered above the fray and so had no inclination to see it changed. In *The Confidential Clerk*, Sir Claude describes this constitution of his own mandarin self: "There are others, it seems to me, who have to live / In two worlds each a kind of make-believe. / That's you and me."

In this regard, *Four Quartets* was another failure, but the failure was the mandarins' own, not Eliot's. Ultimately, the Atlantic mandarin failed to learn how to listen. And it is on this very issue, how we listen to literature, that Cooper's case is strongest. If at times one feels that he is overstating Eliot's deliberate or even masterminding rhetoric, one is nevertheless impressed by his ability to superimpose *Four Quartets* over an ideological backdrop stretching from America to Germany, from the 1910s to the 1980s. In short, Cooper's book is a stunning piece of intellectual history. I have presented here only a skeletal sketch of Eliot's story, to which Cooper has carefully attached a fascinating array of sinew and flesh ("My guts the strings of my eyes and the indigestible / portions"). The entire body is well worth the read. (CHARLES STANG, ETON COLLEGE)

* GLENN WILLMOTT. *McLuhan, or Modernism in Reverse*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996. 262 pp. CDN \$19.91 paper, \$55.00 cloth.

Le critique comme masque.

La récente reprise de l'oeuvre de MacLuhan a lieu dans un contexte marqué par les transformations technologiques et culturelles de la fin du millénaire. Lorsqu'une nouvelle vague d'innovation technologique — l'Internet, l'informatique, la réalité virtuelle se met à remodeler notre monde, il semble naturel que se renouvelle l'intérêt pour cette pensée qui a évoqué le rôle des *media* dans la constitution du village global, cette forme de société dialogique liée aux réseaux électriques.

Cependant, *McLuhan, or Modernism in Reverse*, de Glenn Willmott, ne s'inscrit pas dans l'ambiance euphorique d'un *revival*. Pour son auteur, au lieu d'être oublié ou, pire encore, d'être redécouvert, McLuhan doit être compris comme un chaînon réfoûlé d'une génération de critiques modernes ou post-modernes qui a su extraire des formes et des valeurs modernes à partir des

deconstructions de la culture post-moderne. Le livre de Willmott s'inscrit donc dans le champ des discussions inaugurées à partir des années 80, avec l'irruption de la notion de post-modernisme, qui a suscité également une réévaluation de la contribution moderne.

Willmott attribue le réfoûlement de ce lien manquant dans l'histoire de la critique à l'image publique controversée de McLuhan, qui aurait empêché l'approche académique de son travail. C'est à cette tâche qu'il s'adonne dans son livre: d'une part il trace les bases théoriques de la pensée critique de McLuhan pour l'envisager comme une expression aussi bien de la tradition littéraire et intellectuelle que des conditions socio-historiques du siècle moderne; d'autre part il interprète son image publique comme un "masque", c'est-à-dire, comme un recours que McLuhan adopte pour montrer comment la projection de la modernité est incorporée par notre identité subjective.

La critique de McLuhan s'est construite dans le sens d'une élucidation des mécanismes à travers lesquels l'art se constitue en tant que forme critique, aussi bien que dans le but de se proposer elle-même en tant que théorie critique qui chercherait à refaire ce chemin de l'art mais en sens inverse.

Dans la première partie de son livre, Willmott décrit la formation critique de McLuhan. Il part de la contribution du *New Criticism* (surtout de Richards et de Lewis) aussi bien que de l'oeuvre critique d'Eliot et de Leavis, passe par l'apport des théories cinématographiques et du montage de Pudovkin et d'Eisenstein, enchaîne sur les oeuvres de Poe et de Pound et sur l'interprétation macluhanienne de l'art symboliste, pour arriver aux incursions du critique dans les nouvelles sciences humaines et dans l'histoire (avec Mumford, Giedeon et Harold Innis) et à son interprétation des théories économiques du libéralisme contemporain.

De 1930 à 1940 McLuhan pense la modernité à l'intérieur du paradigme de la techné: modèle ou ordre formel selon lequel se construit la socialité d'une période, son langage, son économie politique, sa science et son art. Le premier livre du critique, *The Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man*, de 1951, essaye de découvrir de quelle manière formelle et dans quelle situation spécifique l'art peut se trouver à l'intérieur de l'ordre social, en même temps qu'il constitue un moyen pour la compréhension historique et sa transcendance en tant qu'historicité. Le livre est un montage d'images et de textes de la culture commerciale et populaire qui se sert de la forme de la publicité et de la poésie moderne pour interrompre et déplacer le montage de la culture commerciale à fin de permettre ainsi à la conscience d'appréhender la manière subliminale par laquelle ses messages sont agencés. Arrêter, projeter, retracer cette dynamique constitue ce que Willmott appelle "l'inversion du modernisme," en tant que processus où le critique démonte, par un montage arrière, la répercussion que les textes de la culture moderne a produit sur la conscience de l'audience.

Dans la deuxième étape du parcours critique de McLuhan, le paradigme de

la techné donne lieu à la notion de *medium* en tant qu'extension de l'homme et l'art critique fusionne avec les *media* jusqu'à ce que les formes esthétiques de la critique et des textes soient rendues indiscernables. Dans son interprétation de cette étape du parcours critique de McLuhan, Willmott examine sa découverte pleine de conséquences théoriques du monde primitif (analysé surtout par Edmund Carpenter) et établit un rapport saisissant de la pensée du critique avec la philosophie heideggerienne. Surtout deux livres sont envisagés ici: *The Gutenberg Galaxy* et *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*.

C'est alors que la pensée de McLuhan est considérée vis-à-vis du modernisme et du post-modernisme. Willmott fait appel à l'analyse que Frederic Jameson aussi un lecteur de McLuhan fait du phénomène post-moderne en tant que dominante culturelle dont l'esthétique et l'épistémologie sont fondées sur la pénétration de l'humain par les *media* et par les moyens de production du capitalisme avancé. On s'aperçoit de l'affinité de Jameson avec la pensée de McLuhan lorsqu'il considère le post-moderne comme le moment où les *media* ont absorbé la totalité du champ politique et social et l'espace physique du globe, mais ont également réussi à pénétrer les recoins les plus reculés de l'espace personnel, en confondant "l'intérieur" et "l'extérieur". Inspiré donc par l'analyse du théoricien américain, Willmott met en lumière la dimension post-moderne de la critique de McLuhan, ou, du moins, quelques uns de ses aspects les plus évidents: l'effacement des frontières entre la haute culture et la culture de masse; l'impossibilité d'une distance critique; le remplacement de la "profondeurs" ou du "contenu" par les rapports de latéralité; l'impossibilité de penser ou de représenter l'histoire en tant que "totalité."

Willmott expose alors la thèse centrale de son livre, en essayant de montrer que McLuhan quitte le terrain des formulations théoriques pour "vivre" sa propre théorie, une expérience que l'auteur conçoit sous la notion de masque. Véhicule d'un inconscient collectif, le masque est la condensation du "rêve collectif" de la culture de masse que McLuhan revêt pour le montrer à l'audience. C'est donc par l'abandon de l'intériorité de l'individu, par l'incorporation d'une espèce d'"individu corporatif," le village global porté comme satire, que McLuhan cherche à démystifier l'audience. À l'opposé des critiques de McLuhan qui ont attaqué son "adhésion" aux *media* et sa conversion en image de marque, Willmott voit la transformation de McLuhan en "McLuhan", ce port du masque, comme un "sacrifice" symbolique du critique et comme la plus grande originalité de sa contribution.

Selon Willmott, McLuhan est un moderniste qui fait le pont avec le post-moderne parce qu'il pratique un modernisme inversé. Si l'on considère que pour les modernes l'art est une forme critique, l'activité critique de McLuhan aura été une manière de *retracer* le parcours moderne à l'inverse, tout en proposant une critique engagée dans un processus de conscientisation. Si le modernisme croît dans l'historicité, s'il voit son moteur dans la technique et

attribue la forme de cette construction aux *media* et à leur répercussion sur la conscience des hommes, McLuhan fait la critique de la construction de ces formes, tout en démontant la façon selon laquelle ce procès s'est produit.

Willmott sépare McLuhan des post-modernes parce qu'il a fait la critique de ce processus en *le vivant* jusqu'aux limites de sa propre extinction. McLuhan est moderne parce qu'il analyse la forme et son évolution, mais en même temps il opère le *passage* vers le post-modernisme, étant donné que les post-modernes se situent à partir de cette rupture, et non plus dans l'historicité dans laquelle les modernes se croyaient immergés. Willmott voit McLuhan comme l'inconscient du modernisme, un modernisme qu'il réinvente en tant que symptôme même de la modernité. (STELLA SENRA, SÃO PAULO)

*KEVIN J. H. DETTMAR. *The Illicit Joyce of Postmodernism: Reading Against the Grain*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1996. Pp. 276. US \$50.00 cloth; \$22.95 paper.

