

REVIEWS

*DAVID E. BYNUM. *The Daemon in the Wood: A Study of Oral Narrative Patterns*. Foreword by Albert B. Lord. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University, the Center for Study of Oral Literature (Publications of the Milman Parry Collection, Monograph Series Number 1) 1978. Pp. xviii + 454, 67 figures. \$12.50

There are few monographs in the field of folkloristics that make such a polemical and fervently personal statement as this work by David Bynum. His criticisms of assorted approaches to the study of oral literature that he feels are extraneous, spurious or specious in nature fall right into line with an undercurrent in recent American folklore studies that seeks to return to a consideration of the basics in folklore and folkloric phenomena. 'The science of oral traditions needs improvement,' says Bynum, 'and to improve it one must have stories and their ideas... more firmly at the center of attention than the procedural presuppositions or prejudices of any other science' (p. 28). A similar dissenting voice is heard in André Lefevere's complaint in 1977 regarding studies in literature that were not 'too eager to entertain the notion that a poetics of literature might be found in — of all places — literature itself' (p. 30 in André Lefevere, *Literary Knowledge. A Polemical and Programmatic Essay on its Nature, Growth, Relevance and Transmission*. Assen/Amsterdam: Van Gorcum 1977, reviewed by Holger Pausch in the *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature*, 6 (1979) 84-6). But there is a somewhat rakish and almost desperate edge to Bynum's sporadic attacks on a series of eminent researchers that stretches from Jacob Grimm, James George Frazer and Antti Aarne to Vladimir Propp, Ruth Benedict, Stith Thompson, Claude Lévi-Strauss — those whom Bynum finds guilty of the 'inexact, mechanistic, and ideologically timid utilization' of Milman Parry's Test of Orality (p. 5), of 'mechanical taxonomies and arid formalism' (p. 26), and of 'crypto-activism' and 'excrescence in academic literary thinking' (p. 31). A few notables, like Bynum's mentor, Albert Bates Lord, remain unscathed; others (such as Linda Dégh) are simply not mentioned. As far as Francis J. Child is concerned, 'it remains a marvel how little he understood the substance of what he laboured on so

long and devotedly' (p. 30). 'Manifestly,' exclaims Bynum, 'I do not like this state of affairs, and am not willing to abide in it' (p. 26).

Nonetheless, one can sympathize with the author's distinct aversion for those studies that appear to ignore, distort or violate the integrity and essence of folklore. Bynum's preferred approach is his own: one that looks for patterns, arrangements of narrative materials, and 'essential or generic motifs and the webs of design that kept them together in traditions of oral fable' (p. 79). The search takes Bynum on an extended and rather laborious excursion around the world, and into Biblical narrative as well as into more recent field materials recorded by the author himself in Africa and in the Balkans. The focus of attention throughout his exposition is one particular motif dubbed 'the daemon in the wood.' There are two kinds of trees in Bynum's wood: trees of oneness and trees of separation. Together they constitute an underlying green and/or/versus hewn wood pattern that can generate and bind in a variety of ways. The task of the hewn wood narrative element, for example, is to serve as an 'instrument of civilized equity and reciprocity' (p. 425). Moreover, the tale of the Two Trees in oral literature is not merely a folkloric convention but a 'proper aspect of human biology' and 'an adaptive mechanism in human evolution' (p. 27), 'an atom of tradition' (pp. 56, 69), and 'a feature assignable to the origin of our species' (p. 258). After all, 'the first true humans were the ones who first remembered fiction about the past and told each other those memories' (p. 85). In this way, then, the folklorist's traditional concern with origins takes on a new twist that adds depth and scope for research into the inherent, generative dynamics of folklore. Especially noteworthy in this connection are Bynum's own syntheses such as 'the cosmogonic triad' (pp. 277-90) and 'the four zones' (pp. 261-5).

Whether daring or obtuse, Bynum maintains a forceful prose filled with interesting asides, slogan-like headings and aphoristic phrases. Some read as warnings: 'the literary bushel is bad measure for oral fable' (p. 420); others are more in the manner of pronouncements and formulations that suggest a system of laws and programmatic procedures for folkloristics. The following instance is an especially important one for Bynum: 'the inalienable conservatism of oral narrative tradition sufficiently explains it' (p. 318). There are a number of distinctive lexical features that are sure to enrich future studies in oral literature; these include 'complementarity,' 'fabulosity' (a close cousin of the now established 'orality'), and, of course, Bynum's own neologism: 'cosmotact' (= 'who or which orders or arranges the world,' p. 162). And so, having unleashed *The Daemon in the Wood*, Bynum has simultaneously drawn atten-

tion to both forest and trees in a provocative American contribution to general and comparative folklore studies. (ROBERT B. KLYMASZ, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*DORRIT COHN. *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press 1978. Pp. 331. \$14.50

This study is a model of taxonomic literary criticism. Cohn labels, classifies, and illustrates how Western novelists from Dostoevsky through Sarraute have approached the mimesis of consciousness. She builds on Käte Hamburger's premise in *Die Logik der Dichtung* (1957) that the language of fiction has its unique patterns which are a function of the fictional mind in the text. This means that fiction is the only genre where the consciousness of a person other than the speaker can be recorded. Cohn, who accepts this premise, shows her greatest originality in developing the implicit corollary. To wit: that the distinction between the first-person and third-person modes is formal (i.e., syntactic), not epistemological; the 'I' of the author's narrative persona is never truly absent. This means that the phyla of first-person and third-person modes are the same, although their genera may be distinctive. (This borrowing from biological terminology is mine, not Cohn's.) Since at present, i.e., prior to Cohn, we have only haphazard, random, unsystematically applied terminology for some of these phyla-genera features, Cohn supplies us with a coherent, consistent, and systematic one. This terminology is her second original contribution to narratology, and it may prove to be her most widely adopted contribution. To adapt a definition by Walter Benjamin, an essayist whom she omits (and citing this omission implies no criticism), Cohn has translated the language of seemingly disparate literary phenomena into a unified language of criticism by naming. Thanks to her, some distinctions and similarities we may have felt keenly but had some difficulty articulating can now be discussed.

Cohn's phyla are psycho-narration, quoted monologue, and narrated monologue (this last is her English equivalent for *style indirect libre* and *erlebte Rede*). These modes are found in third-person novels, obviously. But they are found as well in first-person novels, psycho-narration becoming self-narration and monologue becoming self-quoted or self-narrated. But as Cohn properly precautions, this would be a falsifying symmetry. (Any naming, to return to Benjamin, makes the named specific and hence — and henceforth — reduced or shifted in its reference.) The conventional

label 'interior monologue' obscures, first, the distinctions between a mediated technique and a, presumably, unmediated (sub)genre and, second, the critical role of memory for the narrator-protagonist. (E.g., what does he remember? what did he think? or think he thought?)

Thus far it may sound as if this study, concerned as it is with taxonomy, eschews literary texts. Nothing could be further from the case. Cohn stays close to her exemplary texts at all times, and her approach passes the pragmatic test for any methodology: it allows the texts to reveal more about themselves. Further, her range through continental and Anglo-American literature is impressive. Members of her own generation (like myself) may, I suspect, find her discussion more interesting when she is segmenting (or curetting) a novel we have not taught than one we have. For this reason, I should be reluctant to say that she is more insightful with, say, Schnitzler's *Fräulein Else* and *Lieutenant Gustl* (both first-person autonomous monologues) than with Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (memory monologue of the same genus) or Joyce's 'Penelope' section of *Ulysses* (third-person autonomous monologue). That is, when we know the accrued parameters and diachronicity of an author's critical corpus, we may have already encountered her insights through other approaches. She subsumes such categories as voice, reader distance and collaboration, intertextuality, narratological relationship to social and historical contexts. Moreover, any 'extrinsic' matters which the novel can carry are mentioned only to the extent they impinge directly on the narrative mode. (E.g., her mention of the use of middle-class clichés in *Lieutenant Gustl* would tend to make us want to dissociate ourselves from both the substantive and the attributive, but Cohn does not dwell on Schnitzler as a class critic.) But these observations should not be considered adverse. On the contrary, they point to the economy of her methodology.

Indeed, I am willing to predict that *Transparent Minds* will serve the present generation of graduate students the way Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957) served a preceding one. Cohn's essay provides a taxonomy of terminology and a compendium of illustrative criticisms which the best students will integrate and the mediocre (alas) will hypostatize. But such are the risks of a sound critical achievement. (MARILYN GADDIS ROSE, SUNY AT BINGHAMTON)

*LUCETTE DESVIGNES, éd. *Travaux comparatistes*. Saint Etienne: C.E.C.R.E.D. 1978. Pp. 179. FF86

A ce petit volume, publié avec le concours de l'université de Saint-Etienne, ne demandons que ce qu'il prétend nous donner: des exemples variés de la recherche comparatiste. Il n'y faut chercher ni thème dominant, ni structure d'ensemble. Au hasard de la cueillette, l'éditeur a eu la main plus ou moins heureuse.

Consacré à la 'défense du comparatisme,' l'éditorial a le mérite de s'appuyer sur une expérience concrète qui, pour être vieille de dix ans, n'a pas perdu de son actualité pédagogique. On applaudira donc les étudiants en lettres de Saint-Etienne de l'année 1969-70. Ils ont été nombreux à se sentir à l'étroit dans l'étude, strictement française, du conte fantastique à travers Maupassant; c'est avec enthousiasme qu'ils se sont initiés à la littérature comparée, qui leur offrait un vaste 'panorama du fantastique,' où cinq champs de recherche s'ouvraient à leur choix, du roman gothique le plus démodé à la science-fiction la plus moderne. Tous, n'en doutons pas, en resteront marqués. 'Lorsqu'on s'est rodé à l'optique comparatiste, toute autre vision paraît insuffisante et faussée.'

Pages détachées d'une thèse aujourd'hui parue, une lettre présentée et traduite par I. Linitzky, exprime les réactions d'un écrivain populiste russe visitant en 1872 un Paris qui, dans la gaieté des théâtres, des cafés-concerts et des bals, s'empresse d'oublier les drames de la guerre et ferme les yeux sur la justice sommaire qui, à Versailles, liquide le cauchemar de la Commune.

Bien différente de cette attitude de voyageur sera celle de l'Américain Robert MacAlmon à l'égard du Paris de l'entre-deux-guerres. R.-M. Marcel nous montre à quel point l'auteur de *Being Geniuses Together* ignore la cité où il vit, en dehors des bars où se rencontre l'*intelligentsia* exilée dont il fait partie. Refus en grande partie volontaire: 'I knew too well that Paris is a bitch, and that one shouldn't become infatuated with bitches, particularly when they have wit, imagination, experience, and tradition behind their ruthlessness.' Aussi MacAlmon n'a-t-il rien du touriste: ne va-t-il pas jusqu'à confondre — l'auteur de l'article aurait pu le souligner — la cathédrale Notre-Dame avec Notre-Dame-des-Champs? (p. 42). 'A peine évoqué, le Paris de Robert MacAlmon se renie presque toujours au profit des êtres humains, étrangers de préférence, qui y vivent.'

Examinant, de façon parfois un peu confuse, les textes consacrés au Vésuve au cours du XVIII^e siècle — en particulier ceux de Charles de Brosses, de Vivant Denon et de Friedrich J.L. Meyer — un article d'E. Chevallier note les changements qu'a subis l'optique des écrivains, et

parallèlement du public, à l'égard du fameux volcan: peu à peu on est passé de l'indifférence à la curiosité, puis à la fascination et au lyrisme.

Utile contribution aux études voltairiennes, une étude de S. Messina fait état de la sévère leçon infligée à l'auteur français par Paolo Rossi, poète, traducteur et critique italien installé à Londres. En 1728, en pleine campagne de diffusion de la *Henriade*, Rossi publiait des *Remarks upon M. Voltaire's Essay upon the Epick Poetry of the European Nations*. Il y dénonçait, entre autres choses, des erreurs importantes dans le domaine de la littérature italienne, des jugements sommaires à l'égard d'Homère et de Milton, une théorie tendancieuse des 'goûts nationaux,' le tout accompagné de commentaires sarcastiques. Or Voltaire, tout en feignant d'ignorer le pamphlet de Rossi, en a fait largement son profit, comme le prouvera la version française de *l'Essai sur la poésie épique* publié en 1733. Etude documentée et intéressante.

On ne saurait en dire autant de celle sur 'la littérature roumaine et le fantastique' de N. Rata. Ce catalogue de noms laisse le lecteur sur sa faim. Quant au texte qui l'illustre — une nouvelle de V. Voiculesco — il est la preuve, une fois de plus, qu'une traduction doit être faite, ou en tout cas revue avec soin, par quelqu'un qui écrit dans sa langue maternelle. Quelle que soit l'originalité du style de Voiculesco, on doute que le lecteur français en apprécie l'équivalent dans des expressions comme 'une écrasation de poissons,' — 'Où sont les calebasses? se hérissa-t-il vers ses hommes,' — 'Ben, mais toi, qu'est-ce que tu en crois? quand sera-ce?' etc.

Partant d'une phrase de Ionesco, qui déclare que son *Macbett*, 'entre Shakespeare et Jarry, est assez proche d'*Ubu roi*,' J. Sessa étudie la parenté de ces deux 'avatars dérisoires de *Macbeth*' entre eux et avec leur modèle shakespearien. Sa conclusion est peu favorable à Ionesco. Etait-il bien nécessaire de refaire une nouvelle fois *Macbeth*, alors que la farce de Jarry, démystifiant Shakespeare à grands coups d'humour noir — un humour dont l'affinité avec celui de Lewis Carroll est évidente — portait déjà la parodie à son point extrême? Dans la pièce de Ionesco, la dérision reste extérieure, accessoire; elle ne dépasse pas, la plupart du temps, le niveau du langage. C'est donc Jarry, et non Ionesco, qui, en contestant le sens même du monde, atteint 'la véritable dimension de l'absurde.'

L'éditeur a grossi ce volume du texte de sa communication faite au congrès de l'AILC en 1973 à Montréal et publiée depuis dans les *Actes* de ce congrès: 'De Poe à Jules Verne et du mystère au gouffre.' Tous deux romanciers du mystère, Poe et Verne commencent par lancer à la face du lecteur le fait inexplicable et à lui faire éprouver le choc de l'incompréhensible. Mais, chez Poe, le mystère lui-même compte beaucoup plus que le mot de l'énigme, tandis que Jules Verne, 'comme un enfant impatient de

voir les adultes donner leur langue au chat,' se hâte joyeusement vers l'explication raisonnable. Même différence entre les deux écrivains, quand on considère leur obsession du gouffre. 'Les gouffres de Verne, innombrables, sont terrestres et explorables; ceux de Poe, océaniques, sont par essence inconnaisables et traduisent l'angoisse ultime d'une imagination fiévreuse.'

