Book Reviews

The Age of Reform 1250-1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe. By Steven Ozment. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980. Pp. xii + 458, with illustrations. $25.00 (U.S.)

It is an important moment when a scholar of Steven Ozment's stature publishes what appears to be a long-awaited synthesis of intellectual and religious history over a period as vast as that between 1250 and 1550. Scholars and teachers might expect a useful analysis of the links between medieval and Reformation thought, one combining thoughtful focus on the strands which held or unraveled as the world changed, with careful attention to the historical and religious context of the period, seen as a unity. Professor Ozment has long been known as a Reformation scholar who takes cognizance of the medieval period, particularly in his *Mysticism and Dissent* (1973). Thus, it is unfortunate that the present volume shows all the signs of being a too-hasty revision and assemblage of the lectures and previously published articles which Ozment notes in his Introduction, one which fails to satisfy at a number of points.

A major problem for this reviewer is the book's lack of coherence. One would have hoped for the author to have identified a number of *continua* which would be traced from the thirteenth through the sixteenth centuries, to which reference could be made in order to link, for example, the scholastic theory of knowledge with humanist and reforming treatments of similar issues. These links, or their breakage, are frequently asserted, but seldom demonstrated. The volume falls into two disparate sections, medieval and Reformation, and the treatment of themes in the first is not generally carried over into the second.

This may result from the author's apparent indecision about what sort of book this was to be. If a synthesis, then the lack of thematic unity stands out more glaringly: this reviewer had high hopes that "The Idea of Reform" would serve as a point of reference for the whole work, but the "idea" is never presented concretely. If the book is an expanded critical essay, providing a critique of recent work in many fields (which Ozment does at many points,

some of the critiques quite useful), then the claims of the sub-title are too vast. Further, if the work is directed to medievalists and Reformation experts, then the documentary apparatus is inconsistent at best: to give but one example among many, on p. 30, Ozment cites Thomas on the sacraments with a reference to a translated collection of his works, without giving even the title of the original work; the preceding note on the same page gives a full Latin quotation from the *Summa*. For whom are these notes intended?

In the first, essentially medieval part of the book, the reader is given a very full and complex treatment of the scholastic, spiritual, and ecclesiopolitical "traditions" of church and intellectual history. While I disagree with Ozment's reliance on what he calls the "Ockhamist" tradition, since most contemporary scholars are whittling away at any sense that this formed a coherent tradition after Ockham himself, his treatment is very detailed, and he identifies a number of threads which I expected would serve as the warp on which the weft of Reformation thought would be entwined. Unfortunately, this is not the case; and Ozment fails to consider a very basic question: the relationship between intellectual life and thought, on the one hand, and the reality of late medieval Christianity. Ozment appears to be reaching toward a description of what he terms, "the oppressive religious culture" of the late Middle Ages (p. 243, and *supra*), but he fails to define it clearly, or to demonstrate that it was a consequence of the very patterns of scholastic and mystical thought on which he expends so much effort. The bare summary on pp. 179-81 is full of unsupported generalizations ("The papacies of Gregory VII and Innocent III and the scholastic synthesis of Thomas Aquinas were exceptions, not the rule;" ". . . in the late Middle Ages the traditional mixing of the sacred and the profane, . . ., was finally overcome."), and provides no transition to the next, Reformation section.

Here, the manner of presentation changes. Instead of continuing a discussion of "traditions", as illustrated from a variety of thinkers and movements, Ozment presents a largely disconnected series of synoptic passages from Reformation figures, treated *seriatim*. The portraits must have been excellent lectures: lucid, and always interesting; but the points established previously are not taken up. Even here, internal consistency is lacking: after bringing Luther up to 1519, criticizing at length Erikson's *Young Man Luther*, the course of the Continental Reformation moves onto other ground, only to return to Luther later, in a chapter taken from previously published work. If there is a unifying theme here, it is Luther's opposition to "Ockhamist Pelagianism", but the previous discussion of this point is not sufficient to prove the connection.

The discussion of "Humanism and the Reformation" is perhaps the most enlightening in the book, revealing clearly the points at issue between Luther and Erasmus. A later chapter, "Marriage and the Ministry", is interesting, but is not linked, except superficially, with the central themes of the book as a whole; again, previous work has been included without careful attention to the demands of the subject. For a book on "Late Medieval and Reformation

Europe", there is an appalling inattention to England. Granted, the English case was peculiar, but this is no reason for it to be treated as if the English reformation began sometime around 1548.

The "idea of reform" is best considered in the chapters dealing with political thought and its links to religious change, yet the recent work of Skinner is far more satisfactory. The sections of historical narrative, which might have provided a framework within which to discuss reform, are well-presented, if ordinary: there is little re-assessment of recent scholarship. Finally, almost no attention is paid to "ordinary religion", a matter which is presently attracting a good deal of attention; what there is, is given in the most general, traditional terms. This is particularly vexing given Ozment's frequent assertion that the Reformation was primarily a consequence of ordinary and intellectual dissatisfaction with the state of late medieval religion.

The result is a book which will not satisfy scholars, especially medievalists, nor will it appeal to teachers in need of an analytic summary of late medieval and Reformation religious history. One can only hope that Professor Ozment will turn his attentions again to these matters, and produce the sort of synthetic interpretive essay which he is uniquely qualified to write.

