

Book Reviews

Criticism in the Wilderness: The Study of Literature Today. By Geoffrey H. Hartman. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1980. Pp. xi, 323. Cloth \$18.00

To keep a poem in mind is to keep it there,
not to resolve it into available meanings.

G. Hartman

For well over a decade now there has been a refusal by both Anglo-American and Continental critics to recognize the methods and theory they each have in common. Instead, each accuses the other of an intellectual terrorism which ignores the essential philosophical and moral issues of literature. *Criticism in the Wilderness* is one of the most important books to have come out of this controversy because in it a pre-eminent American critic tries to heal that division. Although Hartman is concerned with the "unwillingness of most Anglo-American critics to engage Continental thought," the book is primarily a re-evaluation of the theoretical importance of such Anglo-American thinkers as Carlyle, Emerson, Frye, Leavis, Bloom, Burke, Eliot, Richards. Still, readers who prefer books of theoretical speculation to have a narrative or polemical development will find that this book remains resolutely unsystematic. The chapters are random; the positions he takes undermine one another. It is important to note that this apparent disarray embodies the profound mistrust of monistic approaches which unifies the book.

Hartman's resistance to method reflects his painful despair at his ambiguous role as an academic preserving literacy in a world which destroys the very potency of language. Put another way, academic critics, whose main interest has been pedagogy, have turned Matthew Arnold's pessimist assessment of both literature and criticism into a dogma which subordinates criticism to literature and divides literature from any philosophical discourse which would connect literature to its vital cultural function. At the same time, mass-media freezes language into cliché emptied of vitality by the necessity that all content be instantly accessible. In the face of that crisis, the New Critical drive to comprehensibility, which dominates our pedagogical methods, betrays the uncanny to the canny, the sacred to the mundane, and

silences the answerability of literature. The result is that literary studies have become increasingly isolated from an educational system devoted to preparing students for technological survival. To reverse this trend, Hartman seeks a critical style more "answerable" to both literature and its students.

No one could be more sensitive than Hartman to the contradictions inherent in the problem he articulates: if literacy is to remain potent, it must be accessible; if literature submits to accessibility, it loses its potency. This dilemma accounts for the difficulty of Hartman's style and the complexity of his content. He must avoid formulating another theory while shifting our habits of reading away from Practical methods towards a style which will "undo previous understanding" and "resists formally the complicity with closure implied by the wish to be understood." It is precisely Continental modes of analysis which offer the most rigorous models for such resistance. Hartman's favorite example is Derrida's *Glas*—a book where Derrida cuts-up with Hegel, Genet, and his own Husserlian discipline to portray a mind actively engaging the structures which have formed it. While such extremes of resistance will hardly seem "answerable" to most of our needs, Derrida, nevertheless, demonstrates an attitude to reading which is both exigent and open. Criticism becomes answerable when it ceases to undermine the subversive force of literature and becomes, with literature, a form of resistance to technology by fortifying the inaccessible strongholds of language. Criticism is therefore a primary literary text which does not "fix the relation between critical and creative . . . but [which] disclose[s] the variety and inadequacy of that relation in a radical way."

Hartman's own strategy for such resistance is the "indeterminacy" of his own reflective style. Indeterminacy is an ironic mode of reading which refuses the "reduction to meaning" by occupying, simultaneously, multiple theoretical positions. Where the positions collide, the potency of language explodes. Indeterminacy defamiliarizes reading by introducing a kind of theoretical "stutter" which impedes the smooth reading of a poem and gets us caught against the language as if it were not already assimilated to a system of received ideas. It requires an intellectual posture which continuously undermines its own footing so that a poem remains a perpetual potent repository of the richness of language. The results of this strategy in *Criticism in the Wilderness* are some startling revisions of works by poets such as Yeats, Blake, Dickinson, Beaudelaire, Williams.

Though most of its assumptions about the variety of relations between texts are informed by Hartman's knowledge of Continental thinkers—Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Hegel, Derrida, Lacan, Barthes—the book is free from the specialized vocabulary we associate with these thinkers. It is this that Hartman's refusal to amplify the theoretical basis of his thought counts for the difficulties reviewers have had understanding either his claim of literary status for criticism or the dialectical basis of "indeterminacy." Nevertheless, reference to such vocabulary often alienates those Anglo-

American critics who habitually resist such theoretical and abstract terminology. Indeed, the real strength of the book lies in Hartman's demonstration that profound understanding of multiple layers is possible by adhering to the concrete-ness of poetic language. What we confront is its very materiality and not preconceived theoretical constructs.

Answerable style, then, is for Hartman a matter of moral commitment to the life of the mind. His methods introduce a stutter to our own reading which sends us back, through the density of his style, to those philosophical texts the Anglo-American institution has ignored. That is why he dazzles us with the precision and play of his language while forcing us to struggle through the thickets of his own encyclopedic understanding. He is variously erudite and witty, profound and playful, reflective and iconoclastic because the only viable position he permits us is vigilant resistance to our own habits of mind. His supple elusions invite participation in an exemplary act of attention which the cultural crisis of our time demands.

University of North Dakota

Kathleen Hulley

Blake and Freud. By Diana Hume George. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1980. Pages 253. \$15.00.

Although many critics have superimposed bits of Freudian terminology on elements of Blake's mythic structure, until now no one has undertaken a sustained comparison of these rival systems so hugely influential on modern thought. Thus Diana Hume George's work, a study long needed, has an importance that transcends its intrinsic merits, though these are substantial. Even where her argument limps or skirts key issues, it has the value of initiating discussion and of spotlighting problematic issues in the topic itself that future criticism can treat with more refined focus.

Blake and Freud is a professedly introductory study of its dual subject, and it possesses precisely those virtues that an introductory study should have. It is written in a clear, engaging style, it covers the essential points of contact between the Blakean and Freudian systems in accurate, unforced readings, and it steers a course among some fairly controversial issues—particularly that of female sexuality—with admirable tact and a fairness to both sets of theory. The perspective is Blakean but includes a generous admiration of Freud; indeed, "accurate reading of Blake," she insists, "requires acceptance of the axioms of psychoanalysis: full acknowledgement of the range of unconscious thought processes and of the role of sexuality in human personality." (p. 205) In the core of her study, the treatment of Blake's earlier works from *Thel* to *Vaia* as a series of family romances or war-songs of sexuality, George's readings hew closely enough to classical psychoanalytic

theory to please the most scrupulous of orthodox Freudians. This is unquestionably the most valuable and skillfully presented portion of the book (some of the readings—that of *Thel* in particular—I have not seen bettered elsewhere). George achieves a persuasiveness here sufficient to impress on students of Blake the immense resourcefulness of Freud's formulations and to alert Freudians to Blake's uncanny prescience.

This is a book, however, with loose ends and thin spots. The construction is casual: the first chapter advances a revisionary theory of psychoanalysis that the rest of the book fails to demonstrate or even to entertain with any sustained interest; the chapter on Blake's *Milton*, a hurried pedestrian reading, makes little use of Freud and suggests a left-over from an earlier version of this study; the concluding chapters on the issue of femininity are currently pertinent and generally well-argued, but seem misplaced as the culmination of a general book on Blake and Freud. More damaging, there is a certain glibness in the way George treats important theoretical issues. This is particularly apparent in Chapter One, a general comparison of Freud and Blake, where fundamental ontological, epistemological, and aesthetic questions of the most problematic kind—the nature of reality, illusion, imagination, art—arise without prompting the author to apply any rigor in treating them.