Chapter 6 of Kevin Dettmar's book has a telling title: "Towards a Nonmodernist Ulysses." The inference is that this is a worthy endeavour that will enhance Joyce's reputation. The vogue for depreciating modernism as a monolithic, elitist movement devoted to authoritarian metanarratives, whether in paint, sound, concrete or words, has one peculiar consequence: a spate of arguments claiming that a chosen modernist is not so at all or is saved from authoritarian extremes by a leavening of proto-postmodernism. A major fallacy of the antimodernist trend is to focus on the naive politics of selected artists and to extrapolate from these a view of the *art* as fascistic. A more convincing exercise would be to show that *any* of the authoritarian regimes of the period found modernist aesthetics other than repugnant and subversive. As far as I know, Goering did not steal Picassos; Franco did not have works of Juan Gris and Miro on his walls; Stalin did not relax with the music of Stravinsky. However useful Mussolini may have found the mischievous broadcasts of Pound, I doubt if he considered making the *Cantos* a required text for fascist youth. Hitler did not ask his architect, Albert Speer, for Bauhaus designs. Rather than empowering fascistic order, the *art* of modernism asserts the right to radical difference. As such, postmodernism and much of current popular culture stand on its shoulders in claiming the right to radical difference from modernism itself. There can be no quarrel with the right of artists to manifestos and counter-manifestos, which are the birthing agents for new creative ideas. But the rush of the new critical orthodoxy to tear down modernist achievement is a deplorable abdication of scholarly judgement to polemical expediency.

that allow one to win the argument in advance. Dettmar claims Barthes, Bakhtin, and Lyotard as his chosen authorities, "with grace notes supplied by Ihab Hassan and Julia Kristeva" (15). In practice, the main characteristics he relies on in claiming superiority for the postmodern mode are uncertainty of meaning, stylistic variety, and heteroglossia. As applied to *A Portrait* this becomes a disappointingly thin critique that asserts and reasserts the monologism of the text, the dominance of the text by the single voice of Stephen Dedalus, the inadequacy of a modest amount of irony to counter the monologic focus, and the resulting failure of the work to achieve full novelistic stature. Attempts by critics to find other voices, overt or implied, are dismissed as wishful thinking. The massive rewriting of *Stephen Hero*, with its apparent elimination of about eighty per cent of the earlier text and the radical change in narrative method, is dismissed as a minor revision. Reader participation is dismissed because the text appears to lack the playful signals of true postmodernism.

In fact, the focus on a single sensibility in *A Portrait* is a necessity of the *Künstlerroman* subgenre which Joyce follows but subverts as he subverts the flow of linear narrative. Transitions in *A Portrait* anticipate the cinematic "jumpcutting" which has been seen as a characteristic of the postmodern novel, frequently setting up "montage" sequences that reflect off one another. These range from the rapid early-childhood transitions of Chapter One to the expanded beach-montage in the last pages of Chapter Four which takes the reader through the bathetic fade-out of Stephen's "voice from another world" into the cries of his bathing fellow-students, back into the romantic ecstasy of his vision of the girl/bird and his subsequent dream-vision and idyllic sleep and through to the transition to Chapter Five which recalls a classic camera close-up followed by a pullback into despairing naturalism:

A rim of the young moon cleft the pale waste of sky like the rim of a silver hoop embedded in grey sand; and the tide was flowing in fast to the land with a low whisper of her waves, islanding a few last figures in distant pools.

He drained his third cup of watery tea to the dregs and set to chewing the crusts of fried bread that were scattered near him, staring into the dark pool of the jar. The yellow dripping had been scooped out like a boghole and the pool under it brought back to his memory the dark turfcoloured water of the bath in Clongowes. (*Portrait* 187-88)

This transition points up a dialogism that Dettmar denies in *A Portrait*, a dialogue between romanticism and realism that exists in stylistic variations that he refuses to see, combined with retellings that deconstruct Stephen's narratives of desire. His hero-narrative of Chapter One is demolished by the gossip-narrative of his father in Chapter Two. His romantic hero-sinner

Kevin Dettmar's book begins and ends with good intentions to avoid the worst of revisionist polemics. His first chapter cites Richard Rorty's goal of "keeping the conversation going" as his own admirable intention (6-7). The end of his last chapter could serve as a retrospective thesis statement that would have admirably carried out this intention: "This is perhaps the most compelling reason of all to reread modernism through postmodern glasses: to bring to the dock the works of our modernity and try to discover wherein lies their freedom to discover within the works of the modernists themselves the antidote to their sometimes 'authoritative discourse'" (208).

Unfortunately, what we have in between is Dettmar's own "authoritative discourse" that slips rather too easily from reasoned argument to radical assertion and a certain patronizing scorn for all those who have read Joyce's works before him. Thus, the valid argument that one can make a better case for *Ulysses* than for *A Portrait of the Artist* as a "postmodern" work deteriorates into assertion that *A Portrait* is, therefore, not merely inferior to *Ulysses*, but a failure of Joyce's art that has been hidden by the misjudgments of generations of readers, naively deceived by the excellence of *Ulysses* into reading retrospective virtue into the earlier work. An admirable warning against overreading meaning into the symbolic structures of *Dubliners* becomes a rather too dogmatic denial of meaningful insight for character or reader. The famous "epiphany" is exposed as an author's trick and horridly punned by Dettmar into the term "epiphony." Dettmar may well be right in claiming that few, if any, of the characters in the stories have other than false epiphanies. To leap from this to the claim that the reader, including Joyce's intended Dublin audience, is left only with mystery, creates more questions than it answers. It is hardly plausible that the Joyce who claimed to be writing a chapter of his country's "moral history" and who wished to give his fellow citizens "one good look at themselves" really expected them to see only mist when they peered into his "nicely-polished looking-glass."¹ But Dettmar's insistence (82-83) on epiclesis over epiphany on mystery over showing forth serves his purpose of asserting that *Dubliners* has more postmodernity than *A Portrait* and is therefore a superior work of art.

Dettmar's extreme position on *A Portrait* combined with his patronization of those critics who have mistakenly praised the work, places an immense burden on his own arguments. The chapter on *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* becomes the most important and must be the best-argued of the book. It is not.

The obligatory "statement of theory" chapter has now become as familiar as the "survey of the literature" chapter used to be in the 1950s, a kind of passport offered as evidence of respectability, permitting one to enter upon a critical argument validated by the seals of authority while setting up the terms

1 See letters to Grant Richards, May 20 and June 23, 1906, in *Selected Letters of James Joyce*.

narrative at the end of Chapter Two is deconstructed by its confession-narrative retelling at the end of Chapter Three. Within chapters, the monologic voice of desire is constantly shattered by the technique of interruption. Subjected to the grand interruption of the Priest's immense sermon in Chapter Three, the romantic sensibility tries to repair itself in the vision of self as doomed Lucifer only to be subjected to the interruption of overheard banality: "On hell I suppose he rubbed it into you well. You bet he did. He put us all into a blue funk" (135). As with the voices of his friends on the beach, Stephen is called into community with those he despises, those who, the reader of *Dubliners* knows, must be paid attention to if he is to become James Joyce. Likewise, his chosen symbolic identity with Daedalus and Lucifer is opposed by a subtext of Celtic symbolism that implies sovereignty and success but again only if he learns, as Joyce did, to acknowledge Ireland as his setting and the ordinary citizen of the "New Ireland" as his subject. This is anything but a text "locked in a state of arrested development" (108) or "a ruthlessly monologic narrative" (119) unless we conceive of monologism in the narrowest of terms.

Dettmar claims intertextuality as one of the key virtues of postmodern dialogism, but he counters R. B. Kershner's authoritative claim for extensive dialogue with other texts in *A Portrait* by arguing that *Stephen* refuses dialogism and since, his voice dominates the text, the dialogic process is aborted. He adds:

Similarly, Richard Pearce argues that a monologic novel is one in which "the voice of the author dominates" (50) and that's clearly not the case with *A Portrait*; yet if we consider Stephen's voice the voice of an author presumably similar to the authorial voice of the young Joyce, before he "found his voice(s)" the novel can be seen as monologic in this specialized sense. (119-20n21, see Kershner; Pearce)

In other words, allow me to define the terms and I shall win the argument. If you will permit me to dismiss the complex narrative strategies of the James Joyce who actually wrote the book, we shall have a really monologic text here. There is, in fact, a dominant *dialogue* in *A Portrait*, and it is that between the author, James Joyce and the subject, Stephen Dedalus, who *might* become him.

Neglected by both Kershner and Dettmar, one of the most powerful intertextual elements in *A Portrait* is the awareness of *Dubliners* by the many readers who will have read both texts. The interdependence of the two texts is later validated by their amalgamation in *Ulysses*. Many sequences of Stephen's life could be abstracted as *Dubliners* stories. Any time the concrete reality of Dublin and its citizens intrudes on the self-absorbed psyche of the would-be artist, the echo of the earlier book sounds loudly. At the height of Stephen's

self-creation as the aloof romantic artist, he lectures on his theories. Abstract this scene and you have a *Dubliners* sketch of the Dublin "artist" in the pejorative sense. In revising *Stephen Hero*, Joyce slyly changed the interlocutor from Stephen's ally, Cranly, to the sardonic Lynch. A pompous young man walks the Dublin streets expounding his borrowed theories to a single unlikely disciple. As Stephen presents an hypothesis on beauty, his theory is comically interrupted: "A long dray laden with old iron came round the corner of Sir Patrick Dun's hospital covering the end of Stephen's speech with the harsh roar of jangled and rattling metal" (226). In the heteroglossia of this novel, even the voice of the Dublin streets demands to be heard.

If the chapter on *A Portrait* defines the weaknesses of *The Illicit Joyce*, there are also strengths. Kevin Dettmar's book is worth reading for its trenchant statement of an extreme position and for some lively readings, including such nice touches as the description of Father Flynn's "mad" laughter at the end of "The Sisters" as "reflective, golden Nietzschean laughter" (72). Chapter 7, on the carnivalesque in *Ulysses* is well worthwhile and the discussion of the detective story paradigm in *Dubliners* (58ff) is very well done. Neither of these is an entirely new concept, of course, but Dettmar extends the debate and certainly keeps the conversation going here at least. (FRED RADFORD, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

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*SILVIA SPITTA. *Between Two Waters: Narratives of Transculturation in Latin America*. Houston: Rice University Press, 1995. 246 + xii pp. US\$ 37.50 cloth.