L'ouvrage se termine par des considérations pédagogiques. Le comparatisme peut-il trouver sa place au niveau de l'enseignement secondaire? — Oui, répondent les contributeurs. Une approche thématique des textes, l'entrée dans les programmes d'auteurs étrangers traduits, les expériences pluridisciplinaires doivent permettre de faire du 'cours de français' un lieu privilégié de réflexion et d'expression ouvert sur le monde. Viennent encore quelques pages sur l'enseignement de la littérature en Afrique, où R. Tabarant dénonce l'erreur qui consiste à mesurer à l'aune française les œuvres de l'Afrique francophone. C'est l'esprit comparatiste qui permettra d'aborder les textes africains 'sans parti-pris, sans idées préconçues, mais au contraire avec un esprit curieux, libre, prêt à recevoir dans l'intérêt et le respect ce qui se présentera.'

Au total, par son éclectisme et la qualité de plusieurs articles, le recueil mérite considération. On regrettera, sur le plan matériel, qu'une lecture attentive des épreuves n'ait pas éliminé les coquilles qui déparent certains passages d'un ouvrage par ailleurs agréablement présenté. (PAUL CHAVY, DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY)

*JANE CAMPBELL AND JAMES DOYLE, eds. *The Practical Vision: Essays in English Literature in Honour of Flora Roy*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press 1978. Pp. xiii, 163. \$7.50

In 1978 friends and colleagues of Dr. Flora Roy, for thirty years professor and head of the Department of English in the institution that is now Wilfrid Laurier University, published a *Festschrift* in her honour. As one might expect, most of the essays in this volume deal with topics specifically related to literature in English, ranging in time from Old English to recent Canadian literature. Three of the essays, however, should be of interest to comparatists. These are Michael Ballin's 'The Third Eye: The Relationship Between D.H. Lawrence and Maurice Maeterlinck,' Elizabeth Dipple's 'Iris Murdoch and Vladimir Nabokov: An Essay in Literary Realism and Experimentalism,' and William Blissett's 'Wagner in *The Waste Land*.'

Ballin's essay is concerned primarily with the recurrent symbol of the horse in Lawrence's work, with the occult roots of that symbol, and with its analogue in the work of Maurice Maeterlinck. Ballin's analysis of the horse symbol in the works of the two writers is interesting, but ultimately he is not able to establish a clear relationship between them. That Lawrence knew some of Maeterlinck's work is certain, but Mr. Ballin has been unable to find specific mention of Maeterlinck's *L'Hôte inconnu* in Lawrence, and that work is crucial to a discussion of the recurrent symbol of the horse in Lawrence. Mr. Ballin's essay, interesting though it is, must thus remain to a large extent speculative, since it would have been quite possible for Lawrence to have developed his symbolic use of the horse from sources other than Maeterlinck.

Elizabeth Dipple's essay is valuable because it raises 'the problems of literary realism within the novel, and the relationship of that realism to the experimentation which has become the natural direction of the genre in the twentieth century' (p. 104). Ms. Dipple's brief discussion cannot really explore the problems she raises in any depth, but her essay should be of particular interest to theorists of form and genre.

William Blissett's essay on Wagner and Eliot is a masterly performance. It continues his long-standing interest in Wagner and Wagner's influence on English and European writers.¹ In this essay he is primarily concerned with *The Waste Land*, but so profound is his knowledge, so magisterial his grasp of the material, that he is able to give us a comprehensive view of Eliot's indebtedness to Wagner and, even more important, to show how deeply rooted Eliot was in certain nineteenth century aesthetic manifestations, particularly in France, that can ultimately be traced back to Wagnerian theory and practice.

Eliot himself speaks of Frazer's *Golden Bough* and Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* as the major sources for *The Waste Land*. While not disputing this, Blissett sees Wagner's influence as overriding. It was, he says, from a Wagnerian 'cauldron that Eliot plucked out his poem.' Two Wagnerian devices above all served Eliot in his composition of *The Waste Land*:

The first of these devices was to use legendary, mythical material, strong, simple, appealing at a deep level of awareness and avoiding all superficial complications

1 See the following articles by William Blissett on this topic: 'Thomas Mann: The Last Wagnerite,' *The Germanic Review* 35 (1960) 50-76; 'George Moore and Literary Wagnerism,' *Comparative Literature* 13 (1961) 52-71; 'Wagnerian Fiction in English,' *Criticism* 5 (1963) 239-260; 'From Wagner to Jung,' *Queen's Quarterly* 70 (1964) 598-606.

of plot or 'intrigue.' The second was to impose upon the endless stream of musical sonority patterns of repetition reaching out beyond the music, by the assignment of a particular musical phrase, or leitmotif, to certain persons or objects or actions or passions or ideas, whenever they appear in the unfolding experience of the music-drama. (p. 76)

Blissett reminds us that the recognition of thematic material as the basis of the 'real structure' of works of literature, which is a commonplace of modern criticism, was by no means commonplace before Wagner and literary Wagnerism. He analyses one of the major leitmotifs in *The Waste Land* — the water motif — in depth, and then shows how the overall narrative of the poem derives itself from Wagner's *Parsifal*, though Eliot is not able to bring his poem to the kind of resolution offered by the opera. In *The Waste Land* deliverance is arrested. There is no Good Friday Spell.² Blissett argues convincingly that Eliot, while able to resolve the leitmotif system he develops in the poem, could not unequivocally resolve the action. He was therefore emotionally compelled to renew and continue the quest, and returns to it again and again, from *Ash Wednesday* to *Four Quartets*, although after *The Waste Land* the influence of Wagner can no longer be clearly isolated.

Blissett concludes his study by alluding to the paradox between Eliot, the practicing poet, and Eliot, the critic and philosopher, who professed allegiance to classical doctrines:

Richard Wagner is a source of what is inward, profound, symbolical, mythical in modern literature. Not for him, or for his, the sunlit surface of life, the Mediterranean and classical concern for the definite and bounded, the central, the humane. For all its professed classicism, the art of T.S. Eliot is unmediterranean because, like D.H. Lawrence and Thomas Mann, like James Joyce and Marcel Proust, like Jules Laforgue and Stéphane Mallarmé, he owes no Roman obedience and remains liegeman to the great Despot from north of the Teutoberg Forest. (p. 85)

(HENRY KREISEL, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

2 I agree with Blissett on this point, although I do not think it is, as he argues, the Fisher King who resolves to set his lands in order. I think it is the quester, the unnamed Parsifal of the poem, who makes that resolution, nor do I think that the resolution is quite as dispiriting as Blissett thinks it is.

RICHARD BRINCKMANN, ed. *Romantik in Deutschland. Ein interdisziplinäres Symposium*. Sonderband der *Deutschen Vierteljahrsschrift für Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*. Stuttgart: Metzler, n.d. Pp. 722. DM 78.00

In September, 1977, an interdisciplinary symposium on German Romanticism financed by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft was held at Schloß Reisenburg near Günzburg. The symposium had been advertised widely; abstracts of approximately eighty papers were submitted, of which the organisers of the conference selected forty. With the exception of a lecture on Caspar David Friedrich that heavily depended on slides, the papers were not read at the conference, but mailed to the invited participants in advance, so that the four days of meetings could be devoted almost entirely to discussing them. The present volume contains the text of the forty papers, brief summaries of the discussions that they elicited, and – somewhat incongruously – a bibliography limited to studies of romantic science and medicine, 1950-1975.

As is evident from the genesis of the volume, *Romantik in Deutschland* is fundamentally different in its purpose and its intended readership from such well-known earlier collections as *Die deutsche Romantik* (Göttingen, 1967) or *Die europäische Romantik* (Frankfurt/M., 1972), with which, at a superficial glance, it might be confused. It is not meant as an introduction to its subject, and it does not contain surveys, but research papers. That the reports on what was actually said at the symposium are somewhat anaemic will surprise no-one who has ever tried to capture in a brief summary the give-and-take of a discussion. The main purpose these reports will serve is to remind readers that there is no topic of any importance in German Romanticism that does not call forth disagreement among the experts. As regards the papers themselves, the rate of acceptance was approximately fifty per cent, i.e., more than twice that of most respectable North American scholarly periodicals, and quite a few of them read like reports of research in progress or chapters from forthcoming *Habilitationsschriften*.

On the whole, however, standards of scholarship are high, and the papers cover an impressively wide range of topics, all the way from Romantic politics and economics to philosophy, theology, and aesthetics. The symposium was, however, strictly limited to *German* Romanticism, and a surprisingly small part of it – less than a tenth – dealt with literature and literary criticism. In particular – as one of the organizers has pointed out – one misses discussions of the theory and practice of the novel, of the *Kunstmärchen* and of Romantic comedy. Altogether, on reading this volume from end to end, one wonders

whether there is not too much earnest and conscientious research — too much midnight oil — and too little simple delight in the great texts that, in their own time, caused so much excitement. But of course, the volume is not intended to be read from cover to cover. It is intended to be consulted by specialists, and there is no doubt that it will be consulted widely and with profit. (HANS EICHNER, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO)

*FREDERICK GARBER. *Thoreau's Redemptive Imagination*. New York: New York University Press 1977. Pp. 229. \$15.00 cloth; \$4.95 paper

Although this study was apparently intended as a contribution to 'the Gotham Library's' series on 'Comparative and English Language Literature,' Professor Garber explains in his preface that while 'I weighed the possibility of a comparative study which would place Thoreau within the entire Romantic context, I found that his modes of organizing his experience of the world were so fascinating and intricate in themselves that they needed and deserved an entire study of their own' (p. v). In this report of Garber's findings, such modes are undeniably fascinating in their intricacy. Because, however, this intricacy is so frequently the product of what Garber chooses to describe with the vocabulary of 'disturbing paradoxes' (p. 19), 'the often contradictory order of Thoreau's consciousness' (p. 19), 'the basic tensions' (p. 45), 'a prevailing ironic pattern' (p. 63), 'an ambivalence so profound and unsettling' (p. 121), and 'all these dichotomies' (p. 211), it raises serious questions, questions unconsidered by Garber, about the quality of Thoreau's thought, its value for us as truth. Such questions may seem old-fashioned, simply alien to the Romantic premise of the priority of the imagination which Garber assumes for his study, but nonetheless they seem relevant in assessing the trends in recent Thoreau criticism which Garber exemplifies.

A.O. Lovejoy urged us long ago to be more sensitive to what he identified as one of the frequently recurrent phenomena in the history of ideas, namely, 'the internal tensions or waverings in the mind of almost every individual writer — sometimes discernible even in a single writing or on a single page — arising from conflicting ideas or incongruous propensities of feeling or taste, to which, so to say, he is susceptible.'¹ In recent years students of the Romantic writers have made Lovejoy's caveat into something of a methodology, relentlessly seeking out and

¹ A.O. Lovejoy, *Essays in the History of Ideas* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press 1948) xiii

highlighting these waverings and tensions. Just as, for example, Geoffrey Hartman, David Ferry, Paul de Man, and Harold Bloom have been preoccupied with Wordsworth's ambivalence toward nature, so recent students of Thoreau have labored to chart variations on what James McIntosh calls Thoreau's 'programmed inconsistency.' Garber follows McIntosh, Charles Anderson, Lawrence Buell, Richard Tuerk, and Stanley Cavell, and although the ground he tours is thus increasingly familiar, his survey of it is adroit and provocative.

Garber's focus is the action of Thoreau's 'redemptive imagination.' One might have expected the term to engage lingering Christian traditions of personal salvation, as does Ernest Lee Tuveson's study of the Romantic aesthetic, *Imagination as a Means of Grace*, but Garber's meaning is more akin to what Quentin Anderson identified and stigmatized as 'the imperial self.' For Garber, Thoreau's redemptive imagination works primarily to reclaim, to transform, to take over nature: 'When consciousness redeems nature, it transforms the world into itself' (p. 19); or it does 'what consciousness likes to do best, transforming the world into images of itself' (p. 26). Garber further defines the central mode of redemption as the act of clearing a space — both a physical place redeemed from the American wilderness and a mental horizon in which the central self has come to enlarge its qualities and capacities. By stressing this 'homology of consciousness and nature' (p. 51), Garber offers us Thoreau as 'a cartographer of the American consciousness' (p. 160). The imaginative map that results is 'the graphic, static record of the activities in the narrative of redemption, what the mind has done in making a place for itself in the New World's vastness' (p. 208), a map graphing 'a set of enclosed shapes through which he organized his interpretation of the world and the relation of his self to experience' (p. 181). The circle of the clearing becomes Garber's basic figure for analyzing the complicated interactions of Thoreau's consciousness and the natural environment against which he measured it. Other scholars — Richard Tuerk, Joseph Moldenhauer, and J.J. Boies — have established and explored the importance of the circle for Thoreau, but none, I think have traced its implications so convincingly and in a way that makes accessible such a remarkable variety of Thoreau's concerns. Although Garber unaccountably fails to use Emerson's essay, 'Circles,' the definitive statement of the American transcendentalists' sense of the circle's boundary as both a triumphant measure of what has been won by the self and an imprisoning limit which excludes the alluring yet still unknown beyond, he employs this basic dichotomy with great subtlety not only to marshal Thoreau's varying attitudes toward nature, but also to describe the resulting problems in Thoreau's prose. If Thoreau is shown working to

enlarge the circle of consciousness, imposing upon or preempting nature with an aggression equal to any of Quentin Anderson's romantic imperialists, Garber also stresses his author's scrupulous respect for boundaries or margins between mind and nature. This respect prompted Thoreau to seek and express a harmonious co-operation between the two which would denigrate neither — one very successful example of such balance is, as Garber demonstrates, the 'Bean-Field' chapter in *Walden*. Garber shows us Thoreau, on other occasions, abandoning the circle of the civilized clearing to immerse himself in radical wildness; the desire was to refresh his spirit, but sometimes such immersion brought him to the limits of his redeeming imagination. And here Garber is particularly convincing as he explores Thoreau's experience in the Maine woods, especially in the trip up Mount Ktaadn, a confrontation with nature felt as so resistant that it threatened personal dissolution for the climber. Finally Garber notes those occasions upon which Thoreau expressed his uneasy sense that nature was simply inadequate to the task of satisfying the demands of consciousness. Nature is thus for Thoreau both, or alternately, or variously, 'analogue and antagonist' (p. 55), redeemed and redeemer, richly meaningful and obdurately blank.