Orono, Maine *Malcolm C. Burson*

Darkness Visible. By William Golding. London: Faber and Faber; Toronto: Oxford University Press; New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1979. Pp. 265. $13.95. (U.S. price: $10.95)

In its title, William Golding's 1959 novel, *Free Fall*, echoed a line from *Paradise Lost*; God speaks about man: "Ingrate, he had of me/All he could have; I made him just and right,/Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall" (III. 98-99). The same source supplies the suggestive title for Golding's seventh novel, his first in twelve years:

> A dungeon horrible on all sides round
> As one great furnace flamed, yet from these flames
> No light, but rather darkness visible
> Served only to discover sights of woe. (I. 61-64)

Didactic tabs are a Golding trademark; indeed, his tendency to insert thematic hints in his fiction has made him a target for purist critics who insist on art without a message. Golding ignores such strictures to carry on his twenty-five year preoccupation with the theme of fallen human nature; the thesis that man is sadly prone to evil: "I believe that man suffers from an appalling ignorance of his own nature. I produce my own view in the hope that it may be something like the truth."

Alexander Pope's context for Milton's oxymoron ironically foreshadows Golding's intense and circuitous story-telling in this novel: "Of darkness visible so much be lent/As half to show, half veil the deep intent" (*The Dunciad*, IV. 3-4). *Darkness Visible* unfolds as if Golding deliberately tried to "half veil the deep intent" of his writing. As if indeed he wanted to institute as a narrative method the Sullivan-Bauhaus architectural principle that form follows function. The function of his fiction he once made clear, is to hold up for humanity a mirror to reflect the basic character of man, not merely his often benign exterior. His wartime experiences are said to account for Golding's dark vision of human nature: "The basic point my generation learned about man was that there was more evil in him than could be accounted for by social pressure." The function of *Darkness Visible* may be to show that evil man can produce only an evil world, a cruel civilization in which a good man is hard to find. The dense narrative and sectional structuring, the form of the novel, then, reflects the complicated, multi-layered morality, social, political, personal, of today's world. The darkness of title and story extends beyond the nature of man to project a contemporary society of bombs and brutal terrorists; of older people confused and dismayed by unfamiliar, jarring experiences; and of the pervasive amorality of our diminishing century: an overall picture aptly symbolized by the context of Milton's phrase, a description of hell.

The novel is a formidable, challenging work in which Golding once more demonstrates that he is a master of oblique narrative. It will likely revive complaints about his earlier major works (*Pincher Martin*, 1956, *Free Fall*, and *The Spire*, 1964); namely, that he obstructs his readers with gratuitous difficulties. Problems of comprehension may result from such factors as the intensity and deliberate ambiguity of some areas, the use of the film device of sudden "jump cuts," the changes in point of view, or Golding's richly allusive style which can make readers uneasy about missing important symbolism. The opening pages, for example, a brilliant set-piece about the firebombing of London, evoke the Biblical burning bush, Dante and every inferno of history, and *Little Gidding*'s "intolerable shirt of flames." Indeed, the *novel* is complex, but the *story* is relatively simple.

The novel has three major parts, of seven, four, and five chapters respectively. The order is chronological, less complicating than the "memory sequence" of *Free Fall*. Part One presents most of the story of Matty, the protagonist; introduces an ageing schoolmaster pederast, Pedigree; and concludes with a chapter of sporadic diary entries, the tortured thinking and planning of the hapless Matty. Here is his first horrific appearance:

> A figure had condensed out of the shuddering backdrop of the glare. . . . it was impossibly small. . . . Nor do small children walk out of a fire that is melting lead and distorting iron.
>
> . . . A child's stride is quick, but this child walked with a kind of ritual gait. . . . It was perhaps something animal that was directing him away from the place where the world was being consumed.

With "no background but the fire" and horribly disfigured by his "birth" from the burning bush which mercilessly did not consume, Matty moved slowly from various specialty hospitals to several schools, to menial jobs in England and Australia, eventually back to England to work as a handyman at a posh private school in Greenfield whose pupils include the sons of oil-rich Arabs and African rulers, tempting bait for kidnap plots. By then he has become an unlearned Bible addict, memorizing whole chapters, seeking an answer to the old questions, "Who am I?" and "What is my role in life?" No wonder that, like others before him from the Gnostics to the Moonies, Matty begins to have visions: two preternatural visitants who promise him an unspecified, worthy future assignment. So he ponders, a delayed-action human bomb, awaiting its tremendous moment.

Part Two features the Stanhope family: father, a radio-TV chess expert remote from his family; a live-in nurse-housekeeper-mistress; and the beautiful twins, Toni, the dark-haired terrorist-to-be, and Sophy, a fair, driven female villain who belongs in Milton's or anyone's hell.

The two stories converge in Part Three, five chapters of two thickening plots, Sophy's and Golding's. Her actions terminate the story and Matty's life in a second flaming inferno. Other characters are mostly victims of Golding's degenerate society: Sim Goodchild, a confused bookseller, ironically named, for his interest in the beautiful twins is latently sexual; bemused Edwin Bell, a schoolmaster with no answers about life; and Sophy's fellow plotters, criminals all. Pedigree as a cliché character is balanced by a physical education master so easily manipulated by Sophy that he is openly called Fido.