The issues are important. George sees herself in the tradition of the Utopian revisionists of Freud, such as Marcuse and Norman O. Brown, thinkers who want to find a way out of Freud's pessimistic determinism without repudiating psychoanalysis itself. According to George, art is the way out and Blake's thought is the map. In a flimsy sort of way, she attempts to link this notion of salvation through art to psychoanalysis, relying on some of Freud's own observations on art as reconciling the reality and the pleasure principles, but essentially the notion is asserted, not argued, or if argued at all, in vague terms. Her refusal to grapple seriously with Freud here is perhaps tactical; the argument may be beyond her present powers. A deeper reason lies in her assumption of Blake's axioms as her own. In her view, Blake accurately perceives the Freudian psyche with all its conflicts, but he perceives it from the liberty of a privileged perspective, as if it were an enclosed globe he holds in his hands. Thus George tends to exempt the axioms of Blake's thought from the kind of critical probing that she feels no hesitation in applying to Freud. That these axioms—the reality of Eternity, the primacy of Imagination, the repudiation of empirical nature—are easily vulnerable to a reductive Freudian account she knows perfectly well, since she has read *Civilization and Its Discontents*, but the issue is avoided. Even where Blake is seen at his most uncongenial, the partiality comes through. Thus in her chapters on feminine psychology, she considers Freud's views on women with judiciousness and respect but sees them ultimately as a sign of his limitation; on the other hand, Blake's unmistakable misogynist outbursts are explained away as a problem of figurative language: "woman" merely

equals nature. George does not ask herself what it means to hate a feminized nature in the first place. Freud could have supplied some handy answers without much difficulty. George's inability or unwillingness to think through the intellectual implications of her own arguments is, it seems to me, the greatest shortcoming of her book.

Blake criticism has always shown a tendency to proclaim their man as a major thinker while shying away from subjecting his ideas to the kind of searching critique that major systems of thought (Freud's for example) are able to sustain. This is no service to Blake, indeed it has retarded the spread of his intellectual authority beyond the circle of his professed admirers. Between Blake and Freud there is an ontological gulf, and the ground of each ontology, its philosophical presuppositions, its credibility and its usefulness, need to be thoroughly established before anyone can form a reasonable judgment of the value of Blake's thought in comparison with Freud's. One can hazard a guess that George has undertaken her project somewhat prematurely and that several more years of reading and reflection before publishing might have made this a more distinguished and enduring book. But we must admire so brisk an adventure on perilous terrain, an attempt long overdue. It is a start that will give the work of later critics in the field, or perhaps later work of her own, greater strength.

University of Toronto

V.A. De Luca

October Winds. By Liliane Welch. Fredericton, N.B.: Fiddlehead Poetry Books, 1980. Pp. 77.

Liliane Welch is a captivating Maritime poet with a dual cultural heritage. Born in Luxembourg, educated in Europe and the United States, she has taught French literature at Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, since 1967. Prolific in her adopted language, English—her last two books came out within a year of each other—she moves adeptly and engagingly from European to Canadian culture and back.

October Winds is the more structured of the two collections. In addition to lyric poems, it contains two prose pieces, a Preface and a concluding essay: "Mountain Climbing—Reading—Writing".

The collection is triadic in structure. "October Winds," the first section, affords glimpses of the poet's bleak but beloved Bay of Fundy region. "Night Saints," the second part, comprises a kind of ontological quest, as she describes it. And Part III, "Dark Trumpets," is, as she calls it, "a fantastic autobiography" (p. 6) in which she imagines herself climbing the north face of the Eiger, which she has never done.

The tone of the final essay supports the basic structure of the book with its trinity of mountain climbing, reading, and writing. Her work turns on an

analogy between her vocation and avocation, in which the two ultimately fuse. Part of her charm lies in frankness. In this essay she lays her cards on the table, admits she is arguing from analogy, but that the analogy is deeply rooted in her personal vision. She quotes the guide Lionel Terray that climbers are "les conquérants de l'inutile" (p. 69). Without knowing the context we could easily understand him to be describing the profession of teaching literature—and indeed she quotes Mallarmé on reading as an "exercice." Adventure, discipline, professional, and, yes, even sexual satisfaction are inextricably linked with pride in craftsmanship for both climber and writer. Two of her favorite words seem to be "ascent" and "terror," and they constantly recur both in poems about mountain climbing and about writing.

Poetry itself is viewed as a weapon, "a swift bullet/ striking through the timber" ("Writing," p. 8). Many of her protagonists—"Spinster," "Wife," the housewife in "Winter dream of a Housewife," the "Night Saints"—seek refuge from the winter tedium of small town life in fantasies of sex, of violence, in scotch.

Welch switches adeptly from the self-revelation of the mountain-climbing poems to a whole series of characters in dramatic monologues. I was reminded very strongly of Edgar Lee Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*. In "August," for instance, we encounter the housewife's stored-up resentment of her "fat neighbours," passive members of the consumer society nourished on junk foods (p. 31). There is a terror underlying the placid, frozen, conventional lives of her Sackville villagers: "a witch's sabbath" celebrated in the churches, "sweet blasphemy and/ stoked lust" (p. 17). She associates the churches with a "slow corruption" (p. 18), and the congregation awaits "the Lord's apparition/ in the empty sky" (p. 18). There is a repressed violence in the ghosts haunting Sackville's dump, "stirring dead Acadians" in an evocation of T.S. Eliot's spring rain, "stirring dull roots." The "spat" of an angry couple in a tar-paper shack resonates with "primeval fury" (p. 30). Even the professors at Mount Allison University, where the poet teaches, are not exempt from the cold anger and boredom of the land, as they "think of their colleagues' wives,/ touching their thighs/ and/ plundering the liquor store" (p. 23). As "January howling banged/ down Gaspé" the vulnerable landscape mirrors the terrified soul of its inhabitants. The "October Winds" of the title are the harbingers of the disasters of winter.

Despite the emphasis on climbing, stress, terror, adventure, Welch combines these with a delicacy of touch and perception that refines and subtilizes them. She is as fond of closed settings—"Ghosthouse," rooms, and caves—as of the great outdoors, but always seems fascinated by the windows, sometimes broken, that unite interior and exterior and perhaps serve as two-way reflecting mirrors. Images of "creamy milk" (p. 9) or of bread likened to "blond flesh" about to be bedded (p. 10) attempt to transcend the gulf between the sexes.

It should be interesting to see where Welch's poetry goes from here. She is evidently reaching both for tender daily detail and for transcendence. She has chosen a deliberate provincial-universal dialectic. I am not sure, however, that her subtended targets of the "consumer way of life" (p. 5) or "our contemporary industrial society" (p. 74) can or should be so easily dismissed. Perhaps in future she will articulate a third relationship: self-nature-society.

York University

Hédi Bouraoui

The Mad Trapper. By Rudy Wiebe. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980. Pp. 189. \$14.95.