Garber's claim that the relationships between Thoreau's consciousness and nature are intricate is amply sustained by his patient tracing and exposure of the interlaced strands, but too often his governing critical assumption is that because such strands are so intricately met, they are necessarily well met. Had Garber explicitly defended or argued this assumption, one might have been willing to concede that the contradictions, tensions, and paradoxes are evidence of Thoreau's imaginative honesty, his fidelity to truth as it may be revealed by the succession of moments, but the same evidence suggests Thoreau's perplexity as often as it does pattern, his confusion as much as it does complexity, and his evasions as strongly as it does honest confrontation. At times Garber's own remarks strengthen these suggestions without seeming to recognize how they might compromise the quality of Thoreau's thought and work. In speaking, for example, of Thoreau's early work, Garber says: 'He had not yet developed imaginative forms through which he could attempt to handle all of the components at once. He solved the problem of adequacy simply by avoiding it' (p. 112). I initially assumed that Garber uses 'solved' here ironically, but his eventual discussion of 'the imaginative forms' which are alleged to offer genuine solution undermined this assumption. Garber explains one of these forms as follows: 'The tempo of ideas, a rhythm of advance and sidestep, is a basic cadence in Thoreau's thought, a pattern which, as I shall argue in the next chapter, informs most of his major works' (p. 139). Even after his subsequent argument, the nagging

question remains: Why is this not another case of the very dubious practice of 'solving' problems by avoiding them? That the question is not idle is further indicated by Garber's remarks in speaking, without criticism, of 'an ambivalence so profound and unsettling that Thoreau could get around it only by a disjunctive maneuver which avoids confrontation of the contradictory positions' (p. 121). Garber is clearly less interested in the negative moral or intellectual implications of this action than he is in identifying the maneuver; indeed the final impression is that he finds Thoreau's contradictions, tensions, and paradoxes fascinating not because Thoreau carefully resolves them, or clearly recognizes them, or rejects them as logical deadweight, but rather because he so cleverly maneuvers them within some greater imaginative embrace. This larger harmony, described with terms like 'a counterpoint of rhythms' (p. 193) or 'the counterpoint of attitudes' (p. 205) is, however, more often asserted than demonstrated. It is as if, having taken such pains to sort out the widely diverse elements in Thoreau's attitudes towards nature, Garber now relaxes his critical attention in order to celebrate that diversity as it co-exists within a presumptive, if ultimate unity: 'Whatever Thoreau was doing, he was always, ultimately, doing the same thing' (p. 48); or 'He manages to have both continuity and discontinuity, repetition and an irreversible journey to the west, all at once' (p. 205); or finally 'Once again Thoreau manages to have it most ways at once' (p. 215). Without necessarily denying that Garber's insights here are correct, we should see, I think, that the most convincing case he makes is for the intricacy of Thoreau's relationships with nature, an intricacy that does much to reveal serious rational and moral difficulties, and thus calls less for celebration than for a more rigorous reevaluation of Thoreau's credentials as a mind worth attending to in such detail. (MORTON L. ROSS, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*SAMUEL WEBER. *Unwrapping Balzac: A Reading of La Peau de chagrin*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1979. Pp. 180. \$20.00

From the beginning, Samuel Weber challenges the reading of *La Peau de chagrin* by established critics, be they traditionalists or so-called structuralists. Thus, Gérard Genette, with his discovery of a turning-point between the traditional novel (Balzac) and modernity (Flaubert), is definitely brought into question: 'It is not only Genette who takes the opposition Balzac/Flaubert for granted. Indeed, one can wonder whether this opposition has ever been seriously questioned; so pervasive it seems

to have been in literary history and criticism' (p. 4). It is true that this type of opposition, which is in the tradition of French critical categorization, is used repeatedly by researchers. Martine Frier-Wantiez, who studies *Salammbô*, does not present Flaubert differently.¹ If this method has ever been challenged, it was only recently in an article published in *Littérature*.² Self-referentiality, thought to be the exclusive mode of writing of Flaubert, is now also brought to light by Weber in this study of Balzac's *Peau de chagrin*. The traditional reading of Balzac through the discovery of a reality beneath the symbol or the word has disappeared. Words and symbols are wrappings that refer only to themselves. This is clearly shown through the analysis of the ability of the ass's skin to shrink, allegedly when a wish is expressed by its owner: 'Contrary to the statement of Raphael himself — cette peau se rétrécit quand j'ai un désir — it is not the mere having of a desire that is crucial, but its enunciation, its utterance by a voice' (p. 119). The power of the word is overwhelming. It is not the reality which is important, but the word, as long as it creates this alleged reality. The word is not separated from action or from its referent. This is the mentality to which J.C. Carothers refers³ and which shows itself at any level of *La Peau de chagrin* as well as in *Han d'Islande* by Victor Hugo. In Hugo's novel, however, this belief is treated in a grotesque way which is in complete accordance with the strong parodic tendency of *Han d'Islande*.

Samuel Weber emphasizes the absence of a conclusion in Balzac's novel and demonstrates that the *Wunschbild* structures the Balzacian text (p. 161). This leads the reader to 'the space of discursivity, the flow and flight of speech, the unfolding and production of the voice' (p. 161). Via Freud, Marx, Derrida and Barthes, Weber reaches his goal, which is the encouragement of a renewed reading of *La Peau de chagrin*. Weber's presentation and method strongly resemble Barthes's in *S/Z*, as he explains in the Postface (pp. 163-7). However, in contradistinction to *S/Z*, Weber, who acknowledges some resemblance to Barthes's reading of *Sarrazine*, claims that the *déjà lu*, *déjà vu*, *déjà là*, taken for granted in *S/Z*, are explored thoroughly in *Unwrapping Balzac*. (PATRICK IMBERT, UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA)

1 M. Frier-Wantiez, *Sémiotique du fantastique: analyse textuelle de Salammbô* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang 1979) 254

2 P. Imbert, 'Sémiostyle: la description chez Balzac, Flaubert et Zola,' *Littérature*, No. 38 (1980) 106-28

3 J.C. Carothers, 'Culture, Psychiatry and the Written Word,' *Psychiatry*, No. 4 (1959) 307-20

*M. JONES, ed. *New Essays on Tolstoy*. New York: Cambridge University Press 1978. Pp. xi + 253. \$23.50

This collection of essays, which is characterized on the dustjacket as a specifically British contribution to the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Tolstoy's birth, is a very welcome addition to Tolstoy studies in the Western hemisphere. The themes, chosen by the authors, involve reconsiderations of major problems in Tolstoy's literary and philosophical output. No particular efforts have been made to provide new approaches; even the position, that Tolstoy could not think logically, is not new, however daring it may be.

The collection opens with an appraisal by Professor Gifford, a comparatist from the University of Bristol, of Tolstoy translations into English. As a general principle, Gifford advises the translator *in spe* not to be misled by the seeming naturalness, bluntness, and occasional carelessness of Tolstoy's style because every word, every stylistic detail was put down purposefully. It often means rendering the text literally, however uncomfortable the translator may feel. Gifford stresses especially that a translator should not deviate from the very powerful Tolstoyan devices of repetition and unusual syntax. Since Constance Garnett provided by and large literal renditions, but succeeded at the same time in maintaining the natural flow of the original, it is my impression that Gifford still prefers her translations to others, certain shortcomings notwithstanding.

In Gifford's opinion, when rendering the speech of the Russian peasant — probably the most demanding task for the Tolstoy translator — one should not seek refuge in dialect forms, but search for the most appropriate equivalents in good English while calling on one's own imagination and creative abilities to determine how far the potentialities of the native tongue can be stretched. (A minor typographical error occurs on page 24, where Tolstoy is said to have taught the peasant children on his estate in the beginning of the 1870s, instead of the 1860s.)

The following contribution by A.V. Knowles of the University of Liverpool is a very interesting account of the mainly negative reactions of Tolstoy's contemporaries of the Sixties to the serialized edition of *War and Peace*, and in particular to the character of Prince Andrey Bolkon-sky. It is regrettable that Knowles takes exception only once to the opinion of a critic, namely S.I. Sychevsky who praised *War and Peace* highly. It seems that Sychevsky was essentially correct when he explained Prince Andrey's inability to act as a result of his paralyzing habit of questioning everything he undertook. Knowles leaves the reader unenlightened as to why he believes that Sychevsky failed so completely

to understand the prince. At the end of the article, however, he provides an interesting explanation for the unfavourable reception of *War and Peace*. The reason was that the book had not lived up to the general expectation that it would indicate a way out from the desperate situation in which the nation found itself after the liberation of the serfs.

The essays by W. Gareth Jones of University College of North Wales, 'A Man Speaking to Men: The Narratives of *War and Peace*,' and by Malcolm V. Jones of the University of Nottingham, 'Problems of Communication in *Anna Karenina*,' can be discussed together in so far as they both deal with problems concerning the interrelations between Tolstoyan characters. W.G. Jones looks in the first place at the different modes in which Tolstoyan heroes *rasskazyvajut*, tell their story. The different kinds of narration are viewed by him as different kinds of performance. The better the performance, the greater the impression on the audience, regardless of whether or not any truth is revealed in the process. Early in his career Tolstoy had become convinced that the essence of a personal experience cannot be conveyed to another human being. This being so, at least an attempt should be undertaken to make the rendering of the event as entertaining as possible. The performing part should not, however, be stressed too much, since Tolstoy is always at pain to unveil the emotions that prompted an act. In the famous chapter, 'Verses,' of *Childhood*, for instance, the reader is made well aware that Nikolen'ka's inadequate performance was caused by his shame of having equated his love for his late mother with that for his grandmother.

In M.V. Jones's article, both verbal and extra-verbal communications in *Anna Karenina* are subjected to subtle analysis. Does it, however, suffice to see the lack of communication as the ultimate cause for the final breakdown of the Anna-Vronski relationship? Given the incompatibility of the emotional patterns, verbal communication would have provided the two parties until the very end only with weapons to hurt one another more deeply.

In the light of Tolstoy's undeniable attraction towards portraying a violent hero, it is somewhat difficult to agree with the title of the contribution by A.D. Briggs of the University of Bristol, 'Hadji Murat: The Power of Understatement.' While this hero is admired, the violence in the hands of Nicholas I, a character devoid of any *grandeur*, becomes despicable in the eyes of the narrator. As a result, the reader misses here the moral guidance to which he has grown accustomed in other stories written during this period. Contrary to Briggs's opinion, it seems to me quite valuable to search for reasons why Tolstoy abandoned the role of preacher in this one instance. In a recent article, Edmund Heier points to Tolstoy's interesting addition in *What is Art?* of 'negative feelings of in

dignation and horror at the violation of love' to the expected positive feelings of love of God and one's neighbour that should be aroused in what Tolstoy considers the first, religious, art.¹ Thus it turns out that in *What is Art?* Tolstoy made allowances to depict violence as an indirect means of evoking the desired reaction in his readers.

Because of digressions into the realm of Tolstoy's understanding of art, little room is left to deal in any depth with the 'some thirty major social and political statements' (p. 142) which Tolstoy made between 1855 and 1905, in 'The Body and Pressure of Time,' the contribution by Professor Lambert of the University of Keele. According to this author, they are characterized by 'a belief ... in the impossible: that drastic self-improvement will remove evil from the world' (p. 142). To receive more evidence in support of this view would have been most welcome.

In 'Tolstoy and Religion,' E.B. Greenwood of the University of Kent convincingly traces the thorny path of Tolstoy's endeavour to de-historicize the Gospels and thus advocate Jesus's doctrine as an eternal message for every age. It is left to the individual reader to decide for himself how to interpret Tolstoy's confusing demand to carry out literally Jesus's commandment of non-resistance to evil. To contend 'that on occasion he [Tolstoy] forgot that even Christianity at its most extreme called only for the imitation of Christ, and not for his supersession' (p. 170) means to forget that Tolstoy outrightly rejected any ecclesiastic interpretation of the Gospels.

The most provocative and vulnerable article is 'Tolstoy's Philosophy of History' by Professor F.F. Seeley of the State University of New York at Binghamton. It is set up in such a way as to enable the author to ascertain at the end that 'Tolstoy never bothered or never managed to learn the technique of thinking' (p. 190). If Tolstoy's philosophy of history is of no interest to philosophers, as Seeley claims, then why not leave it alone? Even if Tolstoy's exposé of history fails as a logical treatise, it nevertheless contains brilliant pieces of writing as, for instance, the definition of what war is not: 'The activities of millions of men, moving from one land to another, abandoning their own tillage to slaughter one another, can never be expressed in the activities of a dozen men who never set fire to houses nor labour in fields nor kill their fellow-humans' (p. 179). It is offensive, beneath criticism, to use Professor Seeley's own words in a different context, to compare Tolstoy's activities with those of children in their pre-logical stage.

The most revealing detail in the account by M.J. de K. Holman of the

1 E. Heier, 'Hadji Murat in the Light of Tolstoy's Moral and Aesthetic Theories,' *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, xxi, iii (1979) 334

University of Leeds of the Tolstoyan Purleigh Colony, which enjoyed a successful existence from 1896-1898 before dissipating is the fact that Tolstoy himself had been highly critical of the entire undertaking before the settlement had come into being. In a letter to Kentworthy, the spiritual father of the colony, Tolstoy called a colony of this nature 'a community of saints among sinners' (p. 217). The Colonists went ahead anyway and the failure of their endeavour must be ascribed mainly to their lack of understanding of what Tolstoyism, concerned as it was 'with developing attitudes of the spirit,' implied in the every-day life of their community.

The study closes with a useful bibliographical survey of Tolstoy studies in Great Britain from 1946 to the present. (A.F. ZWEERS, UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO)

*ROBERT L. DELEVOY. *Journal du Symbolisme*. Genève: Skira 1977. Pp. 246. Ills.

Dans la belle collection 'Journal de ...' que publie Skira, R.L. Delevoy a présenté récemment un *Journal du Symbolisme*, suivant la formule qui a fait le succès du *Journal de l'Impressionnisme* et du *Journal du Surréalisme*, qu'il complète fort heureusement.

L'ouvrage peut faire l'objet de divers traitements, suivant les centres d'intérêt de celui qui l'aborde. Pour le chercheur, il constitue indéniablement un outil de tout premier choix, ne serait-ce que par l'abondante bibliographie réunie, et classée par pays puis par nom d'auteur ou artiste. Pour l'étudiant, l'important dictionnaire-index contient de nombreux détails précieux qui constituent un excellent complément au texte dont ils auraient alourdi le cours, s'ils n'avaient pas été rejetés en fin de volume. L'amateur de livres d'art ne sera pas non plus déçu, ni par la qualité des reproductions, ni surtout par une mise en page extrêmement judicieuse de la riche iconographie présentée, qui, s'ouvrant avec William Blake (*Satan frappant Job de plaies*) et se fermant sur le *Silence* d'Odilon Redon, forme un tout en soi qui peut se regarder indépendamment du texte, tant y est visible la succession comme le rapprochement des images. Pour l'historien d'art, enfin, le texte offre de l'histoire du symbolisme en peinture une vision à la fois très sensible et extrêmement bien documentée (ces qualités n'étant que trop rarement réunies chez un même auteur).

La formule du *Journal* a été utilisée de façon particulièrement efficace pour présenter l'évolution, entre 1870 et 1900, de ce 'mouvement' aux

multiples facettes qu'est le symbolisme en peinture. Sans tomber dans les excès de l'historicisme, ni verser dans l'anecdote, ce *Journal* situe son objet dans le contexte socio-politique de l'époque, en insistant sur ses relations au symbolisme littéraire.