Darkness Visible fuses character and plot into pervasive and almost intolerable ironies. The attractive innocence of the twins is but a gloss; they become amoral and mindlessly evil. The ugly, disfigured Matty is all simple goodness, the prelapsarian innocence of Lok in *The Inheritors* (1955). The scarified Matty is repugnant to sad old Pedigree, but the handsome lad who attracts him is an intuitive conniver. Repulsive in character and lifestyle, Pedigree hopelessly accepts his pederasty, but the respectable Goodchild and Bell are equally rudderless in modern society. Sophy's dictum, "The way towards simplicity is through outrage," is best exemplified, not by her cold-blooded plotting, but by Matty's outrageous death in a burning bush which did destroy. His mission to rescue the kidnap victim ironically fulfills his diary premonition: "What am I for? Is it to do with children?"

Appearance versus reality has rarely been so forcefully staged to inject fiction with such genuine thematic power. What is Golding saying by presenting human goodness through the wholly innocent Matty? Is an unaware, pre-rational goodness all that is possible in a depraved era? Are the twins, beautiful as goldfish but predatory as piranhas, typical of those who are presently to inherit the corrupt earth? Milton supplied the title, but Yeats

cogently stated the theme: "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;/Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world. . . ." And Eliot characterized Golding's urgency: a "conscious impotence of rage/at human folly."

Golding's thematic hinting is evident but muted in this novel. The "running down" of contemporary moral values and social order is hinted in a dialogue between Sophy and her father:

> "We're not very wholesome, are we?"
> "That's a good word."
> "You, Mummy, Toni, me—we're not the way people used to be. It's part of the whole running down."
> "Entropy."
> "You don't even care enough about us to hate us, do you?"

Stanhope's laconic "entropy" suggests that Golding is aware that his efforts to deliver the story with a minimum of direct assertion and a maximum of effect may result in a loss of communicative power. Certainly the more typical Golding signature passages of impressionistic writing, trenchant, colourful, evocative as the opening pages of *Free Fall*, can lapse into an ambiguity that fails to render some passages explicitly enough. Yet it is the well known Golding narrative mode: intensity, implication, not overt statement; symbolic, figurative, not literal. Here *passim* is poetry's fusion of language, imagery, symbol and allusion; not the ways of everyday prose: entropy indeed when encountered as a whole.

Golding's *animus* towards the evil potential of mankind does inform all his work, and we really must accept his thematic bent as his special *donum*, his card of identity among novelists. He has tabled a timely, impressive report about our erring age. Let us hope fervently that he will destroy the putamen of his years of re-working and pruning, not leave it for tedious dissection and reassembling by textual critics. The given work is a rewarding challenge for the present and a worthy offering to the future. The epigraph he chose from the *Aeneid* signals his confidence about this novel's future: *Sit mihi fas audita loqui*. *Darkness Visible* is a glowing and memorable work of art and soul.

Carleton University *A.A. MacKinnon*

Images and Ideas in Literature of the English Renaissance. By Patrick Grant. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1979. 246 pp., cloth, $15.00.

The blanket title of Grant's second book is a telling indication of its diffusion of interests. The author compounds this difficulty by his arbitrary choice of texts and his self-indulgent, if learned, forays into areas only obliquely related to his central thesis. The study charts the breakdown during the seventeenth century of a belief in Augustinian correspondences between matter, image, and transcendent Idea and the impact on the literary imagination of empirical philosophy. This is itself a large and worthwhile project, but Grant's idiosyncratic tastes and evident restlessness with the strictures of his argument inevitably jeopardize its coherence. He is, for example, more concerned to establish the "cross-diffusion" between Capuchin devotional exercises and Crashaw's poetry than to elucidate clearly the conflict between the allegorical temper (represented here by Spenser) and the emerging Lockean materialism of the new age. Even more disruptive to the logic of the book is the fact that Grant seems intent on salvaging, at whatever cost, his earlier publications. *Images and Ideas in Literature of the English Renaissance* is finally a collection of articles, some approaching monograph length, fitted with varying degrees of success to a single Procrustean bed.

Despite Grant's claims that we are reading a unified work, the awkward transitions and forced comparisons of authors only serve to reinforce our scepticism. Chapters 4 and 6 extend in interesting and complementary ways his discussion of the spiritual models of the Metaphysical poets in *The Transformation of Sin,* but the approach to Crashaw and Norris has little connection to the typology of *Paradise Regained,* the subject of the intervening chapter. The poor organization of the book is unfortunate since it masks Grant's very real strengths. His analyses of specific poems and images—the *effectus passionis* motif of Book I of *The Faerie Queene* or the fine chapter on Crashaw—provide memorable instances of intelligent close reading. Both are eloquently argued, offering many original insights, particularly Grant's thesis that Crashaw's poems "attempt to give us a sense of the distortion of the physical world seen without God" (94) and that they draw on the Capuchin doctrine of referring the creatures.