Since the 1920s, anthropological discourse has played an active role in Latin American narrative. This tendency has become even more pronounced since the 1960s, when a postcolonial sensitivity began to call into question cultural anthropology's assumptions about the Other and to foreground the unequal relations of power which frame studies of the Other. Sylvia Spitta's fine work, *Between Two Waters: Narratives of Transculturation in Latin America*, makes a timely contribution to the debates surrounding these issues. Spitta uses the theory of transculturation to analyze literary, religious, and pictorial

narratives from the Conquest to contemporary fiction from Peru and Mexico.

The first chapter establishes the study's critical framework by tracing the evolution of the concept of transculturation in works by José María Arguedas, Angel Rama, Antonio Cornejo Polar, Gustavo Pérez Firmat, and Antonio Benítez Rojo. Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz coined the term in the 1940s to describe the mutual influences of cultures in contact and the new realities that this process generates. By foregrounding the reciprocity of intercultural dynamics, he sought to avoid the limitations of the term "acculturation," most frequently used to describe how one culture changed in the direction of another, dominant culture. Originally formulated to describe the cultural history of Cuba, Ortiz proposed that transculturation would offer the key to understanding Latin America as well. It is to this field that Spitta turns her attention. Thus, this chapter centres around the point on which subsequent (trans)cultural critics coincide: the importance of the theory in Latin-American efforts at establishing identities which are not derivative(s) of cultural systems imposed by (neo)colonial powers. Her work subsequently analyzes the de- and re-semantization of beliefs and symbols as part of a broader effort to protect cultures threatened by their contact with colonial cultures.

In chapter 2, Spitta examines Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca's *Naufragios*. She reframes the chronicle as a transcultural text casting Cabeza de Vaca as a mediator between cultures and focusing on his deliberate manipulation of indigenous and Spanish cultural codes. She shows how he attempts to convince the Spanish Crown of his success as a Christian evangelist by framing his shamanistic practices in Judeo-Christian terms and, thus, obfuscating their American provenance. Ultimately, Spitta finds in Cabeza de Vaca's assimilation the roots of his proposal of a syncretic method of evangelizing which would attract natives by superimposing Christian symbols on their own.

Chapter 3 studies how this same process also allowed indigenous populations to continue to observe their own religious beliefs under the guise of practising Catholicism. This chapter's argument about transculturation hinges on the fact that priests in the Andes were charged with a task of cross-cultural translation whereby they accommodated Christian beliefs to a native framework in order to render them more accessible; this project of course presupposed their awareness of cultural differences. Spitta's identification of a transcultural dialectic between the forced imposition of cultural systems and resistance thereto through the reappropriation of the conquerors' symbols represents an important contribution to Latin-American colonial studies. And yet, I take issue with her characterization of the priests' work as "evidenc[ing] an early grasp of cultural relativism" (62; also 57). Cultural relativism entails not just the awareness of cultural difference, but also the recognition that each culture exists in its own right, not to be ranked in relation to others. The

awareness of difference may indeed have caused the evangelists to question the universality of their own belief system; however, the fact that they studied the Andean cultures with the express purpose of eradicating them, precludes any discussion of this project in terms of cultural relativism.

Chapter 4 examines the incorporation of Latin-American elements into European forms in the works of the Cuzco School of Painting from the late seventeenth century through the end of the colonial period. Native artists reworked European aesthetic and religious standards in order to express their own culture. While this chapter focuses more on religious syncretism than on the portraits in which this is evidenced, nevertheless, Spitta offers an excellent discussion of the conflation of Andean and Spanish/Christian symbols and religious figures (e.g., Santiago Matamoros becoming Santiago Mataindios).

In chapter 5, Spitta, following Cornejo Polar and Rama, argues that Arguedas uses Andean oral culture and music, rather than causality and logic, to structure his novels. Thus, he exemplifies the transcultural strategies of many postcolonial authors: he appropriates the tools of the colonizer, in this case the quintessentially Western genre of the novel, and uses it to describe a world to which the form is alien. Arguedas' adaptation of Spanish to Quechua syntax similarly reaffirms the indigenous culture's presence and power over the supposed dominant language. Spitta reads these strategies as literary manifestations of the ethnographic theories with which Arguedas explained the survival of Andean culture. Moreover, she recasts Arguedas' descriptions of Westernization as a dynamic of transculturation whereby indigenous culture is threatened while its vitality and viability are ensured by the ability to adapt to new challenges, not assimilating to Spanish culture but, rather, becoming something new altogether: indo-mestizo cultures.

Chapters 6 and 7 explore the links between transculturation, gender, and patriarchal society in Mexican author Elena Garro and Mexican-American Gloria Anzaldúa. She argues that for Mexican women inscribed in history as traitors, since la Malinche 'gave' herself and, ultimately, her people, to Hernán Cortés, transculturation must additionally rewrite this role and, by extension, reclaim the past. Spitta provides an outstanding discussion of the relationship between the judgments and reinterpretations of la Malinche and critical stages in Mexico's formation as a nation (179-80). She further succinctly identifies the different paradigms within which Mexican and Chicana women writers revalorize and vindicate la Malinche as part of their efforts to redefine themselves and establish a female tradition of Mexican cultural identity. Unfortunately, her analysis of Garro's story, "La culpa es de los Tlaxcaltecas," falls somewhat short of its promise: Spitta traces Garro's shifting of the blame from la Malinche to the Indian tribe that aligned itself with the Spaniards against the Aztecs, but does not succeed in showing how the issues of male discourse, malinchismo, miscegenation, modernity, and myth upon which her argument rests complement one another as different

aspects of the transcultural endeavours of Mexican women writers. Similarly, her final chapter finds, in Anzaldúa's works, a geographic, cultural, and literary border space from which to conceptualize the transcultural experiences of Mexican-Americans, but again does not convincingly integrate the many texts, genres, and theoretical currents upon which it draws.

Spitta's book suffers from several other shortcomings. For example, the author never identifies the criteria upon which she based her selection of texts. Also, she does not explore the possibilities of a transcultural framework in the Caribbean beyond her initial discussion of Ortiz and the recent reappropriation of the theory by Cuban critics in the U.S. I question, too, Spitta's singling out of the latter as the only critics currently mobilizing it: Mary Louise Pratt's *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (Routledge, 1992) deploys transculturation as a fundamental paradigm for analyzing descriptions of Latin America's topography and efforts at identification. Moreover, Spitta could have used Pratt's notion of "contact zones" "social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination" (4) to explain why she limited the scope of her study to Mexico and Peru.

Nevertheless, these weaknesses ultimately underscore the importance of *Between Two Waters*, as well as the wide-ranging applicability of transculturation as a theoretical and critical framework. Spitta's work advances in more than one sense transculturation as an autochthonous and specifically Latin American critical apparatus, and thus makes a significant contribution to addressing a problem that has long plagued analyses of Latin American literature and culture. (DEBORAH COHN, MCGILL UNIVERSITY)

* A. JAMES ARNOLD, ed. *A History of Literature in the Caribbean*. Volume 1: *Hispanic and Francophone Regions*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1994. 579 + xviii pp. US\$ 150.

As the exiled Cuban critic Antonio Benítez-Rojo observed, the Caribbean is saturated with language games and language codes, including not only the four major European languages present (Spanish, French, English and Dutch), but also a welter of creoles. Though this heterogeneous heritage is often occluded from the perspective of unilingual scholars, the study of Caribbean literature is unavoidably comparative. This volume, first in a series of three, naturally takes its place alongside other tomes in the *Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages* sponsored by the International Comparative Literature Association.

From the very beginning, the task was recognized as a daunting one. Although there were, by the 1980s, nascent critical traditions in each colonial language, almost no attempt had been made at conflating and comparing developments across this vast "literary region," which includes not only the archipelago itself but the continental "rimlands" whose social dynamics are in some sense Caribbean (not only the former plantation societies of French Guiana, Suriname and Guyana, but the coastal areas of Central and South America, all of which breathe to the beat of Caribbean rhythms, as it were).

The shape of the three volumes in this massive study was to some extent determined by those previously established single-language critical traditions, wherein necessary expertise in each language had to be sought. In that sense, this first volume is only implicitly comparative, and most collaborators keep their focus tight. Spanish and French language writing occupies this volume, English and Dutch a second (still on the way), while a third volume (out in 1997, same publisher) offers the requisite comparative perspectives. This multiplex strategy replicates that found in the predecessor collection *European-Language Writing in Sub-Saharan Africa*, edited by the late Albert Gérard (1986), and like that earlier history, the editorial exercise involved in *A History of Literature in the Caribbean* was itself a constitutive moment in the creation of the comparative approach to the field. In other words, A. James Arnold's *History of Literature in the Caribbean* will likely be seen in the future not only as a reference work in its own right, but as an essential document for study of Caribbean literary historiography. Others will be asked to take an overview of the final project, so let me confine myself to observations about this volume and the process it entailed.