Le sous-ensemble symboliste des années 1870-1900 peut être simultanément appréhendé comme structure idéologique qui incorporerait les informations d'un milieu (circonscription physique et sociale) et de l'histoire à des paradigmes pré-existants, comme engagement politique qui marquerait l'opposition au positivisme et au matérialisme historique (opposition qui coïnciderait avec l'"avènement de la science" et l'épanouissement du mythe du progrès), comme champ sémantique orienté vers l'anéantissement de l'art à partir de l'angoisse, de la détresse, de la déroute suscitées par les bouleversements de l'environnement, l'inflation urbaine, les transformations économiques et techniques... A moins qu'il ne soit vu comme une fuite qui passerait, précisément, par le Romantisme: le plus proche levier mythologique disponible. (p. 12)

L'intérêt de cet ancrage du mouvement symboliste dans le contexte du dernier tiers du XIX^e siècle permet d'aborder de front ses ambiguïtés, sans chercher à les passer sous silence: c'est ainsi, par exemple, que se rejoignent aristocrates et anarchistes dans un même refus de la société bourgeoise: les premiers expriment symboliquement, précisément, leur révolte dans leurs textes et leur tableaux, les seconds s'attaquent aux symboles du pouvoir.

Qu'une ligne de démarcation ne puisse être tracée entre décadents et anarchistes, anarchistes et symbolistes, décadents et symbolistes est d'autant plus évident que dans le milieu littéraire la confusion règne entre les uns et les autres: une confusion qui ne passe pas nécessairement par le territoire de la révolte politique, puisqu'aussi bien "l'âme bariolée tachée d'anarchisme" ne semble pouvoir recouvrir le symbolisme que dans la mesure où, par opposition à toute tradition, celui-ci prône l'innovation radicale et la levée de tout interdit. (p. 77)

Cette question de l'*innovation radicale* constitue une des lignes de force du livre; aussi importe-t-il d'y insister. C'est non seulement par ce biais, on vient de le voir, que se lient révolte esthétique et révolte politique, c'est aussi et surtout un des fils conducteurs, peut-être le fil essentiel qui guide l'auteur dans ses analyses. C'est là que se révèle l'apport de la démarche, qui consiste à ne jamais prendre le symbolisme au pied de la lettre de ses manifestes, mais à l'approcher dans une perspective résolument moderne — attention portée au traitement de l'écran plastique, à l'inscription

chromatique et iconique des énergies pulsionnelles, à la graphie, etc. ... — qui en modifie l'éclairage traditionnel.

Au lieu de tomber dans un 'mysticisme du dévoilement' qui s'attacherait à remonter des symboles vers ce qu'ils symbolisent, suivant les déchiffrages laborieux de l'herméneutique, l'auteur s'interroge bien plus sur ce qui, dans le symbolisme, échappe justement à l'ordre du symbole, et met l'accent sur les innovations formelles qui constituent à ses yeux le propre de ce mouvement. A ce titre les pages consacrées au préraphaélisme sont éclairantes, à la fois parce qu'elles mettent en évidence son rôle de source commune à Puvis de Chavannes et Gustave Moreau, 'binôme' essentiel du symbolisme, mais aussi parce qu'elles donnent le ton de l'approche en situant 'la relation de la censure avec le désir': en faisant retour à l'avant-Raphaël, les préraphaélites se mettent à l'écoute de ce que les contraintes de l'ordre renaissant ont volontairement négligé pour se constituer comme ordre. Mais en même temps et simultanément, ils se trouvent eux-mêmes contraints, face aux tabous puritains de l'Angleterre victorienne, de déguiser ce qu'ils souhaitent exprimer. Il est essentiel de garder à l'esprit ce double aspect pour comprendre et le préraphaélisme, et au-delà de lui, le symbolisme. Ce dernier, s'il répond à des conditions souvent différentes de celles de l'Angleterre d'alors, n'en constitue pas moins presque toujours — et en tout cas dans les meilleurs de ses exemples — *et une levée du refoulement, et un travestissement de la pulsion*. Ne retenir que le second de ces aspects — l'utilisation de symboles — c'est nécessairement manquer le symbolisme dans ce qu'il a de plus spécifique.

Le processus de *symbolisation*, comme transformation et travestissement du désir, est propre à toute activité culturelle de l'homme, en tant qu'inscrite dans l'ordre symbolique. Ce n'est pas non plus du côté d'une rhétorique de la suggestion (ellipse, litote, allusion, etc.) qu'il faut chercher sa spécificité, s'il est vrai que l'art, comme Gombrich l'a montré, utilise de tels tours depuis la Grèce du ^{ve} siècle. S'il y a usage de symboles, c'est, dans le pire des cas (Péladan et ses émules) pour manifester une vérité ésotérique nécessitant une grille pour être décodée, et, dans le meilleur des cas, parce qu'un tel usage, qui est travestissement du désir, suppose au préalable une levée du refoulement, *c'est-à-dire* une innovation formelle. Le symbolisme manifeste bien cette ambivalence dans sa thématique: ambivalence de la vie et de la mort, du sexe (mythe de l'androgynie), de la femme à la fois attirante et repoussante, qu'on désire et qu'on craint, c'est-à-dire ambivalence du désir.

S'explique ainsi, par exemple, le fait que le peintre supposé être le plus 'littéraire' de son temps, Burne-Jones, celui qui s'en serait le plus tenu à une expression symbolisée par le détour du mythe, ait pourtant fait scan-

dale, au point d'être en quelque sorte censuré pendant plusieurs années suite à une petite aquarelle. Ce qui ne fait problème qu'aux yeux du sectaire pour qui le symbole enfermerait le symbolisé. Il faut rendre grâce à l'auteur de ne jamais se laisser entraîner dans une interprétation stricte du symbolisme qui se bornerait à ne prêter attention qu'aux seuls signifiés et au terrorisme de l'Idée, le mot n'est pas trop fort, dont se revendique, par exemple, le manifeste de Jean Moréas: 'La poésie symboliste cherche à vêtir l'Idée d'une forme sensible qui, néanmoins, ne serait pas son but à elle-même, mais qui, tout en servant à exprimer l'Idée, demeurerait sujette' (p. 71).

C'est précisément contre cette sujétion de la forme sensible à l'Idée que prend parti le *Journal du Symbolisme*, en montrant, chaque fois que l'occasion s'en présente, que le symbole, l'Idée ou le signifié, bien loin de résorber en lui toutes les potentialités signifiantes de l'image, est au contraire constamment débordé de toutes parts, car si le symbole est déguisement du désir, il est bien loin de suffire à son expression, parce qu'il y a des plages de libre investissement où le désir ne passe pas la censure (censure politique ou censure du sur-moi, peu importe) grâce à l'élément codé et rigide d'un symbole, mais exprime directement et immédiatement ce qui en lui n'a pas été refoulé (et même après tout s'il s'agit là aussi de désir refoulé, à nouveau peu importe, car ce n'est pas le plus important): ce qui importe, c'est qu'apparaisse dans l'œuvre des éléments qui, même s'ils sont de l'ordre de l'expression ne prennent plus la forme trop détournée du symbole, mais surgissent ailleurs, en-deçà, toujours à côté, hors des digues du symbole, dans la ligne, la couleur, la trace, l'aplat, l'exubérance, la surcharge, etc. 'Oui, il faut sauter la barrière de ce qui est dit. Dans l'espace inventé de l'image' (p. 39). Car c'est là précisément, qu'ont lieu et place l'inventivité et la créativité, c'est là qu'opèrent librement les innovations dont ont été capables les symbolistes, et auxquelles l'auteur est si attentif. Ce qui nous vaut des pages très lyriques (dont le style frise parfois la préciosité) sur ces débordements du symbole par les ressources de l'image, renouvelées, produites et inventées par ces peintres dont, pour ces raisons mêmes, il est fait grand cas. Tel est, en effet, le critère au nom duquel une place singulière est accordée dans l'ouvrage à un groupement 'du type Puvis-Redon-Moreau, ou plus simplement encore, réduit au binôme Puvis-Gauguin' (p. 70).

En ce qui concerne par exemple ce dernier, il est frappant de constater la différence d'attitude possible face à un tableau comme *La Vision après le sermon*: alors que le théoricien Albert Aurier s'en emparait en 1891 sous le prétexte de la présence, dans ce tableau, d'un symbole biblique (La lutte de Jacob avec l'Ange) pour y voir la preuve de l'existence d'une tendance symboliste au sein des arts plastiques, Robert Delevoy estime

aujourd'hui 'plus opportun, sinon plus urgent, d'observer comment Gauguin a interrogé les migrations de la couleur autant que l'économie plastique et chromatique qui fondent les textes magistraux de Puvis' (p. 85). L'angle de lecture s'est profondément modifié d'une façon qui me semble ici d'autant mieux venue que dans le tableau en question, la lutte avec l'ange ne prend qu'une place somme toute mineure, dans le coin supérieur droit, et que le véritable 'sujet' en est plutôt l'inscription des couleurs sur la surface.

D'ou le fait qu'à côté d'un symbolisme ésotérique ou dogmatique (trouver l'équivalent plastique d'une sensation) existe une 'image en crue' pour reprendre ici une belle image introduite à propos d'Edward Munch: 'L'image en crue est flux d'énergies, croisée de turbulence. Elle est celle qui se déborde et déborde la langue de culture comme instrument majeur de la pédagogie. Elle est scandale de sens, par ablation du signifiant régnant, disparition du signifié attendu, apparition de condensations et déplacements sauvages' (p. 97).

Cette optique permet seule de comprendre comment s'affirme toute une tendance du symbolisme où le travail de la *symbolisation* ne s'opère plus par le recours au(x) symbole(s) mais par la ligne: 'il s'agit d'attribuer du verbe à la ligne' (p. 113), par le trait. Cette autre forme du débordement que constitue le travail de la ligne devait déboucher, via Toorop, Beardsley et Klimt, sur le *Modern Style* et le *Graphic Design*. Pas plus que le symbole ne peut enfermer le symbolisé qui le déborde de toutes parts, l'écriture graphique ne peut s'effacer elle-même au profit de ce qu'elle veut dire. Pour les mêmes raisons qui font qu'il faut sauter la barre de ce qui est dit: parce que jamais une trace ne pourra rendre compte adéquatement d'une idée ou d'un symbole. Car 'la trace, donc, toujours, est double. Elle est celle qui se donne à la perception visuelle, comme graphie. Et celle offerte à la perception de l'image comme totalité. Qu'il suffise, pour s'en convaincre, de lire à la hâte un dessin de Klimt ...' (p. 164). C'est là où l'on retrouve la duplicité, inscrite partout dans le symbolisme, entre la trace libre et le symbole codé. Car le symbolisme lui-même peut bien s'entendre en deux sens: 'Dans l'espace fortement culturalisé des années 1870-1900, il devient soit le produit d'une liberté gagnée sur le territoire conquis par la bourgeoisie triomphante... soit image inscrite dans un système où les thèmes de remplacement sont codés pour constituer une symbolique' (p. 186). On comprend dès lors la méfiance à l'égard de la théorie des équivalences que développe Maurice Denis: 'Dès lors, au lieu de chercher, toujours en vain, à restituer telles quelles leurs sensations, ils (les symbolistes) s'appliquèrent à y substituer des *équivalents*. Il y avait donc étroite correspondance entre des formes et des émotions. Les phénomènes signifient des états d'âme, et c'est le

symbolisme' (cité p. 186). Ce que montre ce *Journal*, c'est précisément tout le contraire: ce qui fait la grandeur du symbolisme, c'est l'impossibilité d'une correspondance étroite entre forme et émotion et le débordement conséquent de l'une par l'autre. C'est par ce biais que le freudisme se rattache au symbolisme: par les traits profondément plastiques que Freud reconnaît aux mécanismes de l'Inconscient, de sorte que la *Traumdeutung*, loin de proposer une quelconque clé des songes à l'appui de symboles, s'en tient au déchiffrement des procédés plastiques au moyen desquels opère, dans le rêve, non, à nouveau, la formation de symboles, mais le travail de symbolisation.

C'est pourquoi, si Freud et les symbolistes ont puisé aux mêmes sources mythiques, il n'y a aucune raison de privilégier le premier au détriment des seconds dans l'interprétation de ces sources. Ainsi, pourquoi ne pas considérer que *Oedipe et le sphinx* de Gustave Moreau est plus proche de la tradition grecque (ce que confirmerait sans doute l'iconographie réunie par Marie Delcourt dans son *Oedipe ou la légende d'un conquérant*) que l'interprétation que donne Freud du même mythe, surtout quand cette interprétation devient paradigme et guide la lecture. Après tout, comme le dit Lévi-Strauss, Freud ne fait qu'ajouter au mythe une variante de plus. S'il y a bien une tentation facile et un peu grossière à laquelle il faut se garder de céder, c'est bien celle consistant à affirmer que 'le complexe d'Oedipe est l'un des traits majeurs du comportement symboliste, de Moreau à Lévi-Dhurmer' (p. 183), car on risque alors de réintroduire ce qu'on a précisément si bien évacué dans les pages précédentes, la suprématie du symbole, en faisant cette fois de l'œuvre en tant que telle l'expression symbolique du désir inconscient de son auteur. S'il est certes vrai que l'inconscient travaille en nous — Freud l'a montré à suffisance — tout autant qu'il est sûr qu'il y a en toute œuvre des substituts symboliques, est-ce pour autant une raison d'en faire une clé interprétative en rabattant une activité artistique et les productions de l'inconscient dont elle est — cela, il ne s'agit certes pas de le nier — largement tributaire, sur ce à quoi on suppose qu'elle est sensée se substituer symboliquement. Un exemple, parmi d'autres: Pour Freud, lorsque l'écriture consiste "à faire couler d'une plume un liquide sur une feuille de papier blanc" elle prend "la signification symbolique du coût." Serait-ce à celle-là qu'il faudrait nouer l'œuvre entier de Beardsley? Sans doute. Investissement métaphorique' (p. 142).

A quoi bon montrer que la trace, chez Beardsley ou Klimt, dans son mouvement erratique et son jaillissement créateur échappe à l'emprise du symbole, à quoi bon le montrer, surtout d'une façon aussi sentie, si c'est pour faire du travail de l'écriture comme telle un substitut symbolique! Que gagne-t-on à substituer une symbolique à une autre, sauf à se

maintenir dans le confort rassurant des interprétations. Car quand bien même on serait dans le vrai, à recourir au complexe d'Oedipe et à l'attirail des symboles sexuels pour déchiffrer le comportement symboliste, on ne ferait ainsi que se détourner des œuvres, dans leurs forces vives, au profit d'un schème explicatif réducteur, bien souvent, lorsqu'il prend la forme d'une interprétation symbolique.