The two chapters devoted to John Norris demonstrate another strength offset by a characteristic weakness. The biographical portrait of the reclusive pastor rivals in its wit Christopher Hill's account of the eccentric Welsh prophet, Arise Evans. Unlike Hill, however, who gracefully acknowledges that his subject is a "tiny footnote to history," Grant feels compelled to justify at length the inclusion of Norris in his study. His claims for the significance of Norris's rejection of poetry in favour of extensive philosophical disputes with John Locke remain unconvincing. The fact that Norris was a poet of quite limited talents prior to his recantation, and that

writers like Dryden continued to produce poetry unhampered by the philosophers' attacks on the imagination suggests that what Grant inflates into a "direct confrontation between philosophy and poetic practice" (209) is in this particular instance less a matter for serious debate than for entertaining social history.

Perhaps the most puzzling fault of Grant's book is its inconsistent, often naive, sense of genre. We are reminded that for Augustine and Boccaccio, "Allegory . . . is not simply the depiction of a preconceived set of abstractions by a parallel set of images. It is a mimesis of the way in which images participate in the mysterious and imageless fullness of intellectual vision." (10) A sophisticated apprecation of allegory is crucial to Grant's entire argument—in fact, the omission of Bunyan is indefensible. When Grant ponders alternative readings of *The Tempest*, however, his use of the term is rigid and simplistic. Shakespeare's play, "does not reduce simply to allegory," (68) nor does Miranda represent a "simple allegory." (81) Grant here ignores what any critic raised on Augustine should remember. His grasp of the inherently ironic nature of drama is more tenuous yet. The following passage baffles me in its awestruck discovery of the most basic generic truths.

> Although *The Faerie Queene* also provides countless examples of contrasting ways of seeing things, Spenser does not at all so consciously manipulate the perspectives of the characters themselves to show each of them offering a special interpretation of what the nature of things is. But throughout *The Tempest* are many juxtaposed view points, each with a claim to validity, and we constantly observe people in the process of seeing things their own way and then we attempt to make our own judgement on the adequacy of the images they choose to make significant, and in which they may be said separately to believe . . . Shakespeare observes rather than dwells in the image-making process he describes, and the *The Tempest* becomes a dramatization, not simply an expression, of the Augustinian type of theory. (pp. 64-65)

The fact that dramatic perspective differs from epic narration in its tactics and that an audience (which Grant misnames the reader in this chapter) discriminates between contrasting viewpoints when watching a play may be news to Grant, but I suspect it is not to the majority of his readers.

In her recent review of Renaissance non-dramatic scholarship in 1979, Annabel Patterst n issued a helpful warning about the recycling of articles in books. Grant must do considerable wrenching to fit his articles on *The Tempest* and *Paradise Regained* into his current thesis. In each case, the argument was more succinctly and coherently stated in the original version; in neither was the transplant warranted. The problem of sustaining logical consistency in a book that embraces so many diverse figures as Grant's attempts to do is one with which we can all sympathize. He would be well advised, however, either to publish his next book as a collection of disparate articles or to choose his thesis and relevant texts with greater care.

University of Toronto *H. Jennifer Brady*

Freud, Jews and Other Germans. Masters and Victims in Modernist Culture. By Peter Gay, New York: Oxford University Press, 1978. Pp. XVI, 289. $12.95. Oxford University Press paperback, 1979, $3.95.

This is an important book for those interested in German-Jewish relations, German culture, and Modernism and their interrelationship. The "heart of this collection" of essays is a skillful, incisive probing of interactions between Jewish and other Germans at "the high point in the arc of German-Jewish hope", the Wilhelmian era. This is not another Holcaust narrative. Instead, the author goes beyond the well-documented and oft-repeated and, more successfully than others, comes to terms with this difficult issue intellectually and morally.

Gay's success did not come easily. Not that Gay lacked the intellect; he is a highly respected historian. The difficulty for Gay, as it is for most who are challenged by the topic, was one of emotion. He belongs to a group of brilliant Jewish emigrees, like Einstein, Bruno Walter, Kissinger for example, who fled Hitler's Germany. Like many other victims, he suffered personal losses, hated things German, and thought that the only good German was a dead German. Gay transcended his sufferings and his emotions. These essays, therefore, are a very personal work. They are also evidence of a splendid mind at work, examples of cultural history at its best. Most of the essays, like "Sigmund Freud", "Encounter with Modernism", "The Berlin-Jewish Spirit", "Hermann Levi", "Aimez-vous Brahms?", and "For Beckmesser", have been published previously. Some have been revised. All are now more accessible to the reading public by virtue of this publication.

Common to all the essays is a refreshing, intelligent dismantling of long accepted myths. For example, much has been made of Freud's participation in the uniquely Viennese cultural milieu at the turn of the century. Gay not only proposes that "Freud lives far less in Austrian Vienna than in his own mind . . ." but that "Vienna, that distinctive, impalpable, all-pervasive, electric atmosphere in which everyone who counted, and everyone who was anyone acted both as teacher and pupil in an intense, continuing seminar on Modernist culture—that Vienna is an invention of cultural historians in search of quick explanations" (pp. 33-34). How often do scholars and intellectuals in search of vicarious excitement create false images of places and times? No doubt the Vienna of popular myth is attractive and stirs the imagination, if not the intellect. But did it exist? If Freud was not typically Viennese or Austrian, what was he? Gay points out that most of Freud's teachers and associates were "famous Germans from Germany". Freud was more a participant in a "larger German culture" rather than a crucial and active figure in *fin de siècle* Viennese intellectual circules.