Albert Johnson, the Mad Trapper, isn't a trapper, isn't mad, and isn't even named Albert Johnson. He appears mysteriously on his tiny raft, with his "craggy face" hardening "into a fixed, solid grimace" as he approaches the little Arctic settlement of Fort MacPherson. From the first, he arouses uneasiness, as his unreasonable rage, his "fierce, suppressed fury", fills the Indians with apprehension, and they have secret thoughts about the wendigo, the devil spirit that takes people over and makes them unkillable. At the same time that Johnson is making his appearance wrapped in his unapproachable angry aloofness, the man who is to be his chief antagonist, Corporal "Spike" Millen, laughs, dances, chats and chaffs with natives, trappers, and traders. From the beginning, the conflict of opposites, between the solitary, anti-social Johnson and the generous, warm-hearted Millen, is adumbrated. When Millen and his fellow R.C.M.P. officer (King of the Mounted) arrive at Johnson's half-buried cabin to question him about his unprovoked springing of Nersyoo's trap, they see smoke but get no response from the man they know is inside and have to go back for a search warrant. When they return, King, hammering on the door and shouting at the silence of the cabin, is shot and badly wounded. The hunt is on, a hunt that ends with the death of Johnson and of his chief hunter, Spike Millen.

Since we are not allowed into the cabin any more than the police are, we are not told what Johnson was thinking when he sent the 30-30 bullet crashing through his cabin door. But we have been shown Johnson's anger at King's persistent questions, and we do overhear Johnson's chanting to himself the creed he has accepted: "Never smile at a woman. Call no man your friend. If you trust anybody, you'll be sorry . . . you'll be sorry . . . you'll be sorry, in the end". The three faded snapshots he carries with him hint at some of the things that might have driven him to seek solitude in surely one of the most solitary parts of the world. We learn that he has not always been filled with rage at all mankind, but we can only guess at the nature of the betrayals that have eaten away at his humanity. Millen, in his attempt to

break through the barriers erected by Johnson, tells him that most people in the North are like him, escaping from something.

Wiebe's novels so far have all dealt with conflicts between authority and those who cannot accept that authority, which may be that of the Mennonite church, or the white man's law of rules and regulations and conventions, or any other authority imposed upon an unwilling individual or group of individuals. Johnson fits into the pattern; all he wants is to be left completely alone. His act of springing Nersyoo's trap seems to have been intended to indicate to the Indian trapper that he is not to invade Johnson's privacy again. People get you into trouble, stay clear of them and the cops won't have any cause to come snooping around. But they do, and authority in the shape of Millen and King and their dog teams invades the remote world Johnson must have thought was safe from all that. Millen, even though he is the representative of order and authority, is himself caught by external forces that shatter the relatively free world to which he has escaped in order to regain some sense of personal dignity after the routine paper work he hates, his posing in red-coated splendour for rich camera-toting tourists, and the hateful and somehow degrading job of herding the hungry into orderly soup lines. It is, after all, the winter of 1931-32.

The manhunt gets out of Millen's control as his superiors send in "A goddamn army!" complete with dynamite and radio operators. In what Millen sees as a further dehumanizing of the whole affair, nearly as bad as Johnson's denial of his kinship to other men, he too takes on some of the characteristics of the man they are all hunting. He becomes almost as silent, grim, obsessed with the chase, almost as bitter at his part in the whole sordid business as is Johnson. Millen's anger seems to be directed at the inevitable loss of his own humanity as he pursues the man whose denial of humanity has set off a chain of events that involves everybody in the North, as well as in the rest of the country. His bitterness increases as he is forced to use the machinery he wanted to avoid—the dynamite, the radio and Wop May's plane. In some strange way he and Johnson developed a silent sort of understanding; the hunter and the hunted change places and at the end both men take on both roles in the inevitable ending of the hunt.

A long time ago, when I was very young, I read and wept over *Krag, the Kootenay Ram*, the Ernest Thompson Seton story, in which Scotty MacDougall the hunter relentlessly follows Krag until he finally kills him after a chase lasting several months. Then Scotty waits in his lonely cabin for what he sees as certain to come, Krag's revenge as the spirit of the magnificent ram becomes the hunter and Scotty the victim. During the hunt, Krag sometimes seems to wait for Scotty to get started on cold mornings and ever comes back to see what is keeping him. The strange communion between hunter and hunted in *The Mad Trapper* reminded me of Krag and Scotty Johnson, like Krag, seems to wait around for his pursuers, playing grin games with them from time to time, games that Millen must react to. When

read about Krag, I knew how the hunt had to end, but I kept hoping that something would miraculously save him. From the beginning of *The Mad Trapper*, we know that Johnson will eventually be killed, and we suspect that Spike Millen must die with him. Perhaps we don't much care about Johnson's death, which at times he seems to be seeking, but we wish that Spike might somehow break through Johnson's shell to find something human there, something that would allow at least Millen to survive. At the same time, we know that the ending is inevitable, but we don't always like to accept the inevitable.

In *The Temptations of Big Bear* and *The Scorched-Wood People*, Wiebe deals with historical figures, closely following the known facts and events of the past, but adding conversations, meditations, inner thoughts and conflicts, and interior monologues that might possibly have taken place. He is not a historian, however, and his novels go beyond history to create complex, believable and often tortured and confused human beings. Occasionally (as for example the dubious historical presence of Gabriel Dumont at Fort Garry in 1870, or the secret meeting of Big Bear, Crowfoot, Sitting Bull and Dumont in Big Bear's camp) the demands of the fiction override the need to be completely tied to verifiable facts. In *The Mad Trapper*, Wiebe gives the enigmatic Albert Johnson an inner life and describes in detail his method of "housekeeping" that might or might not have been true of the historical Johnson. I don't know if the real Wop May was very much like Wiebe's characterization of him, and nobody can know if Wiebe's mad trapper is much like the historical figure. But who cares? What really matters here is the work of fiction that has used the raw material of a part of the folk history of the Canadian North (I remember having to listen to umpteen stanzas, sung by someone who couldn't sing, of "The Ballad of Albert Johnson"). Perhaps certain incidents and certain characters are not strictly according to the official version, but by concentrating on the fascinating struggle between the main pair of opponents and pointing out the relationship of the hunter-hunted characters, Wiebe presents us with a great adventure story with heroic figures locked in a duel to the death.

Dalhousie University

Allan Bevan

The Berlin Secession. Modernism and Its Enemies in Imperial Germany. By Peter Paret. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1980. Pp. 269, \$17.50.

This is a story about art and politics. The fine arts, in nineteenth-century Germany were extensively dependent on the state. In Wilhelmine Berlin two organizations dominated the artistic scene: the Royal Academy of the Arts

and the *Verein Berliner Künstler*. The former was an agency of the Prussian Ministry of Culture and Education, the latter an association of private painters but closely aligned with the Academy and the state. The Prussian state, guided by a sense of obligation to enhance culture, offered fellowships, commissions, and teaching appointments. But patronage also meant conforming to traditional aesthetic concepts.