Magritte, qui s'est toujours défendu d'avoir peint des symboles, se demandait:

Comment peut-on se délecter à interpréter des symboles? Ceux-ci sont des substituts qui ne conviennent qu'à une pensée incapable de connaître les choses elles-mêmes. Un fanatique de l'interprétation ne peut voir un oiseau: il n'y verra qu'un symbole.

Le surréalisme est lui-même une des conséquences des profonds bouleversements qu'a apportés la découverte de l'inconscient, de sorte que les symboles ont perdu, de nos jours, une partie de leur nécessité. C'est pourquoi Magritte pouvait ajouter: 'Le surréalisme a éliminé les symboles au profit de ce que ceux-ci ont à symboliser.' (GEORGES ROQUE, UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL)

Les Littératures de Langues Européennes au Tournant du Siècle: Lectures d'Aujourd'hui. Série A. La Perspective Critique Française. Ottawa: Carleton University [1978-1980]. Cahier I, pp. 103; Cahier II, pp. 123; Cahier III, pp. VI + 107

Dans la masse toujours accrue des études sur la période baptisée 'fin de siècle,' il est intéressant de voir surgir une entreprise qui prend délibérément une perspective dynamique sur les années 1880-1914, encore trop peu familière aux spécialistes de la littérature française (entre autres). Ce n'est pas seulement réconfortant d'un point de vue purement 'moral' — il n'est pas toujours exaltant de scruter une agonie — c'est avant tout une exigence scientifique des études littéraires, et plus largement artistiques, qui se donnent pour objet d'analyser une période qui, sans aucun doute, fascine, peut-être à trop bon compte, nos contemporains (ainsi la collection 10/18 a lancé une série 'fins de siècle' où se côtoient Darien, Maupassant, Huysmans, les Goncourt, Hugues Rebell, et J.-E. Hallier vient d'intituler un roman *Fin de siècle* ...). Mais la fascination n'est, au mieux, qu'un indice: comment peut-on lire, aujourd'hui, une époque extraordinairement riche et complexe où la littérature semble tout à la fois emplir tout le devant de la scène et n'être qu'un jeu face à la rage destruc-

trice des années 14-18, inaugurer en même temps le xx^e siècle et l'apocalypse ...?

Le Groupe de Recherche International '1900,' lancé en 1974 par S. Sarkany à l'Université Carleton, s'est donc proposé de constituer pour les chercheurs un vaste état présent des travaux sur les littératures de langues européennes du tournant du siècle et, par là, d'inciter à de nouvelles recherches fondées sur ce bilan.

L'intérêt d'une telle entreprise est indéniable. Depuis une décennie environ l'orientation des études sur les dernières années du xix^e siècle et les premières du xx^e tend à se modifier radicalement: à côté des recherches sur l'esprit de décadence ou sur la 'fin de siècle,' on voit surgir des perspectives résolument axées sur la modernité, notre modernité, que recèlent ces années trop vite considérées comme délimitées, *définies* par l'année 1914: autant que de fin de siècle on vient à parler d'avant siècle. L'idée qui soustend toute l'activité du Groupe '1900' est que ces années du 'tournant du siècle' (les germanistes connaissent bien l'expression *Jahrhundertwende*, qui s'est révélée aussi opératoire que *Jahrhundertende*) contiennent en germe le nouveau type d'homme et de civilisation qui est le nôtre, et que la littérature joue, dans la constitution de cet avenir qu'est aujourd'hui notre présent, un rôle particulier: c'est ce qu'on trouvera exprimé dans l'Avant-propos, très dense, de S. Sarkany (*Cahier* 1, p. 5-9 [désormais cité sous la forme I, 5-9]) et dans 'le nouveau jugement de l'historiographie,' de M. Rébérioux, qui clôt le *Cahier* II. Telle est l'hypothèse de recherche qui a présidé aux enquêtes rassemblées dans ces trois premiers fascicules: on ne peut qu'y souscrire, parce qu'elle paraît féconde, tout en regrettant peut-être déjà que la *littérature* soit seule prise en compte, au détriment d'autres formes d'expression: à tout le moins doit-elle être remise en cause dans son rôle de porteur quasi unique de la modernité. Sachons gré, toutefois, aux responsables d'avoir sollicité ou accepté des études sur la mise en scène et sur ce marginal qu'est J.-E. Blanche.

Une fois admise l'hypothèse de départ, il faut organiser une matière abondante et, de toutes façons, opérer des choix. De l'Avant-propos de S. Sarkany, des indications pour la présentation des manuscrits (II, 123), du 'Chemin faisant' de P. Gobin (III, iv-vi), de la pratique des 3 *Cahiers* parus à ce jour, on peut dégager les grandes options suivantes: 1) fondamentalement, il s'agit de l'étude du 'discours critique,' ce qui explique que les différentes séries prévues le soient en fonction de la langue d'expression des critiques; 2) le lecteur devient objet d'étude, dans la perspective de la constitution d'une (difficile) 'axiologie du public'. 3) l'accent est mis sur la modernité ou l'actualité du discours critique retenu; 4) la grille d'étude proposée opère les découpages suivants (outre la nationalité du

critique): statut du critique (journaliste, écrivain, universitaire), type de l'analyse pratiquée (morphologie, thématique, idéologie).

Le modèle ainsi construit est neuf et intéressant. On doit évidemment se féliciter de l'intérêt porté au discours critique et au lecteur (on doit louer tout particulièrement S. Sarkany de dire d'emblée [1, 8] sa méfiance envers l'écrivain-critique, parce que c'est celui dont l'opinion, quelque motivée qu'elle puisse être, a trop souvent été seule retenue); de même il faut savoir gré au Groupe '1900' de pratiquer, non l'énumération, mais la sélection, avec tous les risques qu'elle comporte: mais, comme le montre la liste des collaborateurs, ceux-ci sont parfaitement au fait du sujet qu'ils traitent, et ce n'est pas un mince mérite que d'avoir su trouver, à chaque fois, le spécialiste de qualité qu'il fallait. Deux questions, toutefois, doivent être posées. La première porte sur la notion même de 'perspective critique française': ne serait-il pas plus juste de parler de perspective critique 'de langue française'? Ce n'est pas là question mineure; ainsi D. Mortier fait remarquer, fort justement, que 'Hesse n'intéresse pas [...] la critique française et [que] c'est un Suisse, Edmond Beaujon, qui publie en 1971 la seule étude approfondie consacrée à l'œuvre de l'auteur allemand' (11, 82. Voir, de même, 1, 52 et 1, 69). Plus fondamentalement, il importe de constater que dans l'effervescence des idées qui saisit les esprits autour de 1900 certains pays francophones, comme la Belgique, remplissent une fonction irremplaçable dans la diffusion des impulsions venues d'ailleurs que de France, et que celle-ci, empêtrée dans son nationalisme traditionnel, a du mal à accepter, voire simplement à reconnaître. Pourtant 'C'est par la Belgique que pénètrent en France mille beautés d'art qui, sans elle, n'y arriveraient pas. ... Nous [les Français] ne venons pas chez vous pour y apporter des enseignements, mais pour y chercher des provisions.' Il serait fâcheux d'être plus nationaliste que celui qui émet, en 1894, cette opinion, et qui n'est autre que Barrès ...! Aussi on peut s'étonner que jamais, sauf erreur, dans les trois *Cahiers*, ne soit fait mention d'un ouvrage essentiel pour qui s'intéresse à la réception des littératures étrangères dans la critique de langue française, celui de Françoise Delsemme, *Les Littératures étrangères dans les revues littéraires belges de langue française publiées entre 1885 et 1899*, 3 vol., Bruxelles, xxix + 855 pp. (Bibliographia Belgica 120), et d'où la citation de Barrès est extraite (p. ii). Grâce à cette bibliographie trop peu connue on découvre que les premières traductions de Cexov ne paraissent pas seulement 'avec le début du xx^e siècle' et que la *Revue Blanche* n'est pas la première revue à publier une traduction de l'écrivain russe (voir 11, 60 et 63, note 1): dès le 15 mars 1898 la *Revue de Belgique* publie 'En justice.' Une autre revue bruxelloise, *La Société nouvelle*, joue d'ailleurs un rôle capital dans les échanges littéraires internationaux, trop méconnu (par exemple on y

trouve, à partir de la livraison de mai 1892, une traduction de *Die Weber*). On ne peut donc négliger le fait que l'ouverture littéraire de la Belgique autour de 1900 ne soit aussi une donnée à insérer dans l'ensemble des éléments constitutifs du nouvel état d'esprit en train de naître.

Un deuxième problème est constitué par le découpage opéré par chaque article. Les *Cahiers* I et III sont tout entiers formés par une suite de monographies centrées sur un écrivain; le *Cahier* II propose, en plus de monographies du même type, quelques articles traitant de phénomènes littéraires pris à un autre niveau, comme 'le symbolisme russe,' 'la mise en scène française,' 'le futurisme italien.' Sans doute les traditions d'une recherche qui, en littérature, tend à privilégier l'individualité créatrice — l'auteur —, expliquent-elles en grande partie la conception des *Cahiers* comme une suite de monographies. Mais on doit se demander si la perspective même de l'entreprise du Groupe '1900' ne devrait pas l'amener plutôt à privilégier les découpages 'synthétiques' et donc à n'accorder délibérément que peu de place à la critique d'auteurs (d'autant que celle-ci est en général déjà bien représentée, et que sont facilement accessibles de nombreux 'états présents des études sur ...'); ne faudrait-il pas poursuivre et développer les tentatives du *Cahier* II (d'ailleurs la note 2, III, vi, suggère que les rédacteurs sont conscients du problème)? Certains articles montrent de plus quelles difficultés entraîne parfois le découpage par auteurs: il faudrait ne prendre en compte que les œuvres écrites (ou même publiées?) avant 1914; or les articles sur Svevo (I) ou H. Hesse (II) révèlent qu'il n'est pas toujours facile de se tenir à de telles limites (comme le souligne d'ailleurs clairement M. Fusco, auteur de la présentation de Svevo: il signale [I, 16-7] que sur les 20 études françaises qu'il relève, 9 seulement concernent la période 1895-1918). Bien entendu, la présence d'essais sur Proust ou Giraudoux est indiscutable. Il reste que puisqu'il s'agit bien des littératures 'au tournant du siècle' une plus grande rigueur apparaît souhaitable dans les délimitations (chronologiques entre autres) de l'objet étudié et dans la prise en compte de critiques qui ne sont que trop tentées d'expliquer une œuvre par les œuvres suivantes ou la totalité de l'œuvre de l'écrivain en cause.

Ces questions méthodologiques soulevées, qu'apportent les 3 *Cahiers* publiés? Il ne saurait évidemment être question de discuter le détail de chaque contribution (38 au total): le point de vue sera ici celui de l'usager comparatiste qui, n'étant pas spécialiste, tant s'en faut, de chacun des sujets traités, souhaite s'appuyer sur des bases d'information sûres. Il faut donc faire, ne serait-ce que rapidement, une place à la présentation matérielle. Il est certain qu'il est difficile de brasser impunément une grande quantité de noms propres! On excusera donc les quelques fautes qui affectent divers noms, patronymiques ou géographiques: Louis

Gillett (Gillet), I, 37; Vintueil (Vinteuil), I, 90 et 91; Laffite, Suzanne (Laffitte, Sophie), II, 64; Ygrange (Ygrande), III, 69; Julie Sabieni (Sabiani), III, 40; Pallacio (Palacio), III, 98. De même on peut admettre une légère inexactitude dans un titre cité en polonais: I, 46, il faut lire 'Polskość' et non 'Polskosé.' D'autres fautes purement typographiques, elles aussi aisément décelables, ne font pas problème, même si elles gênent la lecture: 'traductduction' (I, 15), 'auxxi' (I, 21), 'œuvres' (I, 22). Il est plus agaçant déjà de voir défigurer certains titres, comme 'Montoriol' (*Mont-Oriol*, II, 8); il devient franchement regrettable qu'aient échappé les fautes suivantes: la 'Lettre à Lord Chandos' (I, 31: il s'agit de la 'Lettre de Lord Chandos'), 'Das Reigen' (I, 36; il faudrait *Der Reigen* et, au demeurant, le titre exact est *Reigen*), 'Die Erdgeist' (II, 73 et 74; on trouve, quelques lignes plus bas, une forme correcte *Der Erdgeist*, mais le titre original est, ici aussi, sans article: *Erdgeist*). La chronologie est parfois malmenée: il est curieux qu'après avoir cité *Mont-Oriol* comme exemple de renouveau on nous assure qu' 'à la suite de Maupassant, Pierre Loti nous donne *Mon frère Yves* et *Pêcheur d'Islande*' (II, 8), alors que les dates respectives de ces trois ouvrages sont 1887, 1883 et 1886. Enfin, d'un *Cahier* à l'autre, certains *corrigenda* devraient être introduits, comme J. Milly l'a fait (II, 109-12) pour son article sur Proust (I, 77-98): la bibliographie chronologique de D. Maroger sur 'le tolstoïsme' est à recomposer (II, 19-21); en revanche il semble que le curieux — et peu commode! — système de renvois employé par Y.-A. Favre pour 'André Suarès' (III, 45-8) soit imputable à l'auteur.

Cet échantillon de scories matérielles, plus ou moins évitables, ne saurait faire négliger un des avantages de ces trois *Cahiers*: la mise à la disposition du lecteur, sous une forme brève et condensée, de renseignements qui font réellement le point à une date donnée (tous les articles indiquent la date de rédaction, qui ne remonte pas au delà de 1975, et plusieurs auteurs ont apporté, dans les *Cahiers* suivants, des compléments). Une table des matières par *Cahiers*, un Index commode pour l'ensemble des trois *Cahiers* (III, 102-3), permettent au lecteur qui cherche un renseignement de s'y retrouver assez vite. Ce lecteur trouvera des études sur une vingtaine d'auteurs de langue française: Alain-Fournier, Apollinaire, J.-R. Bloch, Larbaud, Proust, Reverdy, Romains (I), Cendrars, Jarry, Renan (II), Barbusse, Barrès, Blanche, Bourget, Giraudoux, Guillaumin, Maeterlinck, Péguy, Rolland, Suarès (III); sept écrivains de langue allemande: Hofmannsthal, Kafka, Schnitzler, (I), Hesse, Wedekind (II), T. Mann, Rilke (III); quatre italiens: Svevo (I), Gozzano, Marinetti (II), D'Annunzio (III); quatre russes: Blok, Mejerxol'd, Čexov, Tolstoï (II); plus deux articles particuliers sur 'la stratification de l'opinion publique française' (par S. Sarkany (II) une hui-

taine de pages suggestives) et 'le nouveau jugement de l'historiographie' (M. Rébérioux (II) intéressant, mais trop rapide). Les contributions annoncées pour les fascicules IV et V apporteront encore des noms autrichiens, français, italiens et russes, et surtout offriront des perspectives critiques sur plusieurs auteurs d'expression anglaise ainsi que sur le grec Cavafy.¹ On peut évidemment se demander si la part faite à la littérature française n'est pas trop grande par rapport à celle concédée aux autres. En tout cas il n'est pas sans intérêt de relever que, sur 8 auteurs de langue allemande faisant ou devant faire l'objet d'un article, 5 sont des sujets de l'Empire austro-hongrois (Hofmannsthal, Kafka, Schnitzler, Rilke, H. Bahr, lequel joua effectivement un rôle essentiel dans la création et, encore plus, dans la diffusion des idées). Il serait tout aussi intéressant de dresser le bilan critique sur l'ensemble constitué par les personnalités issues des pays scandinaves: Ibsen, Björnson, Strindberg, sans oublier G. Brandes, le 'bon européen' selon le cœur de Nietzsche, qui est un des esprits les plus cosmopolites de son temps et un intermédiaire des plus actifs.