It is not by accident that the metaphor of fractality has been adduced repeatedly to explain Caribbean realities (most notably in Antonio Benítez-Rojo's *La isla que se repite*, 1989 there is a readily accessible translation by James Maraniss published by Duke University Press in 1992). The hallmark of fractality is that an object retains more or less the same profile of imbricated complexity at whatever scale it is observed. It is therefore not surprising, at least to this reader, that the quandaries of the wider project of comparative Caribbean literature reoccur within the frame of Hispanic and Francophone writing. In the first place, there are numerous strange wormholes and sidealleys connecting the two realms, byways which reflect the incessant ebb and flow of Spanish and French influence during the formative years of Caribbean history, but also the political realities of the second half of the twentieth century. I have always found it amusing that the Haitian poet René Depestre lived much of his life under the Cuban handle of "Day-pes-tray" which he has now to some extent recanted though there is something very Caribbean about this dual identity. In the second, the dilemmas of each language sphere are common. Although it is not strictly correct to confine Hispanic Caribbean literature to the three island nations of Cuba, the

Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico, the disparities among them (that Cuba is apart unto itself, the Dominican Republic only half an island, and Puerto Rico an island colony of the U.S.), have odd echoes with those in the French Antilles; Guadeloupe and Martinique like French Guiana are all French D. O. M.'s (*Départements d'outre-mer*), but French Guiana is part of the main, and thus apart unto itself in a different sense, while Haiti, which shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic, is not only independent (and has been so longer than all New World republics other than the United States), but often serves as a kind of template for "deep" creole cultures. Haitian vaudou, for example, is the "canonical" form of this syncretic religion.

As A. James Arnold observes trenchantly, though without, in his word, "acrimony," the fabrication of this volume was impeded by the fact that "a Cold War ... considered to be over elsewhere still obstructs international scholarship concerning the Caribbean region" (xv). Nonetheless, its basic editorial strategy seems to have survived that and the other usual impediments to international collaboration. A two-dimensional grid, at once diachronic and synchronic, organizes contributions to each of the two language groups. Although there is a considerable difference of approach between Humberto López Morales' "The History of Literary Language" (meaning in Spanish, 9-26) and Ulrich Fleischmann's "The Formation of a Literary Discourse: One, Two or Three Literatures" (317-38), both serve an analogous quasi-philological function. Similarly, the distinction between popular and literary cultures is defined for both languages, and a general social and/or cultural history of the major regions where each prevails prepares a second tier of essays, which in each case treats literary genres (fiction, poetry, theatre, essay), though with a historical touch often missing from genre studies, as it is necessary in the Caribbean, where history seems to be rewritten every several decades or so, the parameters re-set as it were though the underlying patterns remaining the same.

In this limited space, it is impossible to encompass the wealth of information in this volume alone, but the decision on the part of the editor to ask for short annotated bibliographies from collaborators means that this tome, in addition to its literary qualities, is also an essential reference work which belongs on the shelves of any library claiming to cover Caribbean cultural history, or any individual whose research touches thereupon. The economics of academic publishing being what they are, both John Benjamins and the International Comparative Literature Association should be complimented. Wherever this book is not, there will be a gap. (GEORGE LANG, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA).

*ALBERT GÉRARD. *Afrique plurielle: Études de littérature comparée*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1996. Pp. 200.

Albert Gérard, whose scope as a comparatist was rarely rivaled in our times, left us in December, 1996, only a few months after the publication of this collection of articles exemplifying what comparatism has to offer to the study of African literature, and vice-versa. At such moments, it is difficult to separate the public and the private. I should accordingly own up to my personal debt to him, one which can never be repaid, such being the logic of influence among generations, an imminently comparatist notion incidentally, one Gérard understood better than many.

To some Albert Gérard might seem a rather conservative figure, especially in the context of the debates raging over the future of comparatism (see Bernheimer). In part because of his relish for felicities of style in English as in French, this polyvalent Belgian, who also had a considerable reputation as scholar of romantic English and classical French literature, eschewed academic jargon, and doubtless thought that the implied singularity of multiculturalism in the title of the Bernheimer Report was mistaken: all ages are multicultural, he might well have responded. Gérard's own sense of historiography, a concept sometimes at odds with postcolonialist studies whose "post" tends to preclude the existence of much that is "pre" was founded on what might be called humanist principles, among them the belief not only that generation engenders generation, but that individual persons count in history. Many of the pieces in *Afrique plurielle* illustrate what we can now perceive as one of his ruling passions, the discovery and celebration of previously obscure *littérati* along the margins and within the cracks of African literary history.

There is no elitism lurking behind this preoccupation with *littérati*. Gérard's knowledge of the heritage of African oral literature was unsurpassed in his generation and also, much like Gramsci, he saw intellectuals as emanating directly from social groups, though this is not how he would have put it. Instead, his defense of nascent or neglected African literary systems represents the polar opposite of crusty elitism, since conquest of literacy and its "higher" literary forms is an intellectual consequence of civilization in Africa too, where, as elsewhere, the epochal advent of writing took and is taking myriad forms, the precise kaleidoscope of which is contingent upon particularities that many outside of Africa have yet to imagine and to which Gérard remains the most ecumenical guide.

There are twenty essays in *Afrique plurielle*, so it would be tedious to summarize them one by one. In fact, some pieces are topical pieces which, though edited to eliminate repetition and carefully contextualized, are most useful as sites in which to enjoy the polemic verve of their author who seldom minced his words. The vision which underlies the last two decades of Gérard's work is, nonetheless, strikingly clear as the reader moves from article

to article: put in its simplest terms, the future history of African literature will resemble that of European language literatures, which emerged into autonomy and independence as the technology of writing spread across that continent, individuated languages of culture arising and defining themselves through literacy. This big picture is cast on a scale uncommon among contemporary comparatists, including "both sides" represented in the Bernheimer report.

Now from one point of view, this vision is indeed Eurocentric. After all, if the future of African culture can be best conceived by way of allusion to the rise of European vernaculars out of the Romance and Germanic dialects, then one might easily infer that the European experience set parameters to which Africa and presumably the rest of the world must conform. Such putative Eurocentricism was, however, far from the Gérard's thinking, since what is conventionally dubbed "the West" was, from his point of view, only one product among many of universal forces.

Let me take three articles and show how this grand vision plays itself out in the study of African literatures. "Expression française, identités africaines" (13-26) would at first glance appear an apology for *la francophonie*, insofar as French is implicitly acknowledged to be a potential vehicle for authentic African identities. True enough, Gérard's survey of the main features of African literature in French does insist upon the connection French offers some Africans both to the wider sphere of French-speakers and among themselves. Yet if meticulousness is the primary trait of Gérard's writing, irony is not far behind, and this essay, the germ of which was presented in Dakar in 1988, turns the concept of *francophonie* back upon itself. Each and every one of the seams that sow this particular sock together traces at the same time the underlying differences inscribed into French and present in contiguous literary systems across Africa. On occasion, Gérard used the term "polysystem" (e.g., 65), but the thrust of his research leads far away from theories of system *per se*. Gérard took it for granted that cultural systems are, as Umberto Eco once claimed for works of modern art, *open*. For him the issue was instead exactly what they are open to. Rather than delimiting *la francophonie* to the use of French by an intellectual, political and literary elite, he defines it by how far the scholarly imagination can reach starting from French. For example, the fraught and frequently catastrophic relationship between ethnicity, language, culture, nation, and state in Africa is paradoxically illuminated by reference to the scrambled heritage of European imperialism, but also to distant historical antecedents:

Faut-il rappeler que c'est sur le territoire de l'actuelle Tunisie que fut fondée, dès la plus haute antiquité, la première société urbaine et lettrée du Maghreb, celle de Carthage. L'impérialisme romain installa l'hégémonie du latin sur l'ensemble de la Berbérie, mais la Tunisie actuelle et les territoires immédiatement adjacents

restèrent le principal foyer d'activité culturelle et d'écriture latine. (18)

The fact that after World War I and to this day Tunisia remains the fount of the most classical Maghrebian writing in Arabic does not, of course, follow directly from this circumstance of ancient history, but the frame within which the differentiation of language, dialect and identity north and south of the Sahara must be this far-reaching, if comparatism is to mean anything.

This theme is pursued in "Francophonie africaine, latinité gauloise" (43-58).² Again, the apparent focus on *la francophonie* is deceptive, since the contemporary political and literary construct of those who share French as a high cultural language within a diglossic or even heteroglossic matrix of other languages, was, according to Gérard, only one among a multitude of similar situations in world history.

Dès le début de l'ère chrétienne avait été fondée à Autun (Augustodunum) une école latine qui accueillait, nous dit Tacite, nobilissimum Galliarum subolem, liberalibus studiis ibi operatam (la progéniture des plus nobles personnages des Gaules, qui y étudiait les arts libéraux). Presque deux mille ans plus tard, même situation, même défi, même réponse: en 1855 Faidherbe institue au Sénégal "une école, dite 'des otages', qui" poursuit ingénument son biographe, "prend en 1857 le nom d'école des fils de chefs et qui forme en quinze ans plus de cent Sénégalais pour le commandement des provinces" sous le contrôle et au service de l'autorité coloniale. (49-50)

Lest one think that the formation of a colonial elite instructed in value-laden liberal arts in the language of a colonizer is the final stage of the "post-colonial" process under Roman imperialism, and as such justification for the Frenchification of the African elite, Gérard continues: "Certes, en bons démocrates, nous ne souhaitons pas que [le français] redeviennne ce qu'il était au dix-huitième siècle, le langage véhiculaire d'une oligarchie aristocratique. Nous voudrions que les peuples [africains] se l'approprient" (51). But appropriation means change and, as Gérard understood, the transformation and eventual disappearance of "high" French as the primary language of culture.