Gay's most important correctives concern German Jews of the Wilhelmian era who, he asserts "made distinctive contributions to German culture, as Germans far more than Jews" (p. 93). Looking backward from the

Holocaust, many writers have assumed that the gulf between Germans and German Jews was irreconcilable. Gay thinks not. To contemporaries anti-Semitism in Germany seemed less dangerous than in Russia or France. Integration appeared to be advancing steadily. Many a German Jew, such as the painter Liebermann, saw no incompatibility between German culture and Jewish faith. Gay argues that while Jews as individuals contributed to German culture, their contribution was not recognizably Jewish. Gay disputes the existence of an identifiable Jewish-German culture.

Modernism, the author points out has frequently been viewed as a Jewish phenomenon. Gay thinks otherwise. He demonstrates, for example, that the German avant garde was not preponderantly Jewish. In fact, most were not Jewish, and many Jews were far from Modern. According to Gay, the claim for intimacy or even identity between Modernism and Jewishness, made paradoxically by both anti and philo-Semites, is not valid: "There was nothing in the Jewish cultural heritage, and little in their particular social situation, that would make them into cultural rebels, into principled modernists" (p. 101). Gay attacks the streotype of the Jew as a restless and clever individual and furthermore notes: "There is a historical and sociological study that desparately needs to be undertaken: that of stupid Jews" (p. 99).

In "Encounter with Modernism" and "The Berlin-Jewish Spirit", the author provides perceptive vignettes of German Jews, and analyses their contributions to German culture. Gay notes that Jews, like other Germans, were to be found in every political, social, philosophical and cultural camp in Germany. He can find a Berlin but no "Jewish" spirit. German Jews wanted to be like other Germans and were, as Gay forcefully demonstrates. Other Germans, however, would not grant them this wish, as exemplified in the essay "Hermann Levi: A Study in Self-Service and Self-Hatred". Levi, the "most accomplished conductor in the German Empire who was also a Jew" (p. 189), worshipped the anti-Semite Wagner and obsequiously sought his respect. Through this case study Gay illuminates Jewish self-hatred which afflicted a number of prominent Jewish-Germans such as Walter Rathenau, Heinrich Heine and Kurt Tucholsky. Criticism of Jews, especially eastern European Jews—anti-Semitism—marks the most poignant stage of Jewish efforts to be accepted as equals, as Germans.

Gay's analysis is masterly, but it is not without problems. His case for the "Germanness of Jewish high culture" is convincing, but were "Germanness" and "Jewishness" identical as Cohen claimed? Was Jewishness merely a matter of accepting Judaism? How could one become "more of a Jew without becoming less of a German" (p. 120)? What does Gay mean when he writes: "Wassermann hopelessly longed to be all his life, a secular saint, a Christian Jew and Jewish Christian" (p. 150) or that the writer Steinheim was "wholly non-Jewish in feeling" (p. 146)? Gay increases the confusion when he writes of "non-Jewish Jews", "Jewish agnostics, Jewish atheists, Jewish Catholics, and Jewish Lutherans" (p. 174). He notes that "ethnic characterizations are

the fruit, not of insight, but ignorance" (p. 145) but then states: "He [Liebermann] was even a strict Jew, certainly not in a religious sense, but in this: that he watched jealously and suspiciously to see that no Jew sin against his race and religion by unworthy conduct and thus burden himself with heavy guilt for Jewry as a whole" (p. 182).

Despite the confusion about Germanness and Jewishness, this collection of essays contributes much to an understanding of European history at the turn of the century. Like his hero, Freud, Gay seeks to be scrupulously honest. He peels away layers of easy answers and facile generalizations which obscure truth. Furthermore, he makes the esoteric accessible and whets the reader's appetite for more of the same. One need not be familiar with Freud or Brahms to appreciate Gay's comments and thoughts. This is a book well worth reading.

St. Thomas University *Juergen Doerr*

White House Years. By Henry Kissinger. Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1979. Pp. xxiv, 1521. $20.00.

The memoirs of retired statesmen for the most part have not proven to be the most edifying or enlightening documents for historians, particularly when the statesman in question does not regard his retirement as permanent. In the United States, where prestigious lawyers have frequently been recruited for positions of authority in foreign affairs, the normal reticence of members of that profession reinforces a tendency to obscure the actual processes of policy making behind a curtain of generalizations, banal homilies, and careful attention to minutiae. There is perhaps some significance in the fact that no American secretary of state since Dean Acheson has even bothered to publish memoirs, keeping in mind that the volume reviewed here covers the period 1969-72 when Dr. Kissinger was national security adviser. Presidents, of course, have been quite voluble by contrast, as befits career politicians, although the products of their labours have ranged from the defensive rationalizations of Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon to the benumbing tedium of Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Henry Kissinger, to be sure, comes from an altogether different background and tradition, and his audience naturally anticipates a more penetrating and objective analysis of foreign policy decisions from an established scholar, even though his previous publications too often affected the ponderous generalizing that predominated academic commentary on foreign affairs in the Cold War era. Ponderous generalization there is indeed in this heavy (1476 page) tome, particularly on such matters as the origins of