Les articles sont de longueur et d'orientations différentes suivant l'importance du rôle attribué à l'auteur en cause et l'abondance des études déjà faites: de 2 pages (J.-R. Bloch) à 22 pages (Proust), la majorité tournant autour de 6-8 pages avec, en général, une bibliographie. Celle-ci, qu'elle soit alphabétique, chronologique, systématique, offre de précieuses références, d'autant que certains spécialistes ont jugé utile, ce dont on ne peut que les féliciter, de se référer à des thèses en cours ou récemment soutenues (et souvent encore, hélas, inédites): I, 27-8 (sur Kafka; à noter que la thèse de P. Chardin, soutenue en 1979, concerne en fait 'L'Image de la conscience malheureuse' [Proust, Musil, Svevo, T. Mann]); III, 16 (sur Suarès); III, 52 (sur R. Rolland). D'autres collaborateurs ont songé à consulter les principaux recueils de morceaux choisis ou manuels littéraires en usage aujourd'hui dans l'enseignement secondaire: on perçoit assez bien, de cette façon, l'image actuelle d'un Bourget (III, 23) ou d'un Barbusse (III, 58-9). La documentation rassemblée est dans l'ensemble considérable, bien que délibérément sélective; quelques légères remarques toutefois: l'étude-bilan de C. Prévost sur Kafka (I, 24) est peut-être autant accessible dans le recueil que l'auteur a publié sous le titre *Littérature, politique, idéologie*, paru en 1973 aux Editions Sociales, que dans la revue *Europe*; la référence à Z. Rylko et à son essai sur la 'polonité' (polskość) d'Apollinaire (I, 46) n'est utile qu'à qui connaît le polonais et

1 Qu'il me soit permis de saluer ici la mémoire de Catherine Trocard, qui a rédigé l'étude sur le poète grec, et qui, Docteur de l'Université de Nantes, est disparue si prématurément.

peut avoir accès au *Miesięcznik literacki* ('Mensuel littéraire') édité à Varsovie: il serait donc expédient de signaler le résumé en italien publié dans *Studi francesi*, 19 (1975) 391. Est-il sûr que dans le cas de Čexov (II, 64) le renvoi à l'ouvrage de J. Bonamour sur *Le Roman russe* s'impose? Le nouvelliste n'y est traité, et c'est tout à fait normal étant donné le propos de J. Bonamour, qu'en quelques lignes. En revanche il semble dommage que l'article 'Renan' (II, 1-6) n'offre aucune référence à l'ouvrage de R. Bessède, *La Crise de la conscience catholique dans la littérature et la pensée françaises à la fin du XIX^e siècle* (Klincksieck 1975), qui contient de nombreux renvois à l'écrivain breton, qui y est, peut-être, l'auteur le plus fréquemment cité, à en juger par l'index.

Il se peut que la perspective initiale, trop centrée sur l'écho actuel de personnalités, d'individualités, ait d'ailleurs amené les collaborateurs à se préoccuper surtout d'études sur 'leur' auteur, au détriment de perspectives plus larges. C'est ainsi qu'un ouvrage capital comme *L'Année 1913*, préparé sous la direction de L. Brion-Guerry et dont les trois volumes (1901 pp. au total) ont été publiés en 1971-1973 est, sauf erreur, absent du premier *Cahier*, n'est cité, dans le deuxième, qu'une seule fois, par l'historienne M. Rébérioux (II, 106, mais sans référence), avant d'être mentionné, dans le troisième, à deux reprises (III, 43 et 88: dans ce dernier cas, l'ouvrage est d'ailleurs défiguré: il faut, bien entendu, lire le sous-titre 'les formes esthétiques ... à la veille [non: 'à la ville'] de la première guerre mondiale,' et rétablir 3 volumes au lieu de 2). D'autre part on constate qu'à de rares exceptions près (surtout dans l'article de P. Goudet sur Wedekind, II, 73-7) la critique universitaire est nettement privilégiée, au détriment de la critique journalistique, contrairement aux souhaits exprimés par S. Sarkany (I, 7). Il est dommage, on doit le regretter à nouveau, qu'une organisation trop cloisonnée ou trop rigide des études littéraires, tout particulièrement dans le domaine de la littérature française empêche le chercheur d'intégrer l'objet de sa recherche dans l'ensemble où cet objet est enraciné: une entreprise éminemment comparatiste comme l'est celle du groupe '1900' se doit, plus que toute autre, de veiller aux mises en relation et aux passerelles. C'est pourquoi, s'il fallait attirer plus spécialement l'attention sur quelques études qui paraissent particulièrement denses et ouvertes, je citerais volontiers le court article d'Y. Beigbeder sur le futurisme italien (II, 35-8), l'approche de 'la mise en scène française à la veille de la grande guerre,' par J. Féral (II, 39-50), et la perspective critique sur H. Hesse par D. Mortier (II, 79-86): dans ce dernier cas en particulier on voit bien comment la réception d'une œuvre étrangère est tributaire de multiples éléments socio-culturels dont l'imbrication, elle-même, est déjà significative.

L'entreprise du Groupe de Recherche '1900' mérite incontestablement

d'être soutenue. Elle doit nous permettre un inventaire critique de nos connaissances sur une période et sur des formes d'expression qui ont, en grande partie, modelé les nôtres. Les trois *Cahiers* parus sont précieux: s'ils ne sont pas, dans le détail, à l'abri de tout reproche, parfois même sur des questions fondamentales (mais quelle méthode n'est pas critiquable, surtout en sciences humaines?), ils proposent, sous une forme commode, des mises au point historiques et bibliographiques, qu'accompagne souvent un état des travaux à entreprendre. Nul doute qu'avec plus de rigueur et, concurremment, plus d'ouverture dans la délimitation de l'objet traité (entre autres, les limites chronologiques et l'origine des critiques dont il est fait mention), tout en cherchant à dépasser le cadre, trop simpliste dans la perspective retenue, de 'l'auteur,' cette ambitieuse entreprise permettra aux chercheurs de mesurer en meilleure connaissance de cause l'ampleur des tâches qui les attendent quand il s'agit de ces années autour desquelles, plus qu'un siècle peut-être, une civilisation est en train de pivoter. (YVES CHEVREL, UNIVERSITÉ DE NANTES)

*JOSÉ ANTONIO PORTUONDO. *La emancipación literaria de Hispanoamérica*. Cuadernos Casa, 15. La Habana: Casa de las Américas 1975. Pp. 169

*ROBERTO FERNANDEZ RETAMAR. *Para una teoría de la literatura hispanoamericana y otras aproximaciones*. Cuadernos Casa, 16. La Habana: Casa de las Américas 1975. Pp. 144

*GORDON BROTHERSTON, *The Emergence of the Latin American Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1977. Pp. 164. £6.50

On his own admission, publication of the twenty essays and review articles in *La emancipación literaria de Hispanoamérica*, by the Cuban writer José Antonio Portuondo, was motivated by a desire to contribute to the movement for emancipation in Spanish America undertaken by his predecessors. Bello after independence from Spain, Martí at the end of the nineteenth century, Henríquez Ureña, Mariátegui, and Che Guevara during the twentieth century struggle against neo-colonialism: these are Portuondo's constant points of reference. Emancipation is clearly not to be understood solely in the limiting context of 'emancipación literaria' inferred from the title of the book. Not just the creation of an autonomous literature, free of foreign domination and excessive influence, it entails the development of a literary praxis responsive to the particular conditions of society in Spanish America and able to further the revolutionary processes of its peoples. Portuondo's unflinching thesis

is that, since Independence, the most significant works of literature and criticism in Spanish America have fostered these ends.

His longer essays are historical surveys, each tracing from a different perspective the parallel developments of literature, society, and the class struggle. The first essay, 'Literatura y sociedad en Hispanoamérica,' is a keynote introduction. In the second, 'Literatura e independencia,' Portuondo covers much the same ground, but emphasizes that independence from all forms of domination is a prevalent theme of Spanish American Literature, as evident in reactions to North American imperialism in the twentieth century as in the literature of the revolutionary movements at the beginning of the nineteenth. 'Literatura de la emancipación y emancipación de la literatura' is intended to demonstrate how, in addition to political and economic independence, writers in Spanish America have fought for intellectual, artistic, and cultural freedom. In 'El rasgo predominante en la novela hispanoamericana' it is argued that the most outstanding characteristic of the Spanish American novel is the commitment of novelists to a faithful portrayal of society.

As the preceding comments imply, notwithstanding the broad context in which the concept of emancipation is viewed, *La emancipación literaria* has several limitations. The territory covered by Portuondo is well-trodden, and recourse to his essays with hopes of finding a significant evaluation of emancipation and contemporary literature will be met with disappointment. Cortázar is the only contemporary author discussed at any length. The final piece, 'Literatura y revolución en nuestra América,' deals very peremptorily with contemporary fiction and depends too extensively on quotations from Ernesto Sábato and the East German critic Adalbert Dessau. For Sábato, the 'neo-culteranismo' and 'neo-conceptismo' of recent fiction is evidence of 'Byzantine decadence.' Dessau had the same opinion. Placing the apogee of the novel between 1958 and 1963, he found that the 'metaphysical interpretation of history,' the 'existential speculation,' and the superficial description of society in more recent novels were signs of decay. Most readers of Spanish American Literature will disagree and will also be puzzled by the contradiction in Portuondo's thesis that results from acceptance of these points of view. Whether or not recent fiction is politically revolutionary and whether or not it has contributed to the advance of a programme of radical social change are undoubtedly fit subjects for debate. However, to deny a significant role in the cultural emancipation of Spanish America for many writers (García Márquez, Fuentes, Vargas Llosa, Donoso, Cabrera Infante, Puig, etc.) whose major works appeared in the sixties and seventies is to negate both the historical process argued by

Portuondo and the very thesis of emancipation sustained so steadfastly in his earlier essays.

It is doubtful that the limited value of *La emancipación literaria* with respect to contemporary literature is fully compensated by its significance as a retrospective anthology of Portuondo's writings. With the exception of a vantage point on history provided by the Cuban Revolution, the three essays written for *La emancipación literaria* are re-statements of earlier views. Of the seventeen pieces remaining, eight are short book reviews (written between 1943 and 1949) and five are reprints of essays that appeared in an earlier anthology (*El heroísmo intelectual*, México, 1955). In publishing his work anew, Portuondo has not revised or edited it. As a result, the combination in one volume of pieces written to express similar points of view on different occasions and for different audiences exposes a lot of unnecessary repetition, including frequent self-quotation. The reader already familiar with Portuondo's essays will find little that is new, while the reader who approaches his work for the first time will exhaust his thesis long before he reaches the end of the book. Although the renewed availability of the work of an important Cuban critic such as Portuondo is undoubtedly welcome, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the interests of his subject merit a new essay in which previous points of view are consolidated, revised and updated in the light of recent literature.

Since Roberto Fernández Retamar's *Para una teoría de la literatura hispanoamericana y otras aproximaciones* overlaps and continues Portuondo's *La emancipación literaria*, it is hardly surprising that the work of these two Cuban critics occupies successive volumes of the Cuadernos Casa. Although his review of the state of literature and criticism in Spanish America is more recent (1968-74), Fernández Retamar's nine essays (including, incidentally, one on Portuondo) also have some of the quality of historical surveys and cover part of the terrain already explored by his compatriot. His essays are also founded on a concept of emancipation, expressed in the plea that Spanish American Literature 'sea abordada con respeto para su especificidad; de que no se le aplique, colonialmente, la ortopedia de conceptos que se modelaron sobre otros cuerpos, sobre otras realidades, sino se busque pensarla como ella en efecto es' (p. 1). Formulated in such general terms, we must agree with his thesis. We also agree that, with the exception of a handful of texts (by Alfonso Reyes, Amado Alonso, Martínez Bonati, for example), there is a dearth of sound theoretical studies originating in Hispanic countries, that, in Spanish America in particular, there is a striking imbalance between literary theory and praxis, and that the practice of criticism is often afflicted by an absence of sound methodology, non-literary influences,

and an excess of intuitive impressionism. Concern with this situation was already voiced by Portuondo in 1955 and is reiterated in *La emancipación literaria*. The analyses and solutions offered by Fernández Retamar, however, require some examination.

His two key essays are 'Para una teoría de la literatura hispanoamericana' and 'Algunos problemas teóricos de la literatura hispanoamericana.' In both texts he argues in favour of developing a particular theory of Spanish American Literature as a counter to the idea, erroneous in his opinion, that it can be dealt with satisfactorily in the context of a general theory. The initial difficulty with his approach is that two different aspects of the same problem are unnecessarily confused. Literary theory and its concern with the nature of literature and the characteristics of the literary text is not placed in proper perspective alongside the concerns of literary history and the description of the evolution of a particular literature within the context of a particular society or group of societies. Fernández Retamar's identification of conditions that have unduly affected descriptions of the periodization, the literary history, and ideological content of Spanish American Literature and his advocacy of different approaches to the complex question of the relationship between European and Spanish American Literatures place him on sure ground. All too often, as he legitimately argues, the historical and social idiosyncrasies of Spanish America are not properly taken into account when criteria developed on the basis of the study of other circumstances are applied too indiscriminately. However, it has not yet been demonstrated that solutions to problems such as these must remain forever beyond the scope of a general theory of literature.

Fernández Retamar's aversion to universal theories of literature is a consequence of the notion that their validity is constantly subverted by the fact that they are not founded on a universally homogeneous literature. He contends that, from Aristotle on, all existing theories in reality are particular theories because they endeavour to explain and are derived from a particular literature. Moreover, he argues that current theoretical speculation has, at best, led only to the formulation of pseudo-theories which mistakenly eliminate the concept of evaluation and which are not pertinent to the concrete study of literature because they are methodologically dependent on other sciences such as linguistics.