The most successful proponent of traditionalism in the arts in Prussia was Anton von Werner. Werner was an accomplished artist and an effective administrator. He had been elected chairman of the *Verein Berliner Künstler* and was head of the Institute for Fine Arts. Politically astute, he managed to be on good terms with emperors William I, Frederick III and William II—an amazing personal triumph. Furthermore, he pursued a policy in tune with the nationalistic tenor of the times. His "interest was not with the great talents but with the mass of painters and sculptors, whose condition he tried to improve." (p. 16) These he sought to unite on behalf of the nation. Art was to be a force in defense of the status quo in German society. Werner's master, William II, certainly believed in the political power of art. William shared the conservative tastes of the majority of his countrymen. Art, he believed, must elevate; political art "must convey a message of unquestioning loyalty, pride, power and assertive self-confidence." (p. 26) Art must please the individual and stabilize society. The emperor's pugnacious insistence on this principle and his dislike of diversity and modernity were to politicize the arts in Imperial Germany to an unprecedented degree at the turn of the century.

Not all Germans shared the tastes and principles of William and Werner. Throughout Germany and other parts of Europe protests arose against parochial academic art. In Vienna (1897) and Munich (1892) independent-minded painters had freed themselves from the restrictions of official standards by setting up their own organizations (secessions). These were elitist although mediocrities were not excluded. All styles and themes were tolerated while foreign art and artists were both welcomed and espoused. Above all the secessions favored exhibitions smaller in scope but higher quality than was normal. While the secessions had much in common each was uniquely dependent upon personalities and local circumstances. Particular concern is with the Berlin Secession which was formed in 1898 and had its first showing in 1899.

The two secessions which had the greatest impact on German art were Vienna and Berlin; they were significantly dissimilar. In Vienna, diversity and modernity in art were not considered by court and government to be challenges to the political and social status quo; in Berlin they were. In the Prussian capital the secession "breathed an atmosphere in which aesthetic differences turned almost as a matter of course into political and even ideological confrontations." (p. 37) However, Berlin Secessionist art was not political. Compared to the Viennese Secession it lacked stylistic unity. T

Viennese were concerned with the "improvement of design in everyday life—public buildings, posters, furniture", the Berliners were "preoccupied with individual excellence." (p. 37) The Viennese sought to teach and uplift and improve society; the Berliners, less ambitious or, if you will, more realistic, merely sought to expose the public to the best in German and foreign art.

Walter Leistikow and Max Liebermann were the leaders of the Berlin Secession. Although among the most talented of their generation in Germany neither attained international stature. Organizational support and good advice was provided by the cousins Bruno and Paul Cassirer, patrons of arts and letters and owners of a publishing house and an art gallery. Association with the Cassirers proved singularly successful. The secession soon surpassed the traditional salon. Many well educated Germans respected its excellence and progressive stance. But while Liebermann and other secessionists espoused diversity and change their tolerance of new styles was not unlimited. They accepted new members such as Lyonel Feiniger, Wassily Kandinsky, Ernst Barlach, Emil Nolde and Christian Rohlf's but their response to post-impressionist art was ambiguous if not at times hostile. These expressionists contributed to the break-up of the Berlin Secession by reinforcing personal differences within the group and, even more importantly, by challenging the *Weltanschauung* of the secession founders. Liebermann, Leistikow, Slevogt, Corinth and other members of the founding generation had been optimistic liberals. The newcomers "emphasized elements of disruption, illness and crisis." (p. 201) In 1913 the Berlin Secession broke up. For fourteen years it had played a crucial role in the development of modern German art—a surprisingly long lifespan for an organization of artists.

Paret's well written account not only describes the rise and fall of the Berlin Secession but places the arts into the German cultural and political context. The major theme of the book, as the subtitle suggests, is the relationship between art and politics in Wilhelmine Germany. The secession was not a political association but it was treated as such. Why? For many Germans the secessionists were dangerous because they threatened to upset the precarious balance between tradition and modernity which characterized Imperial Germany. No other European society of the time was so agitated by the tensions between progress and tradition. Germany led the world in technological and scientific innovation. The German Social Democratic party was the largest and most modern of European political parties. Yet this highly industrialized nation was led by a feudal lord unfettered by constitutional restraints and a Junker and bourgeois elite strenuously determined to avoid democratization. The Berlin Secession thus touched a raw nerve in German society by challenging the fragile status quo. Although German society was more liberal and pluralistic than generally assumed, many Germans feared diversity, individualism and dissent from tradition and community. By setting out on its own the secession had destroyed the unity of the

artistic community in Berlin and had snubbed the emperor and the state who traditionally patronized the academy and the *Verein*. Furthermore, the secession although largely apolitical, still offended by occasionally resorting to working-class themes or even by simply avoiding commitment to the dominant political principles of the nation.

If any one style was favored by the secessionists it was impressionism. But impressionism was modern; it presented to many a distorted reflection of reality. More important, it was of alien origin and threatened the national community. Yet it would be simplistic to assume that all Germans opposed modernism: "It was not so much the comprehensiveness of the opposition to modernism as the exceptional intensity and recklessness of what opposition there was that constitutes the truly significant force in the Wilhelmine era, both at the time and in its influence on the future" (p. 90). Nor was modernism always the offending issue. Some artists such as Emil Nolde managed to be both modern and virulently nationalistic. In his case the latter more than compensated for the former.

Paret's analysis of the opposition to the Berlin Secession is thorough, interesting and persuasive. He explains well why a nervous leadership, xenophobes, anti-Semites, and ultra-nationalists found this artistic movement threatening. These fears were irrational and completely unjustified but they were symptomatic of the troubles besetting Imperial Germany. Paret's book is an excellent contribution to the cultural history of pre-1914 Germany although a comprehensive account still needs to be written. The book is handsomely printed and contains some, but not enough, samples of Berlin Secessionist art.

St. Thomas University

Juergen Doerr

The Poetry of Nature. By W.J. Keith. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980. Pp. 219. \$20.00.

In 1936, Joseph Warren Beach published a large and famous book called *The Concept of Nature in Nineteenth-Century English Poetry*. As its title implies, Beach's book was mainly concerned with what poets thought about nature, and especially with the transition from the idealized nature of pre-Darwinian pantheism to presumably more realistic twentieth-century versions of nature red in tooth and claw (a phrase which, of course, antedates *Origin of Species*). At the end of his book, Beach gave the impression that poetry about nature had become an extinct species. Twentieth-century poets knew too much about nature to be taken in by it, he seemed to think; positive feelings about nature could result only from naive credulity.

As W.J. Keith shows in this rather more modest study, poetry about nature remains prominent in English literature down to the present. Nature

is the abiding substratum of our lives; the demise of romantic pantheism killed one approach to the subject, not the subject itself. Keith's main interest is not poets' ideas about—or even relations to—nature, but rather the poetic techniques through which, from Wordsworth through Hardy to R.S. Thomas, they have embodied the relations between man and the nonhuman physical world. He is particularly fascinated by point of view, by poets' creation of spokesmen whose involvement in the rural world is greater than their own.