the Cold War: "The United States despite itself had become the guardian of the new equilibrium" (page 60); or on the sources of student unrest in the 1960s: "the metaphysical despair of those who saw before them a life of affluence in a spiritual desert" (page 299). Minutiae and extraneous detail are also abundant: on page 349 the reader is treated to a careful paragraph on the exact number and distribution of incidents of violence on Arab-Israeli borders in 1968-69. On page 279 we learn of the exact position of the American negotiators at their first meeting with the North Vietnamese in 1969: "seated on sofas . . . with its back to the Rue de Rivoli, leaving the view of the Tuileries Gardens to the Vietnamese." On page 440 we are told of the state of the chairs ("red and heavily upholstered") at Kissinger's initial meeting with Hanoi's special envoy Le Duc Tho.

Naturally there is also defensive pleading. The Americans were dragged unwittingly into the Cambodian crisis in April 1970 after the fall of Prince Sihanouk. There was not even a C.I.A. listening post in Phnom Penh when the coup took place, largely because of pressures from dovish elements in the United States Congress; and since Sihanouk had tacitly accepted American bombing in eastern Cambodia to counterbalance the North Vietnamese presence in that area, the Americans had no incentive to stimulate or even applaud the change in regimes. Nixon's hard line on widening the war was influenced by such extraneous factors as his nervousness over the fate of the Apollo 13 mission and his visceral desire to demonstrate that he could be more bellicose than Spiro Agnew at national security meetings. On C.I.A. actions to block the election of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1970 Kissinger argues that the United States has a right to move "in this gray area between diplomacy and military intervention," but in any case this particular effort was "amateurish, being improvised in panic and executed in confusion. The 'covert operations' never got off the ground" (page 677). Even under his masterful direction American foreign policy was clumsy, inhibited by bureaucrats and misguided congressional zealots, not to mention the eccentricities of his employer, and these two most controversial episodes of the Nixon-Kissinger era were the products of reactions to unexpected events, not careful deliberation and planning.

Yet for all these conventional features of the political memoir, Kissinger's rendition of events also contains unusual and valuable glimpses of the processes of foreign policy. His account of the marathon negotiations with Le Duc Tho, which understandably preoccupies most of the latter part of this chronologically organized book and provides a running theme throughout it, is detailed and insightful, punctuated by short dissertations on the tactics and strategy of negotiating from a position that he characterizes as relatively weak, a significant admission from a key figure in an administration that adhered publicly to the conventional American Cold War doctrine of negotiating only from strength. Beyond this analytical dimension, there are times when the narrative acquires a dramatic momentum rarely achieved in the tedious historiography of diplomatic negotiations.

Kissinger is in fact a finer stylist than might be expected on the basis of his previous works. His narrative may lack the rolling cadences and eloquence of a Winston Churchill or Harold Nicolson, and his characterizations are less biting than those of Dean Acheson, but he writes lucidly and with an appreciation for the complexity of individual character that belies his image as the prototype for Dr. Strangelove.

Characteristically Kissinger's comments seem most apt when dealing with his counterparts, particularly those on the other side of the negotiating table, even when—as in the case of the "monomaniacal" Le Duc Tho or the "condescending" Indira Gandhi—the individual is perceived as fundamentally unlovable. His treatment of Nixon is neither defensive nor dispassionate: an "oddly vulnerable . . . lonely and tormented man" who shrank from personal confrontations and sought to balance an image of toughness with a "vista of promise . . . a new international order that would reduce lingering enmities, strengthen friendships, and give new hope to emerging nations." (page 1476). Kissinger does, to be sure, bowdlerize his Nixon a bit: that statesman's remarks about "State department jerks" and "lily-livered Ambassadors from our so-called friends in the world" are relegated to footnotes. Nevertheless his portrait is probably the best we will ever have from an intimate of the American Tiberius.

Less edifying, or at any rate less novel, is Kissinger's treatment of the broad themes of change in international affairs in his term in authority. The continuing Cold War confrontation, the growing Russian military threat, the need for American "credibility" to deter Soviet agression and foster detente—these are the pervasive themes of this volume. The rapprochement with China, the Bangladesh crisis, "Black September" in Jordan are all developments knit into the broader fabric of Soviet-American relations. Kissinger does pay attention to the growing strains in the Atlantic alliance and the difficult adjustments with the Japanese, but these matters are treated episodically, their long term implications neglected. The concerns of underdeveloped nations and the emerging nationalism of these regions does not figure in his account, save when these issues impinge upon the changing structure of East-West accords. His gratuitous defense of the Shah of Iran as "that rarest of leaders, an unconditional ally . . . one whose understanding of the world situation enhanced our own" (page 1261) reflects Kissinger's vantage point. Could this be the same Shah whose quest for oil revenues would shortly transform the distribution of global economic power, divide the Western allies, and stimulate a decade of bickering between industrial and non-industrial nations over the division of world resources?