Mais revenons à nos ancêtres les Gaulois.... Subjugués pendant un demi-millénaire, les peuples de la Gaule, comme ceux de l'Ibérie et de l'Italie, ont pratiquement vu leurs langues autochtones disparaître sous l'étreinte mortellement puissante du latin. Mais ils n'en ont pas pour autant adopté le latin "classique." Par un autre processus naturel et organique, par un syncrétisme linguistique qui est un aspect fondamental du métissage des cultures nécessaire à la continuité de la vie collective, ils transformèrent l'idiome de leur conquérants en se l'appropriant, en

l'adaptant à leur propre syntaxe, à leurs habitudes articulaires, en le pliant aux besoins de leur propre vie social.... (51)

There is to be sure no reason the same number of centuries need elapse in Africa as did in Europe between the moment of colonial occupation and the emergence of new literary vernaculars. In fact, all evidence is that discrete varieties of African French (and English and Portuguese) are already taking root: for French the work of the late Gabriel Manessy is particularly revealing in this regard.³

As should be clear from the above allusions to *syncrétisme* and *métissage*, Gérard conceived of this process as one of creolization, a theme he develops explicitly in "Problèmes III: créolité, voix du futur" (137-48). This increasingly fashionable concept — for once Gérard found himself within a trend rather than swimming against the current — needs be carefully defined, to start with by distinguishing cultural from linguistic creolization. For example, the shift from Latin to French, Spanish, etc. was an evolutionary process, not one of creolization as linguists define it: a sharp break in transmission of language from one generation to the next, one involving the loss of core grammatical features (see Grey Thomason and Kaufman 147-66). Indo-European philology is based on the opposite proposition, that not only the articulatory habits of Europeans but also their syntactical and semantic ones can be read against the millennial record of change in their languages.

Still, the broad idea of cultural creolization aptly applies to the differentiation of European languages and literary cultures, the very phenomenon around which comparative literature first constructed itself. If, moreover, the classic schemata of comparative literature tend to differentiate literatures synchronically in space, measuring each against others and thereby relativizing them all, the diachronic approach adopted by Albert Gérard is even more de-essentializing (to use a piece of jargon he would have disliked) of particular national cultures, and for that matter of those whose claim to particularity springs from their postcolonial status.

I would like to conclude, somewhat dilatorily, by placing the burden of these three essays, here sketched out only in barest outline, in the context of the contemporary debate about both comparative literature and postcolonial studies.

The study of Africa from perspectives we might call post-colonial has had increasing impact upon various disciplines in North America and beyond (see, for example, Bates, *et al.*). The ensuing revisions of disciplinary framework might first be thought of as an automatic consequence of the rise of

multiculturalism within the academy. A quick look at the text just cited will show that things are somewhat more complex.

The debate around multiculturalism is closely related to and has been inspired by the internal cultural dynamics of the U.S. (and to a lesser extent, Canada), the "politics of identity" arising both in reaction against the homogenizing tendencies of the hegemonic (read: white, English-speaking) culture and as a natural demographic consequence of generational change, proponents of multiculturalism for the most part belonging to the cusp or leading edge of the so-called boomers currently assuming positions of authority within universities. Cultural literacy and the traditional canon presumed to convey it have been conceived by both sides as an embodiment of moral and political values which should be inculcated to the culture at large, as is clear from the introduction to the recent *Dictionary of Global Culture* (see Appiah and Gates), a deliberate riposte to the conservative, Eurocentric construct of cultural literacy, what used to be called Culture with a capital C.

Africa, within this U.S. context, often serves primarily as a reference point for intellectual African-American identity formation. Likewise, much of the intellectual terrain opened up by postcolonial, postmodernist, gender, and cultural studies is related one way or another to professional struggles within the U.S. university system, which may not count for much beside the gargantuan televisual apparatus projecting mainstream American values around the world, but which has considerable power of its own especially for young academics seeking their place in the sun. Moreover, there are signs that the problematics of multiculturalism and the struggle for diversified identities are increasingly relevant within Europe where many scholars have been disparaging of, sometimes sarcastic about, U.S. cultural fashions. The observant *promeneur* who strays outside of the principal tourist sites of Paris cannot help but be struck by the fact that it too has become a vast laboratory of multicultural contact and synthesis, one rivalling, in this regard, New York, Los Angeles, and Toronto. Yet, however legitimate such revisionism might be, it is not clear that we in the humanities and within comparative literature are embarking upon a genuine paradigm shift when (or if) we embrace, say, postcolonial studies precisely because the postcolonial remains very much an encrypted metaphor for self-definition, professionally as well as personally.

Africa and the Disciplines, though coloured by some of the above concerns, points to a somewhat different approach, since several of its authors claim that adducing what Pliny called the *semper aliquid novi* out of Africa into their own disciplines is not identitarian tokenism, rather has the potential to alter and expand their paradigms. Both macro- and micro-economics, for example, have found fertile terrain in Africa: the former as a zone in which transition from statist to private and from war to peace economies are of

3 For French, the late Gabriel Manessy's *Le Français en Afrique noire: Mythes, stratégies, pratiques* is particularly revealing in this regard.

prime interest, the latter in which local household and small enterprise economies and their effects might be best understood (Paul Collier in Bates *et al.* 76-77). Let me only suggest in passing that there are interesting analogies one might draw between this concern with the microcosmic and Gérard's own detailed early histories of literacy and publishing in Africa. Though Africanist political science is not regarded as central to that discipline, the liminality of political life in Africa offers recognized potential for a special sense of relativism, where "the utility of multiple, transborder, ethnic linkages for regional peace-keeping and security warrants attention [and] could prove to have methodological as well as practical significance" (Richard L. Sklar in Bates *et al.* 107). Social anthropology, a discipline which has been as fraught with self-doubt as comparatism, at least once it was understood that field notes are first and foremost forms of writing, is perhaps less global in its assertions about Africa, but the need to parse detail and to account for authenticity of voice when addressing African cultures has at the very least produced a sense of unease that echoes throughout that discipline, and "the direction of the new anthropology will surely be affected by the paths taken by the new Africa, its scholars, and its other citizens" (Sally Flak Moore in Bates *et al.* 34).

Comparative literature, readers will have understood, has in my opinion largely failed to come to grips with the same material. This is not to say that there are not serious comparatists in the Africa domain nor Africanists who are informed about comparatist issues, but only that reflection is scanty about what African literatures might mean for the history of *world* literature, or literature itself.

In this regard, I would like to append a final if peripheral note to *Afrique plurielle*, one of the most acerbic segments of Christopher Miller's *Blank Darkness: Africanist Discourse in French*, of which there is a review also first published in these pages.⁴ Miller's contribution to *Africa and the Disciplines* (Bates *et al.* 213-31), which treats the impact of African literature on literary studies, would, I imagine, receive a less trenchant response from Gérard. In fact, one can easily imagine Miller's conclusion coming from Gérard's now silenced pen: "The challenge represented by African literature is thus greater than it might appear at first. The present system of including it but marginalizing it ... is inadequate, unjust, and intellectually unsound. At the root of the problem is the current nationalist basis of literary curricula" (228). Leaving aside the encyclopediae of African literary history Albert Gérard bequeathed us and of which *Afrique plurielle* is but a sampler, both comparatists and those who work in the field known, for better or worse, as postcolonial studies, owe him considerable gratitude. (GEORGE LANG, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

4 See *CRCL* 15.1 (1988): 168-72.

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*WOLE SOYINKA. *The Open Sore of a Continent: A Personal Narrative of the Nigerian Crisis*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996. Pp. vi + 170. CDN \$27.95.

In this polemic, argument and narration join to constitute a combative book with a great boxer's staying power. Not to be knocked off his feet, Soyinka continues to speak and write while dividing his exile from Nigeria between London and Massachusetts. Nigeria and its politics call forth literature of more than a little documentary interest. In this regard, *Open Sore* is cousin to *The Trouble with Nigeria* (1983) or *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987), both by Chinua Achebe. The theft, thuggery, and homicide Soyinka shows, the individual and public protests he records, make the book a brave document of the state of Nigeria's civil society. In his text, Soyinka battles for nothing less than a democratic nation. He fights his way into and out of corners with the reader following behind to witness the vice and betrayal that Nigeria has endured from its authoritarian kleptocracy or "rule by thieves." The tendons and sinew that sustain Soyinka's polemic are largely the book's capacity to inscribe in its readers the experience to which it bears witness. More precisely, Soyinka's book belongs in large part to that literature, for example, 1984 or *Darkness at Noon*, through which the state is understood to be a kind of prison. The book's literary strength consists, I think, not only in the representation of civil society turned prison, but also in its contribution both to the ethnography of an authoritarian kleptocracy and its elites and to the rhetoric of such a regime especially around the key notion of "nation."

In the context of prison-state literature, ethnography concerns the description of organized political power and of its impress on communal life and on individual careers and sufferings. The apparatchik Winston Smith and

his neighbourhood in 1984 are illustrative here. Czesław Miłosz wrote a kind of ethnography with *Zniewolony umysł* (*The Captive Mind*) (1951), by representing Poland's Communist regime largely through the careers and temptations before its citizen-types. Authoritarian regimes, such as Sani Abacha's in Nigeria, lack the degree of control of totalitarian ones such as Poland's and work in different ways, including a greater stress on thuggery and homicide. Nigerians commonly call a mobile police unit the Kill-and-Go. The ethnography of the Nigerian prison-state does not stop at careerist corruption or physical violence, crucial as both have been in the development and maintenance of the current regime: for Soyinka, ideas of "nation" have likewise been instrumental. Like corruption and violence, the rhetoric of national self-determination and national unity also sustains the regime in its demonic reduction of daily existence to personal wager, played in squalor, against disease, injury and death. More than once, Soyinka alludes to Pandemonium, Milton's society of devils in *Paradise Lost*.