On the basis of these concerns, Keith posits a tradition of English nature poetry that derives from Wordsworth. Every chapter after the one on Wordsworth begins with a section on its subject's debts to that dominant figure (there are chapters on Clare, Barnes, Hardy, Frost, Edward Thomas, and three contemporary poets). The links between Wordsworth and his successors, however, are the weakest part of the book's thesis. Like most Victorian and modern poets, Keith thinks of nature as the country, a place remote from typical modern life. While Wordsworth was also primarily a rural poet, his deepest concern was not country life in itself but the mutual interpenetration of timeless physical nature and the maturing mind, something Keith underemphasizes in talking about him. Nature for Wordsworth is a living presence, not a background. Where nature ends and man-as-something-else begins is never quite clear in his best poems—unlike, for example, in Frost's, where (as Keith points out) the boundary is often literally a wall. By slighting *The Prelude* (which he surprisingly quotes in its 1850 version), Keith oversimplifies Wordsworth and his relation to later poetry. It may be that later poets also oversimplified Wordsworth; but it seems to me that Keith's central emphasis on technique has led him to assert a tradition of nature poetry where it might be more accurate to see some varieties, more or less related, of poetry about rural life.

That difficulty aside, Keith provides a fine analysis of how poets in an urbanizing age have written about the lives of rural people who are generally less sophisticated than they. The best chapters seem to me to be those on Clare, Barnes, and Frost, although a good case could be made for the final section on contemporary poetry of nature. Keith gives the only convincing justification I have ever seen for Barnes' decision to use Dorset dialect in most of his poetry. Here the concern with point of view amply vindicates itself.

"In a century whose dominant symbol is the waste land," Keith says near the end, "poetry that persists in looking towards a natural world still undeveloped and unpolluted will inevitably, if it wishes to avoid sounding ludicrously irrelevant, adopt the hesitant rhythm and the minor key." Is it inevitable, or is it a complicated misadventure of literary history? The primacy of the metropolis, so obvious in the days of Eliot and Pound, now begins to look like a delusion of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In any case, Keith gives us some excellent reasons for thinking that

English nature poetry since the death of Wordsworth has been much more vigorous and important than is often believed, and remains so. I should add that *The Poetry of Nature* is a pleasure to read; it is smoothly written without the modish jargon that clogs and disfigures so much literary criticism today. (Keith doesn't even feel it obligatory to refer to poems as *texts*.)

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Christopher Clausen

Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, The Modernist as Fascist. By Frederic Jameson. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979. Pp. 185. \$11.95 U.S.

Criticism should be partial, passionate, and political, that is to say written from an exclusive point of view, but the point of view that opens the most horizons.

—Baudelaire

"I am not a politician but an artist," Wyndham Lewis announced in *The Jews, Are They Human?* (1939). The comment demarcates precisely one of the key and obviously untenable positions of modernism: that the artist, by electing to address only the formal and aesthetic function of his practice, can achieve a neutral autonomy, free of political dependency and ideological determination. This position is not one that Lewis can assume even though, in his late work *The Writer and the Absolute* (1951), he again attempts to lay claim to this aesthetic autonomy in his attack on Sartrean *engagement* and the concept of a political vocation for literature. Lewis's failure to attain this Archimedean stance has not so much to do with his brief flirtation with Nazism—celebrated in the notorious *Hitler* (1931) which, after all, was retracted in his anti-Nazi counterblast, *The Hitler Cult and How it Will End* (1939), but more with the sense that Lewis never really assimilated the stratagems by which avant-garde practice perpetrates the delusion that its operations are executed in a historically and politically neutral space. The polemics of this "lonely old volcano of the Right" were never wholly subsumed by the explosive aesthetic discourse into which they were often very enigmatically inserted.

The latest analysis of the Lewis canon—Frederic Jameson's *Fables of Aggression: Wyndham Lewis, the Modernist as Fascist* addresses the integral relationship between Lewis' art and ideology, and in doing so launches a critical negation of the *idées reçues* of modernism in general. Lewis is an anomaly in the modernist pantheon: at one and the same time the exemplar, practitioner of one of the most powerful of all modernistic styles and an aggressive ideological critic and adversary of modernism itself. Lewis "modernism" as well as his "fascism" may be understood, Jameson claims

as a protest against the reified experience of an alienated social life, in which, against its own will, it remains ideologically locked and which, on the level of aesthetic practice, it reflects and reinforces. This cooptation of an initially revolutionary impulse Jameson identifies as the essential dilemma of modernism which has its affinities in the historical evolution of proto-fascist ideology, whereby an initially strong populist and anticapitalist impulse is gradually readapted to the habits of a petty bourgeoisie.

The study takes as its object what Jameson calls the "political unconscious" in Lewis' work, connecting the findings of technical analysis, psychoanalysis, and traditional as well as modern approaches to ideology. The methodological eclecticism is justified on the grounds that "the discontinuities projected by these various disciplines or methods themselves correspond to objective discontinuities in their object (and beyond that, to the very fragmentation and compartmentalization of social reality in modern times)." The conception of ideology which informs the study Jameson describes as a practical exploration of Althusser's seminal definition of the ideological as "a 'representation' of the Imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence." Althusser's definition of the term ideology approximates very closely what is generally meant by culture. The delineation of the parameters of those overlapping, but not mutually exclusive terms is a volatile theoretical debate within Marxist structuralism. Jameson's failure to address this issue at the outset is the central methodological flaw in this analysis.

Jameson's method of reading through the text, to the world of actuality the literary work represents and reinvents, marks an advance on critical approaches to Lewis—an understanding of the intent or motivation behind the technique reveals more about Lewis' literary *praxis* than has any purely formalistic approach. However, in constructing this new homology, Jameson opens up an old schism—that between form and content, or what Jameson calls variously 'style and narrative' or 'molecular and molar levels'. Jameson is fully aware of this schism and treats it as a 'given' in literary criticism: "Every serious practicing critic knows a secret which is less often publicly discussed, namely, that there exists no ready-made corridor between the sealed chamber of stylistic investigation and that equally unventilated space in which the object of study is reconstituted as narrative structure." Further, he adopts it as an *aesthetic*, that is, he sees his study as the description of and apologia for a new type of discourse: the discontinuous, "schizophrenic" text. Jameson is not alone in this bifurcation of the literary work; he cites as his model the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari—*Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. The methodological premise of this work is part of a postmodernist or "schizophrenic" conception of the literary artifact—now strategically reformulated as "text" or "écriture". This slippery doctrine of "écriture" has, as Roger Shattuck laments, "delivered literature into the hands of linguistics." Barthes states it categorically: "Language is

not the predicate of a subject . . . it is the subject." In so far as Jameson analyzes language as the deposit of ideology, the work is successful, but when he separates language from its narrative context, his analysis runs askew. (In a recent essay in *Social Text*, "Towards a Libidinal Economy of Three Modern Painters" Jameson employs this molar-molecular model in the analysis of paintings—with even less success than it is employed here.) A critical methodology which subjects a work of art to this kind of anatomization is highly problematic and leads, at times, to very bizarre logical cul-de-sacs.

For example, Jameson makes a case for Lewis' "populist" impulse on the basis of his predominant use of metonymy over metaphor. In this he is following Roman Jakobson's theory that the predominance of metonymy underlies and actually predetermines the realistic trend in modern literature and acts as an implicit repudiation of that valorization of metaphor which has been perceived from Aristotle to Proust as the "hallmark of genius," the very essence of the poetic process. "No doubt," Jameson says "the primacy of metaphor is the projection of a literary hierarchy for which poetry and poetic inspiration are felt to be loftier and more noble than the humdrum activity of prose." In Lewis, Jameson argues, metonymy is read against metaphor, as its determinate negation: it thus becomes a sign of the devaluation of inspiration itself and of art language in general. Lewis' sentence production results in metonymic forms and surfaces which Jameson claims "anyone could make up for himself. Nowhere is this clearer than in those idling passages where the voice of metaphor remains silent, and metonymy functions on its own, motor wide open, in a kind of sheerly additive sentence production as accessible to the 'common man' as carpentry or literacy itself."

It is just here that the lack of any clear demarcation between ideology and culture becomes problematic. Lewis' often hastily composed, mechanistic sentence production, copious use of unprivileged sublanguage, and penchant for metonymy over metaphor is quite clearly a challenge to the cult of *belles lettres* and is, as Jameson says, "structurally too scandalous even for the most accommodating Pantheon;" yet the radical activity remains wholly contained within the literary discourse. To make a case for Lewis' 'populist' impulse based on his mode of sentence generation is to reduce to a syllogism the complex relationship between ideology and aesthetic practice, especially when these 'populist' sentence structures go to compose narratives which affirm the supremacy of the artist, illustrate the innate inferiority of certain classes and races of human beings, and propound a blatant and obsessive sexism.

This is not to say that Jameson is oblivious to the implications of these narratives of "rape, physical assault, aggressivity, guilt and immolation," only that he has adopted a critical approach in which the narrative and the style or the molar and the molecular levels can be thought to operate independently of one another. This approach is one half of the structuralist dialectic—the notion that each text is 'spoken' by different discourses in a

social formation, and those discourses will be in tension, opposition, contradiction *within the text*. So the initial analytical objective is not to look for 'totality' and coherence, but to show where the texts break, and then where the discourses confront one another. Jameson analyzes the break, but not the nature or the further synthesis of the confrontation. Despite all of this, and even in part because of it, (the proper approach to paradox is after all to point it out, not explain it away), Jameson's book remains the most provocative study of Lewis to date.

Dalhousie University

Jo-Anna Isaak

Gradations of Grandeur. By Ralph Gustafson. Victoria: Sono Nis Press, 1979. Pp. 74. \$5.95, paper.

Gradations of Grandeur is the distillation of a lifetime's vision, sixty-four poems so finely formed that one can underestimate their worth in the first glance or the second. Together they form a long poem, a unified view of and commentary on civilized man, the sky above and the mud below:

Gradations of grandeur descend
And all is reality, sitting here
In the sun, the mind's convolutions

Proof, accumulations ply on ply
Real as diamonds dug

Gustafson writes about the limitations of organized religion but of the human element transcending "penitential endings": ". . . Still, something wishes/Better . . . Quasimodo ringing/ Bells, Salem done with dunking." He writes about the first principle of love: "Not *cogito: amo ergo sum*"; and he celebrates love in the Hopkins style:

Coitions daredown doter makes
Joy, women glad of sons.
That's natural. So is love.

Human gestures and love do lead "the way to waving heaven," but at the heart of the poet's vision is creative man, his gesture: ". . . lacking/Art, a mess. Art's humanity," the permanence of our temporary selves.

These are poems replete with images of creativity, of the artist as one with the ease and freedom of the natural world, of the genius web of art that captures and connects us all. We are various in our creative talents:

We grab the morning stars or none,
The credit for it and shut up.
Heaven winks or winces or wins.

But there are those glorious moments when ". . . the poem/The whole line is unasked given"; there are those men and women in Gustafson's Valhalla who are granted such moments but who also know "The act only will do" and who ". . . exhaust infinite/Possibilities on acts of becoming": Michelangelo, Chopin, Sappho, "an armless Nova/Scotian who painted with his mouth," and "Joyce, his yes."

Whatever we are or attempt, Gustafson urges us to "Cultivate the nearest garden." It is in our poems, paintings, and most of all, perhaps, in our music that we are so human, so divine. It is in our response to art that we glimpse gradations of grandeur in "The flower in the crevice" and in "configurations of stars". It is through art that Gustafson's vision can join the petals to the planets, the spirit of the wide world to the walked circles of the prison cell. As in Blake, the eye of the beholder touches and is touched by God, though Gustafson's God seems not so much the cause as the effect, the effect achieved for ourselves and others by "Finally that which we do."

This is a book that should stay on the reader's desk to be opened at random on those days when the formless world intrudes or when a vision overwhelms of diamonds forever in the rough. As Gustafson writes,

Imperfection to be the awareness,
If the stone is to be carved, the possession
To be had, of the entrance, the altar.

The implication is that we are all potential artists capable of uttering and sharing our yes. The certainty is that Gustafson has created our world in his own. It is a world worth living in and celebrating. After all,

Angels come down and get into it,
Out of modesty in worn jeans,
That is to say, it sometimes works.

Dalhousie University

J.A. Wainwright

The End of Order: Versailles 1919. By Charles L. Mee, Jr. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1980. Pp. 301.

Few other international diplomatic conferences have had so profound effects as the Paris Peace Conference of 1919. In spite of the importance to this century of this conference and the resulting Versailles Peace Treaty, there has not been a significant recent historical treatment of the subject. If Charles Mee had hoped to fill that void with his new book, *The End of Order: Versailles 1919*, then he clearly missed the mark.

What Mee has produced is a well-edited collection of diary entries that attempts to relate the story of the negotiations that led to the Versailles Treaty through such personalities as British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, French Premier Georges Clemenceau, and American President Woodrow Wilson, who were the leading participants in the negotiations. The above three figures are introduced by the author through vivid accounts of their lives and habits, including such items as Lloyd George's first extra-marital affair three months after his marriage, and the comments that Wilson "had at least one love affair" and that Clemenceau had many "conquests" and an affinity for "younger women and the innocent company of adolescent girls". The author's statement that "Lloyd George, like Wilson—and, for that matter, like Clemenceau, too—behaved toward the world as he behaved toward women", is indicative of the type of book written.

The book does make note of all the significant issues that faced the Conference: reparations, Fiume, Shantung, the League of Nations, the fate of Wilson's fourteen points, and the French occupation of parts of Germany. All explanation of these issues, however, is overshadowed by the author's ability to locate still another diary entry describing one of the participants in an uncomplimentary manner. The important issues discussed at the conference find little room in this book when competing with Lawrence of Arabia's or the Mpret of Albania's conference appearances.

The author, by using disconnected sub-chapters of four or five pages in length, found the appropriate style for the introduction of humorous or scandalous tidbits. Besides discussing the conference and the figures involved there, the author's style permits digressions on Marcel Proust, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Dadaism, with the apparent hope that such detours would establish the atmosphere and indicate the period in which the Conference was held. The negative aspects of the disjointed sub-chapters are that it leaves the reader uncertain of the sequence of events at the Conference and of what the author is really attempting to achieve.

Mee attributes the harshness of the Versailles Treaty with the German people to Clemenceau's ability to seduce Lloyd George into supporting his aims and his ability to neutralize the weak and ineffective Wilson. Given the emphasis of the book on the figures involved in the negotiating process, it is not surprising that the author attributes the treaty results to a test of wills, or that one of the lessons to be learned from Versailles is that the fate of the world could no longer be determined by a few world leaders acting behind closed doors.

Mee submits that the Paris Peace Conference was a failure on almost all issues, most important of which was the failure to create a desperately needed new world order. By attempting to reconstruct the old order of the nineteenth century, the book asserts, the diplomats ensured that world chaos would be "the permanent condition of our century."

The style, tone, and approach of this book is completely different from Mee's successful book, *Meeting at Potsdam* (1975), which examined the conference that established the peace after World War II in a clear, concise manner, without detours into side-issues designed to make the book more attractive to a mass readership. In *Meeting at Potsdam* Mee wrote a book that provided insight into a complicated conference, while keeping the book readable for the general audience. In his newest book, however, the desire for a general readership prevents the author from providing the much needed reinterpretation of the Paris Peace Conference.

Dalhousie University

Ted L. McDorman

A Critique of Film Theory. By Brian Henderson. New York: E.P. Dutton, 1980. Pp. xxii, 233. Paper, \$8.95, \$11.50 in Canada.

Brian Henderson is a respected film theoretician whose most influential work has been a series of articles published in *Film Quarterly* during the last ten years. His writings have been widely anthologised and his first book might well be expected to be an important contribution to film scholarship. Unfortunately, the results are extremely disappointing.

To begin with, the book is not a development of Henderson's previous work but basically a reprint of the earlier articles. There is one new "chapter" and some prefatory material but very little effort has been expended to adapt the articles to their new context. There is no reference to more recent work in the areas with which they deal or to the responses that some of them provoked when originally published. Since the book's title does not present it as a collection of essays, the reader might expect a certain amount of revision or, at least, re-editing—especially considering the price, which is extremely high for a paperback without illustrations or even an index. Although it does avoid the jargon that contaminates much film theory, Henderson's prose style is laboured and imprecise, and there is a number of confusing editorial errors.

Re-reading the articles as a group also reveals some serious problems. Those in Part I deal with 'Classical Film Theory' and focus on the theories of Sergei Eisenstein who stresses the role of montage, André Bazin who privileges deep-focus, long-take construction, and Jean-Luc Godard who (in his writings and films) is seen to synthesize the work of the two earlier theorists. The treatment of Eisenstein and Bazin is sound if rather predictable but some reference to Eisenstein's discussion of montage within the short might have helped to mediate their differences. Part I does end with the two most interesting "chapters" in the book, both of which have the virtue of a

tually dealing with films: 'The Long Take' discusses films by Murnau, Ophuls, and Welles, but disconcertingly fades out before reaching a conclusion; 'Toward a Non-Bourgeois Camera Style' concentrates on Godard's *Weekend* and arrives at the problematic suggestion that a certain kind of tracking shot that avoids a sense of "depth" is essentially "non-bourgeois" regardless, apparently, of context.

Part II is called 'Film Semiotics and Cine-Structuralism' and three of its four "chapters" are devoted to a painstaking assault on the semiotic theories of Christian Metz. Henderson here contrives to make things very difficult for the reader. He discusses at length Metz's attempt to arrive at a system of "cinematographic grammar" in his "Grande Syntagmatique", but Henderson fails to reproduce the diagram which Metz provided to make his discussion (more or less) intelligible. Perhaps he assumes that the reader will be able to refer back to Metz, but then the many long quotations would hardly be necessary. At one point we are confronted with a two-page quotation of an extremely dense passage from Metz followed by Henderson's laconic comment: "This passage is most interesting. There is not time to examine it in detail" (199).

There is not time (or space) enough to examine here the substance of Henderson's critique of Metz in detail. There is much to be said against Metz, and Metz himself has said some of it, but Henderson does little more than to demonstrate at great length that Metz has insufficiently theorised his position (!). Metz is shown to have failed in his attempt to apply the semiological methods of Roland Barthes and is accused of ignoring previous film theory. But Henderson does not take advantage of opportunities to relate Metz's concerns to those of the film theorists discussed in Part I. Thus he does not refer back to Eisenstein in his discussion of Metz's idea that "there can be a semiotic ordering of units that are not themselves semiotic" (181) or when quoting Metz's account of "interior montage" (194).

An unnamed critic is attacked for equating Metz with semiology itself, but this is precisely what Henderson does for more than eighty pages (115). Other semioticians are mentioned, but nowhere is there a suggestion of an alternative semiotics that might transcend Metz's inadequate model. The unnamed critic is in fact James Roy MacBean whose account of Metz's suppression of ideology (included in his *Film and Revolution*) is a lucid contrast to Henderson's pedantic and repetitive exercise.

However, even more serious problems are to be found in the last "chapter" called 'Critique of Cine-Structuralism'. This is billed as a "purge of the empiricist wing of structuralism" (216n) and it begins with what purports to be a critical account of an article by Charles Eckert which in turn discusses several British critics who tried to apply Levi-Strauss's structuralist methods to film. Henderson does expose weaknesses in Eckert's argument (as Eckert has acknowledged), but his own argument is made up largely of a series of quotations and misquotations from Eckert and the critics with whom he

deals. Separating Henderson's points from his borrowings is a major task and the case against auteur-structuralism gets lost in the process. As in much of the rest of the book, the hostile tone and the pedantic concern with detail work against the critical engagement with the argument. This final "chapter" ends with the claim that the British critics of *Screen* have misread *Cahiers du Cinéma's* collective text on John Ford's *Young Mr. Lincoln*, but then refers vaguely to "larger issues" that "require further discussion" (233). The promise (or threat) of "further discussion" is one that recurs throughout the book but the cause of film theory is hardly likely to be advanced unless such discussions can define a radical alternative to the barren investigations undertaken here.

St. Catherines, Ontario

James Leach

Latin America in Its Literature. Edited by César Fernández Moreno, Julio Ortega and Ivan Schulman. New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980. pp. xxv, 356. \$44.50

This critical anthology (one in a series dealing also with Latin American art, architecture and music) is a great disappointment, despite some good insights into Latin American *belles lettres*. It simply tries to do too much, to appeal both to the specialist (who finds the material somewhat general and dated in content) and to the general audience (for whom the repetitive listings are far too dry).

Of course this is a tremendous pity, given the high quality of Latin American literature in recent decades (attested to by Nobel Prizes to Gabriela Mistral, Miguel Ángel Asturias and Pablo Neruda). More recently, in addition to widespread popular acceptance in Latin America, critical acclaim has been bestowed by major literary reviews upon the work of Gabriel García Márquez, Carlos Fuentes, Jorge Luis Borges, Jorge Amado, Mario Vargas Llosa *et al.* Given this dramatic eruption upon the literary scene of "el boom" (as it is affectionately known in Spanish), a more carefully selected nucleus of articles (preferably no more than a dozen solid pieces of work) would have been both preferable and more useful. As things now stand, this patchwork quilt of ideas serves only to confuse the reader, replete as it is with dates, literary movements and titles. (The paper of José Luis Martínez, for instance, is more a shopping list of names and dates than anything else).

The repetitive nature of these papers is annoying, since several of the authors feel obliged to embark upon a long-winded pilgrimage through the various stages of literary development ("criollismo," "indigenismo," "costumbrismo," "modernismo," "naturalismo," etc.), compiling essentially the same lists. This is particularly disappointing since, with a little pruning (or, even better, editorial guidelines) at the outset, such untidy

repetition and constant overlapping could have been avoided, or at least significantly curtailed.

This collection of essays (contributed by leading critics and some well-known writers) is the result of a series of reports prepared on Latin American cultural life for UNESCO between 1968 and 1972. The work is divided into five basic sections ("A Literature in the World," "Ruptures of Tradition," "Literature as Experimentation," "The Language of Literature" and "The Social Function of Literature"), and is rather uneven in quality, with excellent papers by António Cândido, José Miguel Oviedo, Rodríguez Monegal, Xirau and Fernández Retamar, and generally disappointing efforts by José Luis Martínez, Sarduy, Guillermo Sucre, Lezama Lima and Haroldo de Campos.

There are also some typographical errors (e.g. Hanava, p. 21; Cinto Vitier, p. 148, Xavier Villarrutiz, p. 150; *el Hijo Pródigo*, p. 250; Salvador Elizonda and Gustavo Sáinz, p. 315), but a more important criticism revolves around the noticeable *lacunae*. Given the importance of Latin American theatre, for instance, it is amazing that an article (perhaps written by a scholar such as George Woodyard or Frank Dauster) is not included.¹ (Professor Martínez examines the development of the novel until 1967, but fails to give any specific references to the theatre after 1940!) A study on the development of "el boom" itself is also sorely missing—possibly something along the lines of an improved, more objective article based on José Donoso's *The Boom in Spanish American Literature (A Personal History)*.

The fundamental purpose of the collection (to interest the North American reader in the treasure-trove of Latin American literature) is therefore not realized, and of course it's a tremendous pity. If the book is intended for the specialist, there is simply little new to be culled here. Moreover, if the target-audience is the non-specialist, this book will do little to interest a potential reader (unlike, for instance, Jean Franco's *The Modern Culture of Latin America, Into the Mainstream* by Luis Harss and Barbara Dohman, or Rita Guibert's *Seven Voices*). In short, while literature to the South continues to flourish (George Steiner recently noted that "the two great literatures are coming from Russia and Latin America. There are now ten, believe me, new Solzhenitsyns"),² this collection does little to show that. While the editor of the English edition, the eminent critic Ivan Schulman, may strive to "unravel the Latin American riddle" (p. 27), unfortunately—for the reader—the riddle will remain.

1. Edward Albee was quoted in 1979 as praising the tremendous wealth of Latin American culture: "Theatre in South America is fresher, more spontaneous than ours . . . Their creativity stems from having to work in difficult conditions, often under governmental censorship, whereas we American playwrights have only one problem to overcome—apathy." See "Albee finds new ideas to the south," *Halifax Mail-Star*, September 5, 1979, p. 20.

2. See "George Steiner thinks!," *Maclean's*, November 20, 1978, p. 15.

Dalhousie University

John M. Kirk

Scotland Farewell. The People of the Hector. By Donald MacKay. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1980. Pp. xxvi, 229. \$17.95

Caveat Emptor! This book is not intended to be a genealogical "Pandora's Box" which upon opening will reveal ancestors, their sins and ills. Nor does it settle the question, "were the MacDonalds or the Chisholms the better sheep stealers?" Rather it is the story of the immigrants on the *Hector*, the conditions which caused them to emigrate and the challenges they faced in their new home. The author has set himself two tasks: 1) To recreate the period leading to the sailing of the *Hector* to Nova Scotia in 1773; and 2) To examine the colony which was to receive these immigrants. The parameters of the story are set within the lifetime of one individual, Alexander Cameron, and take the reader from Culloden (1746) to Loch Broom, Pictou County (1831) and the death of Cameron.

MacKay has divided the book into two sections. The first, "After Culloden", traces the British military repression following the defeat of Bonnie Prince Charlie at Culloden. The subsequent seizure of estates of disloyal chieftans, the inability of the Forfeited Annexed Estate Commission to manage these holdings, the disintegration of the clan system and finally the economic and agriculture collapse in the Highlands, are portrayed in a vivid manner. In the 18th century it was not the Cheviot sheep but rather the depressing brutality of the Highlanders' existence which made them so susceptible to the blandishments of immigration companies and their agents. The final hardship was the voyage itself, a sordid story of disease, squalid quarters and rotting vessels.

The second portion of the book, entitled "Nova Scotia", shows the power of the land companies and their representatives to sway the government of a small and still infant colony. In a two week period in October 1761 more than two and a half million acres of land were granted to various land companies and speculators. Among these was the Philadelphia company, and while it at least attempted to meet its commitments under its contract, its land holdings in Pictou became a subject of legal contention with cases before the courts into the 1840's.

It was to Pictou and the holdings of the Philadelphia company which the passengers of the *Hector* were destined in 1773. They were bitterly disappointed with what they found, and many of them departed almost immediately for other parts of the province. However, the ties to the clan and one's neighbors remained strong and drew them back to Pictou County. Ever before the area received a religious leader in the person of Rev. James

MacGregor in 1786 and later still in 1803, an educational leader in Dr. Thomas McCulloch, Pictou became a mecca for Scottish immigrants, so much so that the *Hector* has been characterized as the Canadian *Mayflower*.

This is Donald MacKay's third book in as many years and it will only serve to enhance his reputation as a reader's writer. MacKay obviously enjoyed his subject and that enthusiasm is transposed to the pages in an easygoing style which will carry the reader through even the most technical passages. While some might complain that his review of the Scottish period is merely a *précis* of Prebble's work, his use of the Forfeited Estate papers may alert researchers and genealogists alike to a source of materials which many have overlooked. However, archivists, in particular will shudder to see the author imply that ship passenger lists are commonly available (p. 67).

The maps and illustrations in the work are relevant and informative. The use of some J.E. Woolford drawings of Nova Scotian scenes never before published, are themselves worth the price of the book.

Some typographical errors have slipped by the proofreaders. Capt. Moorson's name is misspelled Moorsum. The Halifax family were Cochran not Cockran. The index incorrectly identifies the *Alexander* as being on page xi rather than xxi. The purist will quibble whether a map dated c. 1773 should have an area identified as New Brunswick on it. It might also have been useful if Fisher Grant mentioned on page 120 had been identified on the map on the facing page. However, these are minor irritations.

The disputes about the differing *Hector* passenger lists may never be resolved (p. 211). What remains undisputed is the contribution which these settlers and the influx of "Dumfries" settlers made to the province and the country. MacKay correctly points out that the term "Dumfries" settlers is incorrect. Most were from the southwest Lowlands (p. 154). Letters to relatives in Scotland brought families out by the thousands, most wishing to settle near their acquaintances in Pictou County. It's no accident that Pictou County has more miles of roads than any other County; rather it is a reflection of the determination of the settlers to remain near friends even if forced back into the deepest forest and away from the main mode of travel, the river. The irony is that one of the major factors in the lessening of immigration was probably the poem of Barney's River resident, John MacLean, whose "Gloomy Forest" painted a woeful picture of his new home.

Every deceitful story of our stay
 Seeks to allure you on to share our fate
 If you arrive here safely, you shall see
 New hardships worse than ancient poverty.

MacKay has captured the despair of the Scottish period and the pride of the Pictou experience. The latter in particular is no mean feat. Were Alexander Cameron alive today he would not be disappointed that his life span served as the book ends for a very fine account of him and his contemporaries.