Kissinger is clearly in his element when playing a complex Great Power game with Russia and China, and his account of these developments is as clear as his diplomacy was dexterous. But there is less evidence of his understanding of the new economic and political pressures in the world: the

multinational corporations, the commodity rich nations, the amalgam of religious and political zealotry that are features of our current international nightmare. These problems he ignored until overtaken by them in 1973-76, and the record indicates he coped with them with far less finesse. We must await his next volume ("Foggy Bottom Years"?) to determine if Kissinger has been able to incorporate these unanticipated experiences into his view of the world.

Dalhousie University *Graham D. Taylor*

Sartre's Theory of Literature. By Christina Howells. London: The Modern Humanities Research Association, 1979. Pp. viii, 251. $31.50 (U.S.). Paper.

In 1954 Irving Howe noted with distress the "appalling" desire of a generation of graduate students to be "critics." Their criticism would not, however, accompany the "writing of poetry or the changing of the world or the study of man and God." No, they would be, instead, "just critics—as if criticism were a *subject*, as if one could be a critic without having at least four non-literary opinions." Among those quondam graduate students are to be found a number of the luminaries of contemporary criticism. But they have abandoned their "new critical" fathers for Parisian godfathers and have instilled in a new generation of graduate students a much more subtle notion than their fathers had of the self-referentiality of literature. And they have provided their students with more complex tools for examining the self-enclosure of the literary Text. Indeed, that latter word, in the course of twenty-five years, has seen its initial letter rise from lower to upper case.

Among the Parisian godfathers of contemporary "literary theory" we will not find Jean-Paul Sartre. He was never "just" a critic. His effort to align existential freedom with Marxism was part of an effort to "change the world." And while he made no study of God, he did propose an ontology in which Man is the being who aspires to divinity! For Sartre literature could never be limited to the "literariness" and fictiveness that define the interests of the semiotics, structuralism, and deconstructionism that have displaced the critical idiom of an earlier generation. Far from being self-referential, literature was, for Sartre, an act of *dévoilement*, a disclosure of the world.

Christina Howells' superb monograph reminds us how far Sartre's criticism was from the textual fetishism that is now *à la mode* in Paris and the major universities of this continent. At the same time, she makes clear that Sartre was profoundly aware of the "*Critique du Signifiant*" and that he managed to incorporate much of it into his own distinctive view of "*la réalité humaine*" and the literary activity that reveals the "lived experience" of this

reality. One of the virtues of her study is its limited focus, its strict concern with the "theory of literature" that emerges in Sartre's work from his essays of the 1930s, through the period of "committed literature" of the post-war years, to the studies of Genet and Flaubert of the 1950s and the late 1960s.

She outlines with great care the principal concerns that guided Sartre's theorizing about literature—his distinctions between "perception" and "imagination," between "terrorism" and "rhetoric," and between *"signification"* and *"sens"*—and does not allow herself to be tempted into the dangerous waters of *Being and Nothingness* and *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. She is not, however, philosophically naive, and when it is necessary to clarify Sartre's critical activity by reference to those philosophical works she does so with a sure hand. Indeed, she is particularly effective in detailing the importance for Sartre's criticism of his *L'Imaginaire* of 1940. But one regrets her linguistic purism and her refusal to offer translations for her citations from Sartre. Nor does she seem to be concerned with the linguistic nuances that would justify her refusal.

On the other hand, her book benefits from her familiarity with nineteenth-century French literature (indispensable in a study of a man who wrote on Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Flaubert) and with contemporary French criticism. In her chapter on Sartre's *Baudelaire*, for example, she outlines the importance for Sartre's thinking of French Romantic aesthetics and the extent to which he and Baudelaire shared a Romantic frame-of-reference. This is no minor point, for Sartre's book has often been attacked as a "reduction" (the tic-like response of "just critics" to a critic who has more than four non-literary opinions) of the poet to the categories of Sartrean ontology.

But one regrets that Howells did not concern herself with Sartre's comment of 1969 that *Baudelaire* was "very inadequate" and "extremely bad." She may have assumed that this dismissal merely indicated the progressive complexity of an enterprise in which *Saint Genet* represented an advance over *Baudelaire* and in which the massive study of Flaubert, *L'Idiot de la Famille*, represented an advance over *Saint Genet*. My own impression is, however, that Sartre meant that *Baudelaire* was schematic and facile. Howells notes that the famous *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?* of 1948 was marred by a polemical zeal that led Sartre to simplify important and complex views of language he had worked out in earlier essays on Blanchot, Bataille, and Parain. It seems likely that *Baudelaire* suffered equally from Sartre's post-war polemics.

But Howells has performed a major service by her detailed exposition of the formidable *L'Idiot de la Famille* and by her careful analysis of Sartre's response to his structuralist adversaries. The competition had improved since the late 1940s and Sartre could not get away with mere polemics. Howells makes clear that Sartre borrowed considerably from the linguistic theories so important to structuralism and that he adapted his borrowings to his growing emphasis on the manner in which human freedom is alienated. She concen-

trates on Sartre's adaptation of the Lacanian view that man "is spoken" by language and on his increasing willingness to incorporate into his thought the "facts" of psychoanalysis while rejecting the "mechanistic mythology" of Freudian theory. But if Sartre's later thought pays greater tribute than did *Being and Nothingness* to the limitations on freedom, Howells never forgets that Sartre is the incorrigible defender of that freedom and the proponent of the view that man can *be spoken* only to the degree that he first speaks in freedom. Her analysis of Sartre's view of language is indispensable in this regard, outlining as it does his insistence that literature seeks always to reveal the lived experience of the self, and his extraordinary analysis of Flaubert's effort to forge a style that would not only communicate the singularity of his life but, across that singularity, the universal experience of his age.