Against all such authoritarian practices, especially nationalist rhetoric, Soyinka insists, in detail, that Nigeria's survival as a nation depends on its furthering human existence as its people actually live it. This insistence, together with his engagement with the idea of the "nation," gives *Open Sore* an investigative drive and a novelistic scope that other similarly passionate polemics may lack (for example, Graham Greene's chap book *J'Accuse: the Dark Side of Nice*, 1982). Thus, like Langland's *Piers Ploughman*, Soyinka's polemic sets out a synopsis of a nation in which readers witness how groups in that society fail to advance the common good. Soyinka's stress falls almost completely on how elites have betrayed their nation. Moreover, his opposition to Abacha's annulment of the 1993 election moves Soyinka to clarify what kind of society allows for human flourishing in Nigeria. In the process, Soyinka supports norms ignored or traduced by the kleptocracy, especially self-determination and the rule of law (as distinct from theocratic legalism, as found in Sudan). The only elites spared Soyinka's polemic are the criminal bar and the judiciary. Soyinka supports the idea of self-determination because Nigeria's authoritarians and their toadies, again and again, hijack the state for themselves behind the rhetoric of national inviolability and because of the danger across Africa of not addressing the realities of ethnic groups and national boundaries. He returns repeatedly to Rwanda's ethnic cleansing.

Herein lies what I find to be the chief difficulty with the book. Soyinka too readily extends the ethnography and rhetoric of the Abacha regime to other African regimes: his blanket characterization needs more sources, more attention to the ethnographies of the regimes in other nations, if it is to be persuasive. Another difficulty is structural. Without his employment of "nation," Soyinka would almost contain too much to encompass intelligibility. Even as it stands, his text may still display too much strain in places where he incorporates what were originally discrete oral presentations.

One can, indeed, imagine him unrolling before an audience the book's parataxic sentences. The work's "unit-construction" appears most readily in the epilogue, added after the judicial murder in 1996 of the Ogoni writer and activist, Ken Saro-Wiwa.

Yet, on balance, Soyinka does use the nation effectively as a super-ordinating topic, thereby conferring a working unity to the book. Focused and developed through this topic, the real richness of the book, a nasty wealth, consists in its detailed and interlocking linkage of Nigerian authoritarianism, with its corruption and its rhetoric, to daily life. How, for instance, an official campaign for "discipline" led, in the workplace, to countless humiliations and meaningless injury, even death. How the collapse of public security invariably makes the daily bus trip fatal to someone in Lagos. How the kleptocracy's monopoly on permits of building cement kept fleets of ships full of concrete at anchor off Lagos for months while the wealth of their cargoes found its way, with untubulated other billions, into individuals' pockets and the poor remained unhoused. The epilogue ends with the last words reported for Saro-Wiwa: "*What sort of a nation is this? We grasp only too painfully what the nation can be, what it deserves to be. If Ken Saro-Wiwa's death-cry does prove, in the end, to have sounded the death-knell of that nation, it would be an act of divine justice richly deserved*" (153).

Soyinka is ultimately a wary meliorist in that he believes that civil society, marked by self-determination and the rule of law, can support human flourishing in Nigeria and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. In the end, the argument in *Open Sore* engages the idea of nation in order to wrest it from an authoritarian political culture set on using nation-speak at the expense of the very nation and its citizens. The book also allows readers the experience that this culture and that rhetoric brings to Nigerians. The experience and the argument work together in various ways to give this polemic a many-fold value. For example, the text adds to the literary depiction of civil society in emerging states as they find strictly internal resources to deal with their own political regimes. I say "internal" because Soyinka attacks, as he has before, post-colonial elites who use the history of empire as a boogymen to deflect attention from their own turpitude and from the actual suffering of their citizens. As well, the text is often satiric, representing a nation as under demonic extremes of violence, careerism, and linguistic sophistry. In this way, *Open Sore* can reinvestigate a sense of satire's potential to deal with all of a nation's civil society, at a time when this potential may be viewed almost as an historical artifact, the inclusion in a survey course of Swift's *A Modest Proposal* or Orwell's *Animal Farm*. As a satire and a polemic, *Open Sore* reminds us that a society's extreme betrayal by elites can still demand writing that laces up its gloves and uses them in a manner that exceeds the strictly documentary. While the way Tai Solarin died (55), for example, may be historiographic, as a matter of fact, it does have a literary kind of plausibility.

At stake in such linkage of the literary with the topical, including the political, are claims to reason as well as to nationalism. Soyinka represents the world of Nigeria's abused civil society textually and allows us to experience that world, appreciate its ramifications, also textually. Continuing to read *The Open Sore* integrates such experience and ramification as have already been made text into the on-going representation of Nigeria; the nation and the need for its reform thereby become more intelligible, largely on account of the rationality, normally accorded text, that that experience and ramification now also possess. This process is probably most apparent in the rise of medieval literacy; medievalists as diverse as M. T. Clanchy (*From Memory to Written Record*, 1993) and Brian Stock (e.g., *The Implications of Literacy*, 1983; *Listening for the Text*, 1990) demonstrate the establishment of the contiguity still presumed to exist between rationality and literate textuality. The power of *Open Sore*, its call *ad bellum purificandum*, depends on its having textualized rationality in opposition to the irrational Abacha regime; moreover, such rationality is crucial to our understanding of society as represented in *Open Sore*. For instance, Soyinka's stress on the rule of law may arise largely because law is a highly textual *rationality*, in opposition to the social chaos he finds inherent in the ways that regimes, such as Sudan's, use fundamentalist textualities. Considering law as a textual rationality could move law and literature studies even further away from liberal/anti-liberal exchanges (into which its U.S. practitioners can understandably make it) to a wider range of approaches say, more ethnographic or comparative ones better suited to the varied actualities of the rule of law and civil society in our post-colonial world. More generally, however, as Soyinka's example also suggests that attention to literacies and, thus, to literariness, may be heuristically crucial to understanding the topical potential of texts, regime by regime, past or present. (DAVID BARKER, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO)

*DAMIEN BRODERICK. *Reading by Starlight: postmodern science fiction*. London and New York: Routledge, 1995. Pp. 224. US \$59.95.

This fascinating and, on the whole, worthwhile overview of science fiction as a specific mode of writing begins and ends in definitions. In the beginning, Broderick culls what he thinks are the best available from such theoreticians of the mode (a term Broderick prefers to genre for carefully explained reasons) as Darko Suvin as well as such practitioners as Robert Heinlein and Samuel R. Delany (clearly this text's paradigmatic sf author). The final definition, a large and generous, if difficult statement, emerges from the complex arguments that make up the 155 pages that precede it.

But to begin at the beginning, Broderick (himself a widely published sf

writer in Australia) prefaces his study with a comment on what has happened to the two cultures during this century of scientific and technological innovation. The comment is important for the way it sets the stage for learning a way of reading science fiction:

Whether it is viewed as a genre or a mode (even a fresh paraliterature entirely), its very name, for all its acquired taint of comical vulgarity, evokes that central paradox of mutual incomprehension. A theorised interest in sf endures precisely because of the unease with which science fiction poises its narrative modality (or perhaps several such modalities sharing a family resemblance) between artistic attention to the subject and scientific attention to the object. (xi)

Paying attention to Suvin's definition of sf as "an ensemble of fiction tales marked by *cognition* and *estrangement*" (xii) and Delany's argument for reading it as a paraliterature, Broderick then suggests that recent literary theory allows for a reading of sf that explores "a set of writing and reading protocols articulated about and foregrounding aspects of the *objective world* (as science tries to do), through the engaging invention of stories about imagined *subjects* that is, aware, feeling, thinking persons (typical of literary fictions)" (xii). Then, as a writer fully aware of the "unusually concentrated 'encyclopaedia' a mega-text of imaginary worlds, tropes, tools, lexicons, even grammatical innovations borrowed from other textualities" (xiii), he asks two important questions "What makes an item of sf a good example of its kind? Why is sf relished by practised readers or viewers, while others loathe it?" (xiii) which lead to this statement about what he is about to do as a critic: "All these issues point to a semiotics and stylistics of sf, an investigation of the textual strategies which constitute the writing and reading of sf. What are its generic components? How are they put together? How concretised by readers? How, in turn, do they construct their potential readers?" (xiii). Of course, there is a major problem, already hinted at. He admits that his readers will have problems with his arguments unless they are familiar with two "encyclopaedias": that of recent theory and, especially, that of science fiction, itself. But then, a book such as *Reading by Starlight* is probably "always already" limited to an audience of insiders; only readers and critics committed to the study of sf will likely be interested, although I would argue that, despite its insistence on a reader's understanding of the mode, this is one of the best introductions to its whys and wherefores a non-reader of sf could hope to find.

Reading by Starlight is divided into two parts: the first, titled "Modern Science Fiction," provides lineages, definitions, and especially a viable anatomy (in small) of the mode as it achieved a place in the American pulps and then in popular culture generally. Broderick lays out the ways by which the modal encyclopaedia was slowly built up; he also demonstrates how

mainstream writers' lack of understanding of this mega-text leads them into awkward re-inventions of the wheel whenever they venture into the mode. His suggestion that "sf operates metaphoric strategies via metonymic tactics" (56) leads to an exploration of Delany's use of the term "subjunctivity" to mark out the different ways realist fiction, fantasy, and sf actually work. Delany says a famous sentence in the early Heinlein, "The door dilated," "is meaningless as naturalistic fiction and practically meaningless as fantasy" and Broderick adds,

As sf, it confirms, while enacting, the text's radical "futurity" or "otherness." In this special kind of text, metonymy passes first through cascades of suspended lexical paradigms, words regarded as metaphorically equivalent, which are then detached and sent aloft, freed from any last vestige of a supposed everyday reference to reality. (57)

For his view of postmodernism, Broderick tends to stick to Jameson, although he does make some good use of Brian McHale's ideas too. He admits some of the limitations Jameson's Marxism creates, but still finds his general view of postmodernism valid. I am not wholly persuaded by Jameson, despite his many valuable insights, and I am sorry that Broderick did not also make use of some of the other recent theorists of postmodernism who have granted both greater agency and subversive power to popular culture (to which all sf, the worst and the best, belongs) than does Jameson. Nevertheless, Broderick provides a truly intriguing overview of what he calls modernist sf (although his apparent insistence that cyberpunk remains essentially modernist, and not postmodernist, is certainly open to discussion if not argument). Despite such caveats, I would have to say that his readings of such works as *Neuromancer* as well as Brian Aldiss's *Helliconia* trilogy are full of insight. His shorter comments on a number of other texts are also illuminating. Perhaps his major failing has to do with an aspect of recent sf he clearly knows: feminist sf. I think it's truly a failing that he does not deal with Joanna Russ's exemplary fictions nor with the more recent gender bending speculations of Gwyneth Jones, among others, but it is clear that he felt he couldn't cover everything.

One reason he doesn't cover everything is that he is so committed to the writing of Samuel R. Delany, who is the object (or should that be "subject") of study in the second part of *Reading by Starlight*, "Postmodern Science Fiction." It is partly because Delany is such a major theorist of sf himself (he has published five large books of criticism as well as many smaller works), but mostly because his sf best fits Broderick's conceptualization of what this mode can do when it strives to achieve its highest possibilities. "From his earliest novels ... Delany has followed the vocation of what we might call 'allographer,' one who writes the Other" (117). With this as his given, Broderick takes a careful look at the way Delany's fictions work out his

theoretical stances and offers lengthy and useful readings of two major Delany novels, *The Einstein Intersection* (1967) and *Stars in My Pocket like Grains of Sand* (1985), as well as the astonishing four volume *Neveryon* sequence "with its playful, blatantly fake-historical 'reconstructions' of Neolithic city life, sexual fetishism, revolt against slavery, ceaseless invention" (130-31).

This insistence upon Delany's preeminence in the field possibly leads to a certain lack of balance in the study as a whole, but it does not undermine the general theoretical argument (indeed, it is because Delany's work so clearly emerges from that theoretical argument that it has such pride of place in *Reading by Starlight*). Broderick makes a very strong case for Delany as the central postmodern sf writer, but what an intellectual pleasure it is to realize that more recent writing is beginning to challenge for a place alongside his work.

With Delany's work as a base, Broderick finally offers his own lengthy, definition of sf:

Sf is that species of storytelling native to a culture undergoing the epistemic changes implicated in the rise and supersession of technical-industrial modes of production, distribution, consumption and disposal. It is marked by (i) metaphoric strategies and metonymic tactics, (ii) the foregrounding of icons and interpretative schemata from a collectively constituted generic "mega-text" and the concomitant de-emphasis of "fine writing" and characterisation, and (iii) certain priorities more often found in scientific and postmodern texts than in literary models: specifically, attention to the object in preference to the subject. (155)

This is dependent upon the previous 155 pages and is made even more viable by the explanation of each point presented on the next page, but what is remarkable about it is the way it places sf in relation to both popular forms and canonical literature. *Reading by Starlight* has its limitations, but it is a valuable addition to that very short shelf of books that have something truly useful to say about sf and postmodernism. (DOUGLAS BARBOUR, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*LAVONNE BROWN RUOFF. *American Indian Literatures: An Introduction, Bibliographic Review, and Selected Bibliography*. New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1990. Pp. 200 + viii. US \$17.50 paper; \$37.00 cloth.

A sense of balance has long been an important contributor to the resilience of Native-American ways of life. A. Lavonne Brown Ruoff, professor of English at the University of Illinois at Chicago, endeavours to present a balanced

perspective. In her overview of American-Indian Literatures, she provides material of interest not only to literary scholars, but also to linguists, anthropologists, ethnomusicologists and scholars in other fields. She covers works that native and non-Native Americans have written about this field and points out directions for further research.

This is a comprehensive guide to Native-American literature in which Ruoff expands on her earlier survey, "American Indian Literatures: Introduction and Bibliography." Penny Petrone's *Native Literature in Canada: From the Oral Tradition to the Present* is a comparable review of the literature of First Nations in Canada.

The format of Ruoff's book makes it an invaluable reference tool for scholars and students alike. The work is divided into three parts. Part one provides an introduction to American-Indian Literatures, part two is a bibliographic review, and part three contains a selected bibliography.

In the introduction, Ruoff provides a brief historical, social, and cultural background to the literature from pre-contact to the present. She describes tribal cultures and also discusses settler-native relations. There is a short overview of the assimilation policies of the government and documentation of the battles for justice from the nineteenth century to the present. The history of American Indians is, as Ruoff states, "one of endurance despite adversity" (5).

Land and oral traditions are integrally connected and of primary importance to Native Americans. Ruoff provides a brief foray into some key concepts of Native American world-views and illustrates how these differ from those of settler culture. For instance, Native Americans equate words with power. Silence is equally important and is perceived as part of the continuum of, rather than as a binary opposition to, speech. Balance and harmony with the land and with one another, cooperation, relations, community, and spirituality are some shared values across Native-American cultures; however, Ruoff also acknowledges differences between Native-American groups.

There is an extensive section devoted to oral literatures in which Ruoff emphasizes the importance of studying oral literatures within their specific cultural contexts as well as within the interrelationships between diverse cultures. She discusses the forms and styles of ritual dramas: chants, ceremonies, and rituals, songs, narratives, and oratory. In providing a brief summary of some of the different critical perspectives on oral literatures, Ruoff focuses on performance and the relationship between the teller, the tale, and the audience, as well as the relationship between tellers. The audience is an integral part of, and often participates in, the performance. The context, the occasion for the performance plays an important role in what and how a storyteller performs/tells.

The problems of language are inherent in the process of colonization.

Ruoff addresses the difficulties of translation not only from Native-American languages into English, but also from oral performance into written texts. She also points out that, "Native Americans have their own distinctive terms to identify particular genres, which often do not correspond to Euroamerican genres" (18). She stresses the importance for Native Americans of preserving and transmitting oral literatures and illustrates how these are essential for cultural survival. At the same time, she discusses the debate between those who want to try to keep their culture free of "cultural contamination" (13) and those who choose to adapt their culture and perceive written texts as one means of ensuring cultural continuity and survival.

Ruoff presents a short survey of written literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Settler contact with Native Americans led to the popularity of life histories and autobiographies, as well as other genres. Ruoff gives a brief introduction to the works of William Apes, George Copway, Sarah Winnemucca, Charles Eastman and Francis La Flesche.

In the first part of the twentieth century, narrated autobiographies came into existence. Often noted among this genre is *Black Elk Speaks*, in which Black Elk related his experiences to John Neihardt. Other popular genres include sermons, protest literature, travel accounts, and histories. Drawing on oral traditions, many authors wrote histories of their tribes and chronicled the lifestyles, customs, spirituality and thoughts of their people.

Many contemporary Native-American authors have adapted oral traditions to the written form. While twentieth-century Native-American literature is diverse, there are some common threads. Recurring motifs and themes include the dispossession and alienation of Native Americans, the experience of life on reserves as well as in urban centres, the search for identity and place, the importance of cultural survival, and the conflicts within individuals and between cultures. The renaissance of Native-American literature in the 1960s produced many new writers who continued to address these themes, but also emphasized the importance of transformation, of liberation, and healing.

For some writers, the trickster figure serves to illustrate paradigms for transformation. N. Scott Momaday, Leslie Marmon Silko, Gerald Vizenor, Louise Erdrich, and Thomas King, for example, often adapt traditional trickster figures and perform the role of tricksters themselves. As Ruoff points out, "American Indians have always had a tradition of creative and oratorical expression. As they were introduced to the written word, Indians used it as a tool both to help preserve their oral traditions and to share them with others. They also used the written word to extend the boundaries of their own creativity into genres outside Indian oral traditions" (114).

In part two, Ruoff provides a comprehensive annotated bibliographic review. She lists bibliographies and research guides, anthologies, collections and re-creations, and scholarship and criticism. She also provides backgrounds

for the teaching and study of Native-American literatures.

The last part of the book consists of a selected bibliography that is broken down into bibliographies and research guides, anthologies, collections, and re-creations, American-Indian authors, scholarship and criticism, films and videotapes, journals and small presses. The subtitles in parts two and three are helpful and enable readers to cross reference subjects of interest. Ruoff also provides a list of important dates in American-Indian history from 1500 to the present.

Throughout her book, Ruoff is often careful not to use eurocentric, evaluative terminology and is sensitive to many of the issues and concerns that face Native Americans today. One can only hope that the book will continue to be updated in the future. (DEE HORNE, UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA)

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*GEORGE P. LANDOW. "Hypertext" in *Hypertext: An Expanded, Electronic Version of "Hypertext: The Convergence of Critical Theory and Technology"*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1994. 2 HD diskettes. US\$ 39.95.

It has probably eluded no scholar's observation that technology and literature intersect in many ways, and all kinds of technology have generated or will generate their own text in new forms, a process that has been described by Walter J. Ong as "the technologizing of the word" (*Orality and Literacy* 80). Just as the first product of the industrial revolution was the book, a print text, the post-industrial revolution with its electronic technology has produced the computerized/electronic text. Since the 1980's, writers have started to create literary works in electronic forms. Now we have numerous electronic novels, interactive fiction, stories-on-disks, computer poems and so on. New electronic media have also received the attention of literary scholars who are eager to expand their traditional practice of intellectual discourse into hyperspace; and in recent years, an increasing (however small) number of scholarly works have become available in hypertext or other electronic forms. One work of major importance for discussion of electronic books is Landow's "*Hypertext*" in *Hypertext*, which is not a book, but a "hyper-book" on disks. Inserting the disks into a computer, one can download the "book" to hard-

drive in a minute, and then by clicking the mouse, one enters the cyberspace of a virtual book, the major part of which is the electronic adaptation of the author's widely acclaimed volume *Hypertext: The Convergence of Critical Theory and Technology* that first appeared in print form in 1992. "The chief reason for creating a hypertext version of *Hypertext*," Landow explains, is "to demonstrate the ideas advanced in that volume about the ways this new electronic information technology affects our notions of textuality, reading, writing, authorship, and so on." In other words, Landow's hyperbook is not intended to describe word technologization *per se* but, instead, it focuses on the interface between computer technology and our non-technological activities such as writing, reading and interpreting of a literary text.

Hypertext, a term introduced by Theodor H. Nelson into the discourse of computing in the mid-1960's (building on Vannevar Bush's original idea and imagination of a new type of "nonlinear" writing), has two meanings today: on the one hand, it refers to a special kind of computer technology, and on the other hand, it refers to a new textual form, a new type of writing that is done in the nonlinear/multi-linear or nonsequential/multi-sequential space made possible by the computer. Hypertext as a new textual form does not define itself in the tradition that approaches writing as conforming to well established conventions; but rather, it is inspired by the technocultural trend that constantly strives for new ways of communication. Landow's scholarly hyper-book, first of all, suggests a radical liberation from the constraints of the conventions determined by print technology. "We still read according to print technology," Landow writes, "but we can already glimpse the first appearances of hypertextuality and begin to ascertain some aspects of its possible futures." Unlike static print text, hypertext provides multiple, variable paths between blocks of text or what we might call *lexias*. With webs of linked *lexias* and a network of alternate paths, hypertext presents a radically divergent textuality that favors multi-sequential, interactive and plural discourses. In a sense, the rapid development of hypertext suggests a transition from the paradigms of print text/culture to digitized text/culture. As the principal technologies of our time have changed, the basic concepts that are used in both contemporary technology and literary criticism, for instance, have been undergoing similar changes; the old concepts of linearity and hierarchy that are related to the second industrial revolution have been replaced necessarily and inevitably by the new concepts of heterarchy and multi-sequentiality that are closely related to the development of avant-garde computer technology.

Different from many instances of computer assisted scholarly work, in which the emphasis is on the programming or on its applications in empirical assessment of literature, Landow's hyperbook addresses itself to the questions of how computer technology influences our understanding and interpretation of literary texts, and of how computer can be used as a conceptual model for

textual analysis in a creative and theoretical manner. Hypertext does not only represent a literal embodiment of some major points of contemporary literary theory, but it also suggests a new link between the "two cultures," literature and technology. The comparison between electronic and print text, as Landow claims, will be of great value to our understanding and theorizing of text and textuality in the computer age. Text and "techs," after all, are Siamese twins of modern technoculture; and the analogy between the two cannot be overlooked, since each can be explained in the other's terms. As etymology tells us, "art is *techné*," and for a long time in history, technology was part of the cultural process that was inseparable from art and literature. As Siegfried Zielinski points out, "The symbiosis of art and technology, of aesthetic imagination and technical as well as scientific innovation, was a great achievement of the Renaissance. This has gradually been pulled farther and farther apart until it was ultimately declared a dichotomy" ("The Electronic Text" 138). In the age of the computer, however, a new reunion of literature and technology has appeared. This new partnership constitutes a strong affirmation of an emerging field of scholarly inquiry that has been developing rapidly in these years. In addition to Ulmer's "teletheory," Purdy's "technopoetics," and Hayles's "technocriticism," Landow's discussion of hypertext, in a sense, suggests a new source of inspiration for literary and cultural studies. "Using hypertext," as Landow opines, "critical theorists will have, or now already have, a new laboratory, in addition to the conventional library of printed texts, in which to test their ideas." Hypertext, which provides a good model for the mind's ability to re-order textual elements as well as other elements of nature and culture by changing the links of association among them, suggests a polyvalent mode of critical (un)thinking that may help us see those "links" which are not subject to intellectual assimilation from a monovalent position.

One of the most obvious features that distinguishes Landow's hyper-book from its print version is the "links" in the electronic version, a word or a phrase highlighted in red indicates a hypertext node. The click of these words or phrases would pull additional lexias to the computer screen. Instead of facing a stable text, the reader sees only the image of a single virtual text on the computer screen; behind that virtual image lies a network of texts that can be presented on the screen in different ways, according to the reader's choice of links. The reading of a hyper-book might be a demanding intellectual process of discovery and exploration. When one reads "*Hypertext*" in *Hypertext*, one may begin at several different textual points, not necessarily at the "Introduction"; one may begin with the "Overview," then read the book selectively and non-sequentially; or one may use "Find" function to search the key words that interests him/her; or one can "Copy" any parts of the book to a word processing program in order to re-organize the "book" in the way one likes. So, in a hyper-book, one is presented with multiple possibilities of

reading, and as a result, with multiple versions of the "book." Apparently, a hyper-book is not only a source of excitement but also a cause of anxiety. One may feel uneasy facing a dematerialized, digitized book that has lost its "body." Moreover, since a hyper-book can provide readers with multiple ways to explore the full experience and not necessarily a linear one of the work, less experienced readers, without authorial assistance, may feel lost in the funhouse of "wreading" games; Landow's electronic book, however, does not totally deprive readers of their "give-and-take" pleasure of reading a print text, since readers can if they like "Print" any part of or the whole book and then take it to bed.

Some of Landow's most valuable observations are found in his discussion of four "reconfigurations": "Reconfiguring the Text," "Reconfiguring the Author," "Reconfiguring Narrative" and "Reconfiguring Literary Education." Landow observes three crucial attributes of hypertext: nonlinearity, unboundedness and flexibility. In this sense, hypertextual discourse suggests a sort of space in expansion — as the subtitle indicates, this hyper-book is an "expanded, electronic version" of a book that was originally published in print. In comparison with the print book, the expanded, electronic version forms a hyperbolic text that achieves an effect of textual proliferation in which the relations among the linked lexias open up to changeable patterns. If hypertext can be defined as a riotous cacophony of various linked or linkable "docuverses," then it should be a textual heterarchy that resists hierarchization, or an elastic container that expands flexibly to contain many types of re-connections. In this respect, hypertext represents a new form of textual democratization or absence of hierarchy, subverting the unitary, hierarchical discourse and enunciates non-hierarchical, multi-directional discourses that are paradoxically hinged by their complicity with a variety of negotiating links and paths. Therefore, with its enormous possibilities for information gathering, linking, sharing and appending, hypertext tempts us to re-define and to extend the concept of a text. Since hypertext by definition is open-ended, expandable and capable of linking all variations, as Landow argues, "we must abandon the notion of unitary text and replace it with conceptions of a dispersed text."

While his discussion of the malleable, democratic, multicentered dimensions of hypertext is extremely valuable and insightful, Landow fails to mention some of the limitations of hypertext. For example, a hypertext system can also be a confined structure determined, in its indeterminism, by a standard program. Of course, critical views of his discussion of hypertext are not unnoticed by Landow himself. As a matter of fact, one of the interesting features of his hyper-book is the inclusion of published "reviews," "non-reviews," and "cursor curses" of his previous print book about hypertext. Moreover, Landow's hyperbook also includes texts from a variety of sources such as selected writings of Jacques Derrida, Gregory L. Ulmer, and other

critical theorists, entries from the *Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism*, and student "interventions." In this sense, with its powerful capacity of accommodating relations between arguments and counter-arguments, Landow's hyper-book encompasses the coexistence, interaction and interdependence of contra-related perspectives that express simultaneously the various dimensions of open-ended arguments within the unity of a single work. In this sense, *"Hypertext" in Hypertext* is an "open work" that encompasses various versions of possible counter-perspectives.

Despite curse or praise, hypertext, as Landow's "book" illustrates, has undeniably opened up a vast "field of possibilities," challenging the closed and static notion of textual stability as well as socio-cultural stability. As Mike Featherstone and Roger Burrows have observed, "The importation of ideas derived from the science of such systems nonlinear dynamics into the human sciences, fundamentally alters how we must conceptualize the world" (*Cyberspace/Cyberbodies/Cyberpunk* 15). As Landow argues in the "open-ended conclusion," the comparison of electronic hypertext with print and other forms of text has profound implications in a large context beyond the computer screen and the page of a book. Although the potential of hypertext is still far from being fully realized, the impact that hypertext has generated upon culture and society should not be underestimated. "It promises (or threatens)," as Landow remarks, "to produce effects on our culture, particularly on our literature, education, criticism, and scholarship, just as radical as those produced by Gutenberg's movable type." The rapid development of electronic technology has indeed entailed a process of the extension of textual possibilities and offered a wide range of new textual forms of literature and culture; and in the past several years, *hypertext* has been sublimated into an indispensable trope in our intellectual discourse. In a broad sense, Landow's hyper-book points to a new direction of technocultural movement: that is, breaking away from the "logical" and "logocentric" tradition with its stable, one-sided view of unity, hypertextual discourse admits paradoxes, contradictions, multi-sequentiality, and heterarchy, which have far-reaching implications not only for the text of today, but also for the text of tomorrow. (BENZI ZHANG, CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG)

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