This antipathy to the concept of a general theory of literature is, to say the least, somewhat confusing. One of the undoubted virtues of dialectical materialism is its assertion that, regardless of their differences, both natural and social phenomena can be studied scientifically. There is no evident reason why the study of literature, duly consituted as a social

science, should be exempted. On the contrary, dialectical materialism itself demands that literature be studied scientifically and, moreover, that it be studied in the context of a universal theory that purports to account both for the general and the particular, the synchronic and the diachronic. Thus, the contention that homogeneity could be accepted as a valid criterion for determining a particular corpus as the exclusive object of study of any science is undermined by Fernández Retamar's own general frame of reference. His contention is also questionable on the grounds that it is difficult to conceive of any standard of homogeneity that could not escape the charge of arbitrariness. The concept of a possible universally homogeneous literature is also suspect. Notwithstanding Fernández Retamar's optimism, experience confirms that it would not likely occur even in a universally uniform political system. In any event, although political systems may be expressed through literature and may contribute significantly to it, they alone do not constitute it. None of the natural and social sciences, among which a science of literature must, by definition, belong, is constituted in terms of either part of its objects or the homogeneity of its objects. On the contrary, the corpus of a given science is determined by a criterion of pertinency, which, in the case of a science of literature, would simply require that the object studied be a work of literature.

It is true that literature is commonly studied in the context of the particular, but on the grounds that particular works of literature are the proper objects of the study of literature, the theories arrived at in this way cannot be automatically invalidated. Although developed on the basis of a proper scientific rigour, it is to be expected that such theories will, nonetheless, still be modified when they are applied to unforeseen or other realities. This procedure — the procedure of all sciences — does not amount to the successive negation of all existing theories, but rather to their refinement and increasing usefulness as explanations both of a general phenomenon and its particular manifestations. Of course, there are evident dangers in generalizing on the basis of theories derived from particular conditions, and Fernández Retamar is right to point them out. But, although his criticism of the unscientific formulation and indiscriminate application of literary theory is quite just, his commentary should be tempered by the recognition that the study of literature is still a fledgling science in search of the definition of its objectives and still in the process of formulating its methodologies. His failure to recognize this condition, his rejection of Roman Jakobson's recourse to the methods of linguistics in order to identify the tasks of literary criticism, and his omission of a proper discussion of more recent works on literary theory based on hermeneutical, structuralist, and semiotic approaches do not help his

arguments that all universal theories are necessarily impossible and that all theories derived from particular conditions are necessarily invalid.

Although in the light of the preceding comments, we question the legitimacy of the concept of a particular theory of Spanish American Literature, we nonetheless consider it appropriate to ask what contribution the study of Spanish American Literature might make to literary theory in general. Regardless of the vitality of its contemporary literature, Spanish America has yet to develop a criticism of equivalent stature. The repercussions of its development, however, would not be limited solely to solving the problems identified by Fernández Retamar. Given the idiosyncrasies of Spanish American Literature and the complex nature of its problems, it would not be an overstatement of the case to claim that the application of existing theories in the study of particular texts will not only lead to a better understanding and description of Spanish American Literature itself, but will also contribute significantly to the advancement of literary theory in general.

The title of Gordon Brotherston's *The Emergence of the Latin American Novel* appears to indicate that he, too, was preoccupied with the problems of literary emancipation; but his title is misleading. All the authors he discusses are Spanish American and, although his introductory chapter, 'Settings and People,' provides a general, historical context in which to place his analyses, he is only indirectly concerned with tracing an historical process. His book consists, primarily, of eight essays, each devoted to a major Spanish American contemporary novelist and each intended to convey both a general view of one author and detailed criticism of one of his important novels.

If our initial conclusion is that Brotherston's book does not fulfil all the promise of its title, we must also remark that its format and content are, equally, the cause of several reservations. This is not to say that his commentaries are fundamentally unsound or that his insights are not often illuminating. The problem is the scope of the book itself. *The Emergence of the Latin American Novel*, as Brotherston writes in his preface, 'is offered as a scholarly work which nonetheless is accessible to the reader with little or no knowledge of Spanish (or Portuguese).' Scholars of Spanish American Literature, however, will lament that his work is too general and, in part, covers too much familiar ground. Those of other disciplines, who have recourse to the text for a cohesive view of the emergence of the novel in Latin America, will likely regret the lack of both a broader approach to the subject and a more integrated study of the authors represented.

The eight authors whose work is examined (Asturias, Carpentier, Onetti, Rulfo, Cortázar, Arguedas, Vargas Llosa, García Márquez) were

selected in part on a basis of merit, in part because 'each comes from a different national and geographical situation' (p. 3), and 'each shares the continental consciousness' referred to by Brotherston 'as a contributor to the "rise" of the novel in the last three decades' (p. 4). These criteria, however, give an unnecessarily narrow view of the scope of the contemporary Spanish American novel, which is only partially overcome by the introductory chapter. They also result in the exclusion of a number of writers — Fuentes, Donoso, Sábato, Cabrera Infante, Puig come to mind immediately — who have contributed significantly to the development of the genre. At the same time, the omission of a chapter devoted to at least one Brazilian author (Guimarães Rosa or Jorge Amado, for example), somewhat nullifies the usefulness of the book as a study of the Latin American novel and is not to be excused simply 'because of the barrier which continues to exist between the Portuguese and Spanish languages in Latin America' (p. 4).

Each chapter is based on an initial, extended quotation of an exemplary passage, in English translation, taken from the novel on which the chapter itself is focussed. If exploited more assiduously, such a format could have resulted, at its best, in a series of useful *explications de texte* which would also have offered more of the 'practical criticism' (p. 4) of the kind Brotherston proposed. As it is, his chapters are uneven in quality and depth of analysis. The fourteen pages devoted to García Márquez hardly do justice to *Cien años de soledad*. The rather general approach to the description of the significant aspects of the novel and García Márquez' work causes Brotherston to depart from a precise analysis of the excerpt quoted at the beginning of the chapter, yet barely allows him to scratch the surface of the subject. By contrast, the chapter devoted to Cortázar is more penetrating and makes greater use of the representative passage quoted from *Rayuela*, but only succeeds in conveying a fragmented view of the novel as a whole.

The uneven application of Brotherston's method in part results from the fact that all the chapters are tantalizingly short. By undertaking both a detailed analysis of a particular text and a general discussion of the work of its author, he compresses too much into too few pages. The brevity of his studies is also the probable cause of serious omissions and occasional false impressions. The discussion of *Hombres de maíz*, for instance, is appropriately centred on Asturias' portrayal of the Mayan Indian culture of Guatemala, but is sorely incomplete in one important respect. Although Brotherston refers to the ten years Asturias spent in Europe (1923-33), he does not discuss the significant effects that Surrealism and its particular interest in mythology, psycho-analysis, and the unconscious had both on Asturias' view of the subject of his novel and on

the manner in which, as a result, the myths of Central America were portrayed in his work. When Asturias was living in Paris, he indeed 'learned a good deal more about the first heritage of America' (p. 30), and also acquired a good deal more than Brotherston has space to tell us. The brevity of his commentary affects the discussion of Carpentier at a more elementary level. His summary of the content of *El siglo de las luces* (p. 47), and *El reino de este mundo* (p. 50), is so abbreviated that the content of both novels is distorted. *El reino de este mundo*, in particular, is incorrectly collated with its historical sources. (Makandal could not have led a rebellion in 1767, as Brotherston notes, since he was executed in 1758; Henri Christophe's seizure of power in Northern Haiti occurred in 1807 and did not lead to independence from France, which came three years before, in 1804.) Shortcomings such as these, by no means limited to the chapters on Asturias and Carpentier, are unfortunate and would undoubtedly have been overcome in a longer and more carefully elaborated text.

In the light of the wide readership currently enjoyed by the twentieth century Spanish American novel in English-speaking countries, there is no doubt about the need for an accompanying criticism accessible to the reader with a limited knowledge of Spanish. Brotherston's recognition of this need is laudable and, for this reason alone, the publication of *The Emergence of the Latin American Novel* should be welcomed. His general survey of the work of a number of prominent novelists, his bibliographies and passages of detailed analyses will provide useful information and interpretations for a particular readership. The shortcomings of his book, however, are cause for reflection and confirm, to some extent, the weaknesses of criticism on Spanish American Literature, which, all too often, suffers from a lack of methodological rigour.

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*LUCA CODIGNOLA, ed. *Canadiana: aspetti della storia e della letteratura canadese*. Venezia: Marsilio 1978. Pp. 160. L5500

Those who consider the world under the species of emblems, wrote Mario Praz many years ago, must see Canada in terms of 'un nuovo Minotauro oltremarino' who rules an icebound kingdom: "'da mezzo il petto uscia fuor de la ghiaccia.'" ¹ Praz's comment reminds us that Canada

1 Mario Praz, 'Il Canada', *Cronache letterarie anglosassoni II: cronache inglesi e americane* (Roma: Edizioni di storia e letteratura 1951). The essay reviews G.G.

has been known as a land of myth much longer than it has been known in fact; perhaps, then, it is not surprising that only now is its cultural map being plotted. What is surprising, however, is the vigour with which Italian critics are setting about the discovery of Canadian literature. In the same year that *Canadiana* appeared, Giovanna Capone (who, in 1976, held the first course in Italy devoted to Canadian literature, at the University of Bologna), published *Canada il villaggio della terra*,² and the first (and so far only) number of *Argomenti canadesi: letteratura canadese di lingua inglese* was issued in Rome.³ And, from March 30 to April 1 of 1979, the third Conference on Canadian Studies was held in Urbino; the meeting ended with the founding of the Italian Association for Canadian Studies.⁴ This efflorescence is remarkable, considering that the first courses on Canadian history given in Italy were held as recently as 1974 by Raimondo Luraghi at the University of Genoa, and that the first Center for Canadian Studies was established in 1976 by Giovanni Bonanno at the University of Messina.⁵

Canadiana collects the proceedings of the second Conference on Canadian Studies, held at Pisa in 1978, the first one having convened in Bologna the year before. The book's two sections are based on aspects of history (colonization, the Seven Years' War, the Social Gospel Movement) and literature, a combination which should not imply that the approaches to literature are uniformly historicist. The essays are concerned generally with the literary dimensions of the works they examine, with the exception of Bonanno's essay, 'Il Canada e le sue "due solitudini" in due romanzi di Hugh MacLennan' (pp. 133-56), to which I will return, and Pasquale Jannini's note on 'Apollinaire, la francofonia e la poesia del Québec' (pp. 115-19). Jannini cites Apollinaire's interest in the poetry of Emile Nelligan and in the journal *Le Nigog* as evidence of his sensitivity

Napolitano, *Troppo grano sotto la neve: un inverno al Canada, con una visita a Ford* (n.p.: Ceschina n.d.) 280.

- 2 Giovanna Capone, *Canada il villaggio della terra: letteratura canadese di lingua inglese* (Bologna: Patron 1978). See also the review by Giovanna Franci, 'Letteratura anglo-canadese,' in *Il Verri* vi (1978) 161-4.
- 3 Besides articles, in Italian translation, by N. Frye, G. Woodcock, C. Bissell, and D. Rubin, and interviews with M. McLuhan and M. Atwood, the journal contains a list of Italian dissertations on Canadian literature.
- 4 See 'Letteratura canadese,' *Tuttolibri* No. 171 (31 marzo 1979) 27.
- 5 See Luca Codignola, 'Gli studi canadesi in Italia,' *Atti del I congresso internazionale di storia americana* (Genova: Tilgher 1978) 225-33.

to the problem of *francophonie*, although it was the emergence of an Algerian literature which first suggested to Apollinaire the essentials of the problem: to what extent can a francophone literature be said to have autonomy? Although Apollinaire did not write about Franco-Canadian poetry specifically in these terms when he reviewed *Le Nigog*, he was aware that the avant-gardism of the journal was double-pronged, relating both to the indigenous culture and that of France.

The difficulty of being avant-garde 'dans le monde vide que nous habitons' was obvious to the founders of *Le Nigog*, who denied it was revolutionary, on the basis that 'une révolution ne s'accomplit pas contre le néant.'⁶ It is precisely this idea of tradition or the sense that one is lacking that stands at the heart of much Canadian literature, as well as criticism of Canadian literature, and it is an issue to which Comparative Canadian Literature must inevitably address itself. Clément Moisan raises the issue at the outset of his essay, 'Poesia canadese e poesia québécoise: un confronto' (pp. 83-95). Comparative Canadian Literature lacks a methodology, states Moisan, and has often appeared devoted to Pan-Canadianism. While the latter criticism does identify one of the two directions in which Comparative Canadian Literature can err, the former requires some clarification. The adjective 'Canadian' testifies to the inadequacy of a traditional comparative methodology (whereby works from two or more 'national' literatures are compared) when it is confronted by two 'national' literatures in one nation, which, moreover, lacks linguistic autonomy, being not English and French, but anglophone and francophone. A redefinition of the discipline, however, as the study of texts in terms of the literary system through which they are generated, obviates the need to legitimize comparisons of French- and English-Canadian texts as a particular brand of comparative literature, and also brings the theory of comparative literature into line with contemporary practice. If, as Moisan suggests, such comparisons appear to lack a methodology, the fault must lie within the discipline and not with the nature of the comparisons being made.

Having a methodology is not enough in itself, however, as Moisan's comparisons (of Avison and Lasnier, Souster and Miron, Lalonde and Atwood) demonstrate. Themes are cited in each pair of poets, and Moisan comments on similarities and differences. Here, 'methodology' is programmatic rather than systematic, and still à propos is David M.

6 Robert La Roque de Roquebrune, quoted by Laurent Mailhot, in *La littérature québécoise* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France 1974), 44, quoted by Jannini in *Canadiana*, 118.

Hayne's complaint about the 'juxtapositions of titles or authors having some minimal similarities,' which passes as 'comparative.'⁷ Such comparisons are able to articulate only those preconceptions according to which they were first set up; in this case they concern 'temi e miti dell'immaginazione canadese e québécoise' (p. 83). While the thematic parallels which Moisan cites are not unimportant, we are given no sense of their formal motivation, and the suggestion that there are themes and myths characteristic of the two groups of poetry he is examining is neither supported empirically nor argued theoretically. Those who claim for Canada a distinct thematic, as well as those who argue that Canadian literature lacks a tradition, fail to appreciate the ambiguity of a literature which expresses its sense of a unique tradition (or the absence of one) against a highly traditional background of literary forms. Codignola's comment in the introduction of *Canadiana* that, unlike the United States, Canada has maintained specifically European cultural forms (p. 7), is particularly apposite in this context, as is Northrop Frye's statement that a 'writer who is or who feels removed from his literary tradition tends rather to take over forms already in existence.'⁸ This double perspective is maintained selfconsciously in the novels of Margaret Atwood, as Claudio Gorlier's essay on 'La commedia gotica di Margaret Atwood' (pp. 121-32) suggests. Arguing from the example of *Lady Oracle*, which he reads as a meta-narrative, an *autocritique* of her two preceding novels, Gorlier proposes that Atwood's fiction as a whole can be seen as a response to the fiction of her predecessors, as something made out of parts of yet other things, like Frankenstein's monster. *Surfacing* reveals a related aspect of her fiction, which it shares with that of James and Borges: the use of *Doppelgänger* as a metaphor for the duplicating and duplicitous act of narration.