Howells also reminds us of Sartre's old distinction between "terrorists" and "rhetoricians." The Terrorists believe that language can never be adequate to the thought it seeks to express. In their frustration they become mesmerized by the play of language itself, by the *signifiant*, not the *signifié*. Rhetoricians, on the other hand, are linguistic optimists who refuse to be cowed by language and who believe (with Sartre) that *"La Vérité est toujours 'disable'."* They would applaud Sartre's effort, in the *Flaubert*, to answer the question, "What can we know about a man today?"

Those who seek an answer to the "critical terrorists" who insist, today, that literature turns endlessly in the orbit of its literariness would be wise to consult Howells' book. It will not do to cite, against Lacan, Kristeva, and Derrida, the achievements of Johnson, Arnold, and Leavis. The theoretical equipment of Terrorism is too powerful to be overthrown by pious nostalgia. Sartre's is the only modern critical enterprise that can match in power Terrorist theories of literature. Humanists will have to risk its rigours and its refusal to divorce literary criticism from those bodies of knowledge (philosophical, sociological, psychoanalytical) that help us to know what a man is. But the disgruntled critics who are now whining about the influence ("over our *best* students") of the Parisian godfathers will have to overcome their ridiculous and anti-intellectual obsession with "reductiveness." They will need, that is, to purge themselves of the Terrorist-within-them. Howells will show them that a "theory of literature" that begins, *axiomatically*, with a view of freedom is not reductive. *Vive la Liberté!*

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In Due Season. By Christine van der Mark. Intro. by Dorothy Livesay. Vancouver: New Star Books, 1979. Pp. 372. $14.95. Paper, $6.95.

This book was published first by Oxford University Press (Toronto) in 1947. The novel presents a picture of a rural community in northern Alberta in the thirties. A woman, Lina Ashley, struggles to survive on an isolated homestead with only her old father and her young child, Poppy. The old man dies, and though Lina's husband returns briefly, he only fathers another child, and Lina must resume her solitary but stubborn struggle to make the land yield her a living: "But in due season, we shall reap, if we faint not."

Lina does not faint, but she becomes grim and unforgiving. She loses her sense of community as she deals harshly with a neighbour whose land she wants, and she loses contact with her daughter who turns for comfort, and eventually for love, to Jay Baptiste, a Metis. Poppy runs off to the bush with Jay, and Lina rejects her second child because of the role he has taken in the affair. Lina's legacy is the land, "tranquil, beautiful, utterly still," for which she has sacrificed everything. The day is sullen as the book opens; as it closes, Lina, who has systematically repressed her feelings, crouches and begins "mechanically to milk."

The first half of the book achieves a certain dramatic tension arising out of Lina's struggle to establish herself on the land, but once her success is assured, this clear focus blurs. Poppy's story could have provided material for a strong continuation of the narrative line, but as the child matures she weakens rather than evolves as a character, and the relationship between Poppy and Jay is given only sketchy treatment. What is emphasized in the second half of the narrative is local colour. Attention shifts to the community at Bear Claw, *e.g.*, Miss Walker's school, Mrs. Howe's store, a revival meeting, a Valentine dance, a court case involving a Cree Indian, etc. Though vividly presented, this material is extrinsic to the main narrative. Livesay's suggestion in the introduction that the book has "sociological as well as literary significance" raises reader expectations that are bound to be disappointed. It would be fairer to say that the book has some literary value, but that its significance is principally sociological.

Livesay also praises the book for being "one of the first, if not the first, Canadian novel wherein the plight of the Native Indian and the Metis is honestly and painfully recorded." Others have made similar comments. Though there is some painful recording of fact (all the Two Knives children have lice), van der Mark romantically stresses the Indians' "free primitive movements, the firelight playing on happy faces. . . ." In fact, Lina's husband, Sim, is inspired to leave her a second time by the sight and sound of the "strange beating and singing" at the Indian encampment. When Poppy flees with Jay, he has become a romantic figure in a beautiful white embroidered parka.

An earlier book which presents a sharp contrast to *In Due Season* is Hubert Evans' British Columbia novel *The New Front Line* (1927). In a reversal of van der Mark's approach, Evans romanticizes white pioneer labour on the land and treats the Indians realistically. Van der Mark deserves credit for making clear that what is pioneering for one ethnic group is displacement for another. Too often the pioneer experience is presented as if the native peoples are invisible, but *In Due Season* does sometimes sound like *The Noble Savage*.

Van der Mark's novel was worth reprinting, but given its limitations, no very large audience for the work is likely to develop. It will be of greatest interest to specialists in Canadian studies and Canadian women's studies. The author's daughter, Dorothy Wise, contributes a useful afterword about her parent to this re-issue. Van der Mark, who died in 1969, published another novel set in Alberta called *Honey in the Rock* (1966).

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