With the exception of Gorlier's essay, one must regret that little attempt is made in this collection to integrate Canadian literature into its wider literary context. Bonanno, for example, treats Hugh MacLennan's novels as historical documents relating to the 'two solitudes,' but surely the metaphor is elaborated through the process of the novels themselves (pp. 133-56). There is no sense here of the literariness of MacLennan's narrative, nor, for that matter, of the narrativity of history. No one today would study *Wacousta* as an historically accurate rendition of Pontiac's assault on Detroit; the language and form of the text tell us that its

7 David M. Hayne, 'Comparative Canadian Literature,' *Canadian Review of Comparative Literature* 111 (1976) 123

8 Northrop Frye, 'Conclusion,' *Literary History of Canada*, ed. Carl F. Klinck (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970) 835.

meaning lies elsewhere. *Wacousta* is relevant, however, to our study of the contemporary Canadian novel, which, if it is the heir of Richardson and Kirby and Hémon, is also, by virtue of these same authors, the heir of Scott and Balzac and Manzoni. To argue for the autonomy of Canadian literature is to deny the richness of its engagement in the literary system of which it is an integral part. Comparative Canadian Literature has attempted too often to make the part outweigh the whole.

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*IRENE HINRICHSSEN. *Der Romancier als Übersetzer: Annemarie und Heinrich Bölls Übertragungen englischsprachiger Erzählprosa. Ein Beitrag zur Übersetzungskritik*. Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann 1978. Pp. 241. DM 45.00.

The three-pronged title of Irene Hinrichsen's study reflects its grand design as well as its inherent problems. The purpose of her study is primarily to focus on the writer Böll as a translator, on an aspect of his work which, until now, has not received adequate critical attention. In addition, she regards her analysis of Heinrich and Annemarie Böll's translations as a contribution to *Übersetzungskritik*, a critical approach toward evaluating translations which has, until now, been lacking in scientific orientation. Finally, her study is designed to go beyond comparative analysis of translations, to deal with the function of translations and their significance for modern national literatures, and to focus on mutual relationships of Böll's own *œuvre* with those he translated.

A review of the critical work of the last twenty years in the area of theory of translation serves Hinrichsen as starting point. She focuses briefly on contributions by such critics as André Lefevere, Jiří Levý, Eugene Nida, Fritz Güttinger, B. Quincy Morgan *et al.* and relates them to *Übersetzungskritik*. She is well aware of the major dilemma in translation (there is no universally recognized and accepted theory of the craft) but is nonetheless convinced that there are valid points of departure for a more scientific approach to *Übersetzungskritik*. Despite the controversies surrounding such aspects as absolute translatability from one language to another and related problems (context and form, free translation versus literal translation, readability ...), Hinrichsen considers the work of Jiří Levý, Werner Koller, Klaus Reichert, and Katharina Reiss as pointing in new directions for an essentially applied *Übersetzungskritik* which is to be based on a comparative textual

analysis of the translation and its original. She endorses Katharina Reiss' call for 'keine Übersetzungskritik ohne Vergleich zwischen Ziel- und Ausgangstext' (p. 32) and outlines her own criteria for evaluating the quality of a translation. In her estimation, an optimal translation is a rendering of a text in a manner which is as faithful as possible to the original text and yet as free as necessary. She formulates as her guiding principle the question, 'Welche Mitteilungsfunktion [haben] die einzelnen sprachlichen Elemente und welche sprachlichen Mittel in der eigenen Sprache [können] die gleiche Funktion erfüllen?' (p.32) By examining typical words, expressions and syntactical structures she hopes to determine to what extent 'inventions in the original text' have been rendered 'by inventions in the translation.' She is guided by such working-questions as, 'Does the translator tend to smoothen the text, does he tend to explain, interpret or improve on his author by superimposing his own style?'

After these methodological deliberations Hinrichsen presents an impressively lengthy and detailed comparative analysis of originals and their translations, some by Heinrich Böll alone, others jointly by Heinrich and Annemarie Böll, and still others by Annemarie Böll alone. The translations are from the *œuvres* of Jerome David Salinger, Bernard Malamud, Paul Horgan, Patrick White, Kay Cicellis, Brendan Behan, Flann O'Brien, Tomás Ó Crohan and Eilís Dillon.

The longest and most ambitious example of Hinrichsen's applied *Übersetzungskritik* is the fifty-eight page chapter on the Salinger translation. It consists, like her other critiques, of an introduction containing relevant facts about the *œuvre* under discussion, a detailed comparative analysis of selected excerpts of the English text with its German counterpart and a concluding summary of the results of her investigation with an evaluation of the quality of the translation. In the case of Böll's translation of Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, Hinrichsen first compares the English edition with the American one, and lists the divergences. She then compares selected excerpts of the first and unsuccessful translation by Irene Muehlton (Zürich, 1954) and the re-translation by Heinrich Böll (Köln/Berlin, 1962) with respect to the English edition. She juxtaposes typical expressions and syntactical structures (such as various parts of speech and their uses, swearwords, exaggerations, neologisms, slang expressions ...), compares the two German versions, examines errors and omissions and discusses their significance. By way of this seemingly analytical approach she then concludes that, despite its many shortcomings, Böll's version is preferable to Muehlton's (although this applies in only fifty per cent of the instances investigated). Though both Muehlton and Böll smoothen Salinger's style, she finds that Böll does this to a lesser

extent. In the case of the expressions from the 'Tabubereich' especially, Hinrichsen finds Böll's version more adequate, though in many cases not daring enough. The question whether Böll's version is adequate with reference to the American original is not pursued. With respect to the Salinger translations in general, she expresses some reservations about Böll's version of *The Catcher in the Rye*, judges the translation of 'Franny' unsatisfactory, that of 'Zooney' adequate, that of 'Raise High the Roof Beam, Carpenters' successful and that of 'Seymour: An Introduction' not adequate. Despite her negative criticisms she comes to the surprisingly positive conclusion: 'Insgesamt ergibt sich also bei den Salinger-Übersetzungen ein recht positives Bild' (p.89).

Similarly, though not quite at such length as in the case of Salinger, Hinrichsen analyzes the translations from other authors done by one or both of the Bölls. Her investigations lead her to the following conclusions: the Malamud translations are considered by her as not adequate, especially with respect to the dialogues translated from Yiddish. Of the three Horgan translations, one is judged relatively adequate and two superficial and inadequate. The Patrick White translation of *The Tree of Man* is judged in many respects unsatisfactory, inadequate and detrimental to White; the Cicellis translation adequate; the Brendan Behan translation generally satisfactory even though in great need of improvements; the Flann O'Brien translation, despite many reservations, quite adequate; the Tomás Ó Crohan translation despite many excisions and abbreviations successful; the three Eilís Dillon translations adequate and successful — in fact their quality is said to improve with each successive novel.

The final chapter deals with aspects of the significance of translation from one national literature to another, and with the relationship of Böll's translations to his own *œuvre*. Based on Böll's own observations that translation is an act of give-and-take and that his Salinger translations were an act of liberation for him, Hinrichsen develops the general thesis that Böll chose his authors for translation on the basis of his intellectual and emotional affinity and that the quality of translation is directly related to this affinity. This thesis is, of course, somewhat debatable; the reader is not informed whether Böll or a publisher who has previously gauged the market makes the choice of authors to be translated. An interview of Hinrichsen with the Bölls could have provided such valuable information; unfortunately she did not gain audience with them. One of the most interesting aspects she raises which awaits further study, is the influence of the translations on Böll's own *œuvre*. Her influence studies do not go beyond a chronological juxtaposition of the translations and Böll's creative work (p. 224ff), but point the com-

paratist in new directions (e.g. the influence of Salinger on *Ansichten eines Clowns*, the outsider theme, the influence of Irish writers etc.).

The main contribution of Hinrichsen's study lies in showing, by concrete example, that a general and superficial review of a translation or one which takes the name of a translator as a guarantee of the quality of a translation is inadequate and that a systematic approach to *Übersetzungskritik* is needed. However, despite its merits, the study is beset with problems and inconsistencies; despite its apparently theoretical basis, Hinrichsen's applied *Übersetzungskritik* is marked by similar difficulties as the findings pertaining to theory of translation. Her approach is essentially normative, and the norm in question is relative. Her view of an optimal translation as a rendering of a text in a manner which is as faithful as possible to the original and as free as necessary is, in the final analysis, based on subjective criteria of interpretation. Thus a translation which might seem quite adequate in the eyes of one critic might conceivably be inadequate in the eyes of another. The critic who is prepared to consider a translation as a work of art in its own right, or who is prepared to allow for the view that translation is a kind of filtering process by the translator, will be inclined to judge translations more leniently than the critic who considers that all translating involves 'taking away' from the original. With regard to Böll's translation of Salinger, the omissions and the consistent elevation of style might be regarded as ample proof of inadequate translation and reason for a recommendation for a new translation which does greater justice to the original, but it may also be considered as a translation bearing the special mark of Böll. Hinrichsen's applied *Übersetzungskritik* suffers from the inherent danger of resulting in a catalogue of errors, omissions and shortcomings. She could have prevented this predominant impression by relegating many of the comparisons and juxtapositions to footnotes and appendices. In its present form the study makes for arduous and uninteresting reading in many places. Further studies of this type will hopefully occur in modified form.

A major problem of Hinrichsen's study lies in the attempt to focus on the writer Böll as a translator. In dealing with the so-called Böll translations we need to remind ourselves that only *one* of these, Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, is a translation by Böll alone, more specifically a *re-translation* and *adaptation* of Irene Muehlton's version. With the exception of Malamud's *Das Zaubernetz und andere Geschichten* done by Annemarie Böll alone, the other translations are all jointly done by Mr. and Mrs. Böll. Hinrichsen's attempt to examine the question as to which part each one had in the joint translations hardly yields a conclusive answer, as she herself admits: She proceeds by comparing errors and stylistic features of their separate translations and their joint work. Her super-

ficially and constantly recurring expression 'die Bölls übersetzen ...' tends to drive the reader to desperation. The intended interview could have provided useful information about the manner of work in the translations designated as joint work.

Hinrichsen's bibliography of translations done by the Bölls seems complete. A quick check establishes that only one title, Norman Levine's *Ein kleines Stückchen Blau*, has been omitted; this is a collection of short stories which significantly bears the names of the translators Heinrich and Annemarie Böll (and Reinhard Wagner) on the book's jacket, a fact which leads the reviewer of the *Stuttgarter Zeitung* (25. 9. 71) to remark 'mit Böll fängt man Mäuse,' showing once again that Hinrichsen's plea for the need of a systematic approach to *Übersetzungskritik* is well taken. (WALTER RIEDEL, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA)

*WALTER H. SOKEL, ALBERT A. KIPA, and HANS TERNES, eds. *Probleme der Komparatistik und Interpretation: Festschrift für André von Gronicka zum 65. Geburtstag am 25. 5. 1977*. Bonn: Bouvier Verlag Herbert Grundmann 1978. Pp. iv + 339. DM 75.00

This volume, in recognition of a distinguished and dedicated career of teaching and scholarship, admirably reflects Professor von Gronicka's own scholarly interests, which have stressed German-Russian literary relations, Goethe, Rilke, and Thomas Mann. There are six articles on German-Slavic literary relations: Edmund Kostka, 'Schiller in Poland'; Danuta S. Lloyd, 'German-Polish Literary Relations in the Nineteenth Century'; J.W. Dyck, ' "Deceit and Conviction in the False Demetrius": Schiller-Pushkin-Hebbel'; Albert A. Kipa, 'Ivan Franko's View of Gerhart Hauptmann'; Rado Pribić, 'Keyserling's *Schwüle Tage* and Turgenev's *First Love*'; Frank Trommler, ' "Kann jeder ein Faust sein?" Anmerkungen zu Lunačarskij.' Russian is compared to literatures other than German by Arvids Ziedonis, 'Problems of Modernization in Blaumanis' *Indrāni* and Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*,' and by Adolph Wegener, 'Harold Pinter: Chekhov's Heir Apparent.' Other comparatist articles are by Alfred R. Wedel, 'Die "Gauchfigur" und der "cornuto" in Moscheroschs Bearbeitung der Traumvision des Spaniers Quevedo'; Heinz Moenkemeyer, 'Heinse und Hemsterhuis'; Allan J. McIntyre, 'Kleist's Stage Metaphysics and the Japanese Noh Theater'; George C. Schoolfield, 'Rilke and Brandes'; Karl E. Webb, 'Rainer Maria Rilke and Paul Cézanne: A Stylistic Comparison.' Of these I should like to single out the subtle comparison by McIntyre, Schoolfield's fascinating history

of the personal relationships between Rilke and Brandes, which never got so far as to induce a serious examination of Rilke's work by the influential Danish critic, and Webb's masterly treatment of a difficult subject, the comparison of principles of style and composition applied in painting and lyric poetry. There are two articles on Mann: 'Thomas Manns Grundmotiv,' by Peter Heller (a precarious civilized balance threatened by irrational forces, treated with breadth and discrimination) and 'Thomas Mann in the Eyes of His contemporaries,' by Henry Hatfield. There are two contributions on Kleist besides that of McIntyre. Like the latter, Erich Heller is concerned with *Über das Marionettentheater*; he devastates an attempt to interpret it psychoanalytically while grounding it in the history of ideas. Gustave B. Mathieu writes on the Nazis' 'Use of Kleist as a Propaganda Tool.' Kafka is the subject of two articles: Walter H. Sokel, 'Kafka's Law and its Renunciation: A Comparison of the Function of the Law in "Before the Law" and "The New Advocate"' (thorough and penetrating, extending to other writings as well) and Hans Ternes, '"Hunter Gracchus" — An Interpretation.' The volume appropriately begins with a theoretical article, 'The Function of the Reader,' by Ludwig W. Kahn and concludes with one which may well point to the poetry of the future, 'Arno Reinfrank, "The Poet of Facts,"' by Guy Stern. A fascinating contribution that defies classification is that of Harold Jantz, 'The Disengaged Individual, Mystic and Libertine in the Eighteenth Century.' It starts with the examination of certain colorful international figures and families but veers towards movements and concepts of cultural history, encouraging significant revision of conventional notions about the eighteenth century.

This is a rich and varied volume. The breadth of its scope, the substantial quality of all the contributions, and the brilliance, depth, and sensitivity of a good number of them constitute a suitable tribute to one of North America's best loved Germanists. (RAYMOND IMMERWAHR, UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO)