

Book Reviews

***The Voyage that Never Ends: Malcolm Lowry's Fiction.* By Sherrill Grace. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press. Pp. xvi & 152. Illustrated. \$24.00; paperback \$9.95.**

What I had wanted to do at one point was to write, as E.M. Forster had suggested someone should, the history of someone's imagination.

An extract from one of Lowry's drafts (p. 62) suggests the purpose of Prof. Grace's nine years' immersion in the Lowry MSS. Vacation visits by those not privileged to reside in Vancouver cannot hope to compass boxes of inedited and ineditable material—scribble, typescript, old bus tickets, gramophone records—with the occasional startling splendour, the characteristic energy and sparkle.

The Voyage that never Ends—Lowry's own name for his complete *oeuvre*—is neither an evaluative literary survey nor a contribution to the 'overly partial and excessively biographical approach' (p. xv) but a diving and salvage operation. It asks both insight and precision. Prof. Grace distinguishes withdrawal and return as the governing metaphor of all Lowry's fiction, in Paul Ricoeur's full sense of what metaphor achieves as mimesis, though she does not cite Ricoeur. Outward and homeward voyaging, solar, diurnal and oceanic lunar rhythms, the yearly cycle, and in man a cycle of psychic death and rebirth are harmonised in Lowry's 'magnificent wheeling prose and deliberately repetitive plots' (p. 118). Belief 'that fiction should mirror a reality that is itself in constant process of becoming placed an added burden on his art' (p. 119) as he attempted to sustain a continuous creation. 'Life is indeed a sort of delirium perhaps that should be contemplated however by a sober "healthy" mind. By sober and healthy I mean of necessity limited' he wrote in 'Ghostkeeper' (p. 2). The tension remains not only within the title of his *oeuvre*, it offers a problem to Professor Grace as a conflict between her vision and her methodology.

Lowry's schema for a self-reflexive configuration enclosing his works one within another, in series, is found in the MSS 'Work in Progress' (1951). It reminds me of the stiff little charts which Ivor Richards introduced in his fiery Cambridge lectures. The same action is found in *Under*

the Volcano especially the 1940 version (pp. 39-41). Laruelle stands outside the story, much as Eliot's seer Tiresias does in *The Waste Land*—'the poem is what he sees!' Enclosing persona within persona and continuous recreation of the texts is found in medieval dream vision—in Langland especially, but also Chaucer and Dante, lost in his 'selva oscura.' (Lowry was not really a Gutenberg man). Professor Grace does not question the unique achievement of *Under the Volcano*, or hide the confusions of the fragmentary *Ordeal of Sigbjorn Wilderness* and *La Mordida*. She has severely restricted and condensed her statements, adopting a chronological advance for the 'interior biography'. In her conclusion she suggests that the best account of Lowry's achievement is that of a Canadian poet, Al Purdy.

The most affinitive comment, if he cared to make it, would come from Lowry's Cambridge contemporary, Sir William Empson; indeed, it was provided, in verses Lowry must have known, 'Sea Voyage', and 'Bacchus'.

The laughing god born of a startling answer
 (Cymbal of clash in the divided glancer
 Forcing from heaven the force of earth's desire)

If Lowry had said with Blake 'The authors are in Eternity', his visionary power might not have been confused with his psychic turbulence, or his schema described—as it has been, in a review of Professor Grace—as 'a series of shopping lists for shopping trips that never transpired', their utility to 'keep him off the streets (more or less) and sober (now and then).' This is radically to mistake the nature of illumination given by the most tenuous of his dreams upon the most solid of his structures. To mistake also the nature of Professor Grace's enterprise, that of 'the divided glancer.'

Difficulties are formidable. I would agree with her that the unpublished version of 'the Chapel Perilous' is more illuminating than what is printed in *October Ferry to Gabriola*; but the first page, which she reproduces, confirms that as part of a novel, it is not printable.

Over the years, the significance of *Under the Volcano* has been deepened for its readers by the publication of other material, including the biographies, as an extended contextual support system, parts of which carry their own functions, anticipating the later Joyce in his 'Work in Progress'—publication began of this in the late 1920s and the work was continually rewritten till the final appearance of *Finnegan's Wake*, after seventeen years, in 1939. This aspect of Lowry's is best understood in France.

Methodology is Professor Grace's problem. She could have been statistical; she could have devised psychological explanations; she could simply have let loose her own emotions, a standing temptation to writers on Lowry. Eschewing these self-indulgences, her condensed, sometimes very technical vocabulary means that occasionally exhaustion shows in some quite meaningless adjective (in chapter I, 'fascinating,' pp. 1, 3, 9), or some

chokepear of a concluding sentence (end of first paragraph, p. 42 and last paragraph, p. 95). Her signals can be cryptic: 'Little known writers such as Ralph Bates and Claude Houghton were as important to him as Yeats, Eliot or Joyce' (p. xiv). The introductory chapter is vital to understanding her approach; its penultimate sentence offers the map of the fiction's configurations—she herself uses 'spatial form'. The point of weakness may be the growing point, of an imagination, as well as of a personality.

Together the withdrawal-return paradigm, circle symbolism, and 'spatial form' provide a kind of vade mecum for Lowry's work, but they should not be seen as rules that limit his vision so much as the elements in a literary enterprise which was evolving up to the time of his death (p. xvi).

The imagination includes both old junk and hidden treasure. Recently, several hundred tons of Tudor oak and rather fewer of Edwardian scrap iron were raised from the seabed, and skilfully nursed into Portsmouth Harbour. The Navy considered the salvage of H.M.S. *Mary Rose* and *Holland Ias*, among other things, a useful training operation; but the first submarine ever launched was found, surprisingly, to conform in miniature to modern design.

Cambridge

M.C. Bradbrook

***Murder in the Dark.* By Margaret Atwood. Toronto: Coach House Press, 1983. Pp., 64. Paper, \$6.95.**

***Margaret Atwood: Language, Text and System.* Ed., Sherrill E. Grace and Lorraine Weir. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press. Pp., x, 168. \$17.95.**

Women collapsing to the floor, folding in on themselves, and closing out some fact of the public world that men seem to face automatically, is an image we of the eighties are mercifully spared. We little expect, therefore, the narrator in Margaret Atwood's "Fainting," or any narrator in her new volume, *Murder in the Dark*, to faint—or to write "fainthearted" prose. Atwood tells us that "You feel faint when there's something you don't want to see," and her new volume is dedicated to making us see with both our empirical and our imaginary eyes.

In *Murder in the Dark*, Atwood presents prose poems and short fictions to ask "what are we doing here." This question echoes as far back as her critical work on the Canadian imagination, *Survival* (1972), and this time, to pose answers, she takes, first, an autobiographical look at images of her past: an issue of "The Boys' Own Annual, 1911," found in her grandfather's attic; the look on the face of a woman pelted by her and a friend's snowballs; the gold button saved from a dress. But, in these pieces,

Atwood not only conjures the past, but the way memory fondles an image, a texture, a line: "The first thing I can remember is the blue line." In so doing, she demonstrates how one line, like one sentence, unfolds an experience: "This smell is the point at which the landscape dissolves, ceases to be a landscape and becomes something else."

Past, present, and future meet on an Atwood landscape, and *Murder in the Dark*, like the volumes of prose and poetry preceding it, does not let us forget the moral coordinates of such a place. The act of imagination, for Atwood, is a moral act, and choosing the *mot juste* to evoke the precise texture of an experience is a moral choice. So she shows us in the moving and imaginative injunctions of a piece entitled "Bread." In other pieces, such as "Women's Novels" and "Happy Endings," Atwood cleverly exposes the very lack of imagination shaping formulaic plots and predictable endings. Stories that do not tell us the "how" of something or the "what," or the "which," fail to situate us in anything but a kind of imaginative inertia. They do not render the detail that can enliven the world through words, and it is this detail that Atwood provides, over and over, in this short and precise volume.

Atwood retains her distrust of language, as the short comic piece "Murder in the Dark" makes clear. The writer can be a murderer; language can be undependable. Yet, Atwood is a writer concerned with transformations, and her preoccupation has not diminished. In this volume, it has become more clearly focussed, more consistently demanded, and more whimsically rendered. From her acerbic and amusing "Simmering," which pokes fun at the presumed changes in sex roles, to the evocative "Instruction for the Third Eye," which concludes the volume, she insists that if things in their clarity can be merciless, seeing them can teach us to be merciful toward the truths we discover in ourselves.

If Atwood helps us see ourselves, through our words and in spite of them, *Margaret Atwood: Language, Text and System*, a collection of nine essays, intends to help us locate the contexts, or systems constructed in her writing. These constructs look inward toward Atwood's writing itself and outward toward the world she inhabits. Thus, Atwood's use of Canadian preoccupations, her use of shamanism, and her use of poetic politics, if politics be defined in the largest sense, are considered. To elaborate these various contexts and their overlapping, the essays invoke multiple paradigms: the formalist discussion of Atwood concentrates on shifts within the structure of her works; a phenomenologically feminist reading discusses woman and man as operating within a field of oppression and transformation; a computer analysis of *Surfacing* (1972) links self-discovery as a theme to the structures of the novel's syntax; a "Derridean" response suggests that Atwood questions the status of territoriality and anthropomorphism in her use of landscape. Taken together, these essays present a sampling of current methodological tools. Singly, each offers a special window onto Atwood's world.

Unfortunately, however, the entire volume imputes too much coherence and unity to Atwood's work. Although such coherence may exist,

assuming as much moves us away from its tensions and inconsistencies. Frequently, the terseness of Atwood's language registers an ambivalence toward the values claimed, and neither exhortation nor incantation drive this ambivalence away. The ambivalence refracted by the tone of many of her poems, for example, creates much of the poetry's strength. As a writer who, most recently, claims that the third eye is often merciless and that she will be merciful if she faints again, Atwood makes us consider the high cost of vision. A more playful irony controls her own vision in the new volume, where she shows us, once again, that the stakes are always high.

Union College

Brenda Wineapple

***The Haunted Dusk: American Supernatural Fiction, 1820-1920.* Edited by Howard Kerr, John W. Crowley, and Charles L. Crow. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1983. Pp. 236. \$18.00.**

This collection of essays leads us once again into those obscure borderlands of Gothic fantasy which lie alongside the territory of realistic fiction. Though there have recently been on both sides of the Atlantic many map makers in these areas, 'There is room for more,' as Melmoth the Wanderer discovered back in 1820. Our attention is directed in these ten essays to American supernatural fictions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, so all the predictable figures are there: Irving, Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, James and Bierce, also some unpredictable ones like Mark Twain and Jack London, and some unfamiliar ones like Harriet Prescott Spofford and Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. (One inevitably asks about others not appearing: where are Louisa May Alcott and R. W. Chambers?) But carping aside, this provides an interestingly varied view of the range of literary speculations on ghosts and the occult over a hundred year period when attitudes toward the inexplicable underwent radical cultural and fictional transformations. These essays are of two kinds: some literary criticism, and others more broadly social, chronicling changing American attitudes and dealing primarily with biographical aspects of Howells, Twain, London, Henry and William James.

'Supernatural' is here used to designate all fictions that deal with marginal experiences, whether of the marvellous, the uncanny or the fantastic. This inclusiveness seems more feasible for critical practice than Todorov's precise theoretical differentiations which often look unreal when applied to the reading of particular texts. Supernatural fictions exist at the limits of social and cultural order, in the gaps between scientific inquiry and spiritual revelation—or, imagistically, in the dusk. But by what is this dusk haunted? That is perhaps the most interesting question to ask of these American fictions. I would suggest that it is haunted by fears of the void, and by fundamental anxieties about the self and the afterlife. But Gothic fiction has always been haunted by these fears, as was shown

in 1974 in *The Gothic Imagination*, edited by G.R. Thompson, who is one of the contributors to this collection. How far do these essays answer the question in ways which show the distinctiveness of American supernatural fiction?

I suspect a definite nationalistic bias in the Introduction: "[These essays] confirm, we hope, W.D. Howells's belief that American writers seem to have a special aptitude for handling the 'filmy textures' and 'vague shapes' of the occult." It is certainly true that American tales in their response to a cultural order different from Europe will handle Gothic conventions differently, a point made in G.R. Thompson's essay on Irving when he argues that the development of the American supernatural tale cannot be divorced from their peculiar variety of dark Romanticism with its strong popular interest in transcendentalism and spiritualism. The most persuasively 'American' case is Carolyn Karcher's essay on Hawthorne, Brownson and Melville, but theirs is supernatural fiction with a difference. It is a form of social and religious satire with no pretence to be ideologically innocent. Jay Martin's suggestive short essay on James, Twain and Bellamy situates the transition from American supernatural to psychological Gothic precisely at the time of the Civil War, and indeed the 1860s appear to be the period when the occult took up its abode within the human psyche. All of which relates fiction closely to the discoveries and language of psychiatry and psychical research. Despite some of the claims, it becomes increasingly difficult to see what is distinctively American when speculations on the limits of mind are so evidently shared by Howells, William and Henry James with Stevenson, Machen, Wells, Charcot, and Freud.

Traditional Gothic preoccupations with death and the afterlife, with personal anxieties and forbidden feelings underwent various transformations in nineteenth-century fiction, while retaining a remarkably constant core. Not surprisingly the two best essays here are both about death and transgression. J. Gerald Kennedy's close analysis of Poe's death imagery and its psychological implications sheds light on many more Gothic texts than Poe's alone, highlighting that most characteristic Gothic horror of the void. Barton Levi St. Armand's essay on Harriet Prescott Spofford's story 'The Amber Gods' brings to our attention a fascinating female Gothic text, where the safely dead story teller is herself the suppressed phantom of feminism.

A stimulating collection, though I must quarrel with the editors' tidy assumption that the supernatural tale was assimilated by psychoanalysis into cultural invisibility. It is not quite so easily got rid of: what about H.P. Lovecraft, and two recent fictions by Canadian women novelists? Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* is a ghost story and Anne Hébert's *Héloïse* is the tale of a vampire on the Paris Metro. And of course the supernatural still haunts the dusk in horror films, where Howells's 'filmy textures' find their aptly transparent embodiment in filmic images.

Thomas Hardy Annual No. 1. Edited by Norman Page. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1983. Pp. xii, 205. \$32.50.

Thomas Hardy: The Sociological Imagination. By Noorul Hasan. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1982. Pp. x, 200. \$21.00.

The declared aim of the *Thomas Hardy Annual*, a projected series begun in 1982 and edited by Norman Page, is "to make available some of the best of the current scholarship and criticism devoted to Hardy" (p. x). If the first *Annual* is any indication of what is to come, the reader can expect an even more varied and charming potpourri than such a description suggests. For this is a grouping of fine scholarly essays and reviews that also contains a new poem on Hardy by Christopher Wiseman, the first publication of three letters to Hardy by John Addington Symonds, and a comprehensive "Survey of Recent Hardy Studies," complete with bibliography.

Richard H. Taylor's "Survey" supplements the earlier "Thomas Hardy: A Reader's Guide" (collected in *Thomas Hardy: The Writer and his Background*, edited by Norman Page, 1980), which covered Hardy criticism up to 1978. Though Taylor is sometimes less critical of weak studies than he could be, his evaluations are well-informed and elegantly written, and they offer the reader a clear sense of where gaps exist in Hardy scholarship. His comments on textual studies, for example, suggest that there is still much to be done, and to be learned about Hardy's art, in this field. The Symonds letters are a pleasant addition to the volume as well, not only because they add to our knowledge of Hardy's place in the minds of his contemporaries, but also because they indicate that some of our unanswered questions are not newly formulated. Symonds says of *Tess*, "We do not know clearly what the first seduction of Tess by Alec was worth to herself—*how* she became his mistress, after he found her asleep at the woodside" (p. 132). The same problem is still being wrestled with by critics today.

Two essays in the *Annual* deal with Hardy the man and his methods of composition. Peter J. Casagrande's discussion of Hardy biography is an eloquent criticism of the narrowness of Robert Gittings's two-volume life. Casagrande points out that in seeking to counter some idealised view of Hardy, Gittings errs in the other direction by failing to see "Hardy's serious and persistent efforts at critical self-portraiture" (p. 4). Casagrande notes shrewdly that Gittings does not pay much attention to Clym Yeobright precisely because the portrait is a self-critical one and would contradict Gitting's "consistent view of Hardy as egotistical, immature, and even unstable" (p. 26). A different kind of interest in Hardy lies behind Lennart A. Björk's informative essay on Hardy's fictional use of facts and ideas taken from his notes. Björk brings to bear on this critical work the fruits of his own detailed editing of the "Literary Notes," and so he can make some sound general observations: that the same idea will emerge in different notes over a period of several decades, and that

"reference or allusion is with Hardy an important stylistic device in ennobling, or undercutting, his characters" (p. 118).

Probably because 1982 is the hundredth anniversary of the publication of *Two on a Tower*, two essays are devoted to that relatively minor novel. John Bayley has written an ingenious but not entirely convincing essay arguing that *Two on a Tower* is more "spontaneous and natural" than *The Woodlanders* because its "incongruous harmonies" are unintentional and therefore subtly indeterminate, while those in *The Woodlanders* are intentional and therefore contrived (p. 69). The assumption about Hardy's intentions, however, is one that Bayley asserts but does not try to prove. Rosemary Sumner, on the other hand, examines what Hardy himself said about "the juxtaposition of unrelated, even discordant effusions" (p. 78) in his work and sees *Two on a Tower* as a conscious experiment in this technique. Without suggesting that the novel is perfectly successful, she compares its cosmic symbolism to images of emptiness in Conrad, Forster, Beckett, and Camus. Like these writers, Hardy contemplates the existential problem, "the possibility that the universe is infinite and meaningless" (p. 73).

A critical essay that considers several of the novels is Peter W. Coxon's study of the hair motif in Hardy. Coxon is most interesting in his discussion of nineteenth-century coiffures, but his essay is sometimes repetitive and obvious, and he pushes a single point too far when he associates all of Hardy's fair-haired women with a Pre-Raphaelite ideal. Hardy unquestionably was influenced by Swinburne, but Coxon seems to be unaware of the force of the common romance convention of the dark and fair heroine—invoked, for example, by Walter Scott, Emily Brontë, and George Eliot. The assumptions underlying this tradition surely influence the contrasting complexions of Bathsheba and Fanny, and of Eustacia and Thomasin.

The most provocative essay is undoubtedly John Lucas's backward glance at Donald Davie's *Thomas Hardy and British Poetry* (1973). Lucas connects this book with the political climate during the late 1960s and defends the absence of ideological radicalism in Hardy's poetry, while emphasizing the importance of its sound—even more than in Hopkins—over its visual elements. The same tendency to look at sound rather than image characterises Tom Paulin's essay, which distinguishes between the Parnassian poetic tradition of Spenser, Milton, Wordsworth, and Tennyson, and the Gothic tradition of Wyatt, Donne, Browning, Hopkins, Hardy, and Frost. The distinction allows Paulin to produce some beautiful close readings based on shifting stresses from one line to the next.

A controversial subject in recent Hardy criticism has been the extent to which Hardy accurately depicted important social changes in the nineteenth century. Merryn Williams offers a well-documented description of Hardy's developing sympathy with issues of women's rights. She is especially good on the 1890s, when the influence of *Tess* fostered the climate of ideas that paved the way for *Jude* (several "marriage question" novels appeared between *Tess* and *Jude*). In opposition to writers like Merryn

Williams, however, who see Hardy primarily as a socio-economic historian, Arthur Pollard declares "that Hardy does not present social or economic history" (p. 42) and that Wessex is merely the stage for tragic and timeless human dramas. Pollard effectively points out the limits of a strictly historical approach to Hardy, but in doing so he rejects the particularity of Wessex too completely.

A book which achieves a balance between such extremes is Noorul Hasan's *Thomas Hardy: The Sociological Imagination*. Hasan uses Ferdinand Tönnies' distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* in order to examine Hardy's metaphoric use of the human community in his Wessex novels. The sociological terminology works well here, though it leads Hasan to use the word "pastoral" only in a narrow and derogatory sense. But what is important in this book is not its terminology or its occasional lapses in style, but its consistently intelligent and perceptive readings of the novels, based on the conviction that underlying the Wessex fiction is an "overriding sense of a collective moral and emotional identity that characterises members of a traditional community" (p. 5). This idea may sound like a critical commonplace, but it has not been sufficiently applied to readings of Hardy's fiction. Hasan's use of it therefore gives a unique clarity and force to his observations about Gabriel Oak, Eustacia Vye, Michael Henchard, Grace Melbury, Tess, and Jude. The insight also allows him to offer compelling interpretations of the superstitious elements in *The Return of the Native* and "The Withered Arm," of Marty South's elegy at the end of *The Woodlanders*, and of the rhetorical voice in *Tess*. I have a few minor disagreements with Hasan—his quick dismissal of Boldwood's importance in *Far from the Madding Crowd* is too facile, his view of Clym Yeobright as a man at one with his community seems a misreading of his character, and the long plot summaries in the chapter on the stories deprive the reader of the close analysis that he gives the novels—but generally this is a valuable study for its understanding of the relationship between the historical and metaphoric dimensions of Wessex. Hardy's novels are not simply socio-economic histories, nor are they simply symbolic narratives. They are, as Hasan has phrased it, "history *as* fiction, not history *and* fiction" (p. 185).

University of Western Ontario

Kristin Brady

José Martí, Major Poems (A Bilingual Edition). Edited, with an introduction by Philip S. Foner; English translation by Elinor Randall. New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982. Pp. 173.

It is unfortunate that José Martí is virtually unknown in English-speaking circles, for his accomplishments and talents clearly deserve greater dissemination. Born in Havana in 1853, Martí combined political and literary talents throughout his life—leading the movement for Cuban inde-

pendence from Spain in the 1890s and founding the first authentic Latin American cultural movement, *modernismo*. (Indeed Martí's importance in Cuba almost a century later can be gauged from the omnipresent busts of the revolutionary leader in all Cuban schools as well as the very name of the international airport ("Aeropuerto 'José Martí'"), National Library and even the "Plaza de la Revolución 'José Martí'"). If we are to appreciate the essence of literary and political *engagement* in Latin America (which has led to Nobel Prizes for literature being awarded to Gabriela Mistral, Miguel Angel Asturias, Pablo Neruda and, most recently, to Gabriel García Márquez), there is no finer example than this nineteenth-century writer-revolutionary.

This bilingual (English-Spanish) edition—undertaken with his usual painstaking research by Philip S. Foner (Professor Emeritus of History at Lincoln University)—consists of a remarkably sensitive translation of a selection of Martí's poems by Elinor Randall, and is preceded by a thoughtful thirty-page introduction by Foner. The end result is a remarkable, quite representative, sampling of the Cuban writer's "Major Poems."

The variety of Martí's work is an aspect which immediately strikes the reader's attention, for in this anthology (essentially a sampling of three collections, *Ismaelillo* (1882), *Versos libres* (1872-1882) and *Versos sencillos* (1891)) there are clearly visible romantic and classical influences—as well as Martí's own concern with an authentic, *modernista* literary form. Many of his poems are extremely musical in their striking rhythm and dramatic turn of phrase (and it is no surprise that in the 1970s, Cuban balladeers have resurrected much of his work). Also noticeable is his striking usage of colour (particularly 'rose') and symbolism, as well as his moving similes and metaphors, as can be seen from his introduction to *Versos libres*:

I love the difficult sonorities, the sculptural
line: vibrant as porcelain, swift as a bird,
scalding and flowing as a tongue of lava. A poem
should be like a shining sword that leaves the
spectator with memories of a warrior bound for
the heavens; when he sheathes his sword in the
sun, it breaks into wings. (p. 123)

The wide range of thematic concerns is also noteworthy, for Martí dealt (in *Ismaelillo*) with his profound heartbreak at the separation from his young son, the desire for freedom (both in general and with regard to his Cuban homeland), his frustration at living in exile in the United States (later he would note, "I have lived in the entrails of the monster"), his anger at the injustices of the colonial Spanish government, the joys of meaningful friendship, and the beauty of nature. Perhaps most surprising is his ability to mix poetry and politics, seen for example in *Versos sencillos*:

I am an honest man
 From where the palm trees grow;
 Before I die I want my soul
 to pour forth its poetry (...) (p. 58)

I want to cast my lot
 With the humble of this world;
 A mountain brook means more to me
 Than does the sea. (p. 67)

(Many people will be surprised to discover that these verses combined in fact to form the lyrics of the folk song "Guantanamera," made popular in an arrangement by Pete Seeger). As can be appreciated immediately, these verses were indeed "simple," and could be accepted easily by "the humble of this world" for whom they were intended.

Foner's anthology reveals Martí as an intense compassionate man, striving to harness his love for mankind to simple aesthetic forms that provoke a wide variety of sensory reactions in the reader. Despite forays into journalism (at which he was extremely adept) and both the novel and theatre (at which he was notably not), Martí is essentially a poet. His essay on Walt Whitman (whose work he introduced to Latin American audiences) illustrates admirably his profound respect for the genre:

Who is the ignoramus who maintains that people can dispense with poetry? Some persons are so short-sighted that they see nothing in fruit but the rind. Whether it unites or divides the soul, strengthens or causes it anguish, props it up or casts it down, whether or not it inspires a man with faith and hope, poetry is more necessary to a people than industry itself, for while industry gives men the means of subsistence, poetry gives them the desire and courage for living. (p. 17)

In sum, readers of this selection of Martí's work will not be disappointed, for they will find that the Cuban writer's analytical skills are amply mirrored by his creative abilities. For any who are seeking to understand Latin American literature—perhaps the most dynamic literary movement for the past decade—this collection is essential reading.

Dalhousie University

John M. Kirk

***Synge: The Medieval and the Grotesque.* By Toni O'Brien Johnson. Gerrards Cross, Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe Ltd., and Barnes and Noble, 1982. Pp. viii, 209. \$27.50.**

This is an extremely useful study which, for the first time, provides a detailed account of the ways in which Synge adapted medieval materials to his own characteristic vision. Especially useful is O'Brien Johnson's account of Synge's studies with two Sorbonne medievalists—Professors

Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville and Louis Petit de Julleville. We do not know for certain that Synge had actually read André de la Vigne's play, *La Moralité de l'aveugle et du boiteux* but we do know that he had made detailed transcriptions from de Julleville's account of it in his *La Comédie et les moeurs en France au moyen âge*. In her chapter on *The Well of the Saints* O'Brien Johnson not only relates Synge's play to its medieval source but also to de Julleville's treatment of it. In another chapter, "Folly," O'Brien Johnson compares Synge's outsider-fool to the fool of the Middle Ages and shows again that it was de Julleville who introduced Synge to the medieval tradition which had the vitality of great writing which Synge declared was once read by "strong men, and thieves, and deacons, not by little cliques only." In her chapter on *The Playboy*, O'Brien Johnson attempts to identify various features which are analogous to those in such medieval works as *Fled Bricrend (Bricriu's Feast)* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. The analogues O'Brien Johnson cites are highly suggestive but they are no more than that. It is somewhat disingenuous of her to quote T.S. Eliot's well known remarks about the necessity to relate an artist to a tradition ("You cannot value him alone; and must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead") since critics of Synge have always done this, drawing attention, for example, to Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* which with its theme of patricide and incest provides more obvious and significant analogues than the medieval ones O'Brien Johnson cites.

In her introduction the author notes that because she has taken a variety of approaches to her subject this "may at times convey a fragmentary effect." The book is indeed somewhat marred by the fact that O'Brien Johnson is treating two themes—the medieval and the grotesque—which are not necessarily related. Her chapter on Synge as a translator is excellent in its detail but is spoiled by O'Brien Johnson's compulsion to relate the translations to a tradition of the grotesque. The form of the translations is grotesque, she argues, "in the sense that its energy comes from the unresolved clash between implied standard English structures and those which are imposed by thinking in the structures of another tongue." This is nonsense for it suggests that all translation is grotesque. Further, by defining the grotesque as "the unresolved clash of incompatibles" there is some risk that the plays will be too briskly accommodated to this definition. O'Brien Johnson points to "a lack of resolution in the endings" of *The Shadow*, *The Tinker's Wedding*, *The Well of the Saints* and *The Playboy* as evidence that the plays are grotesque. But surely what these plays do in fact share is a resolution in which the tramp-outsider rejects the institutional ethic of Church and bourgeois society. There are also striking affinities among the Tramp and Martin Doule and Christy Mahon. They represent the imaginative side of life as opposed to the materialism of those they reject—Dan Burke, the Saint, the Priest, even Pegeen Mike.

But if O'Brien Johnson's too comprehensive theme sometimes leads her into difficulties it does not seriously mar a work that combines grace of

style and a broad scholarship to provide many genuine insights into Synge's work.

University of Guelph

Eugene Benson

***Beyond Port and Prejudice: Charles Lloyd of Oxford, 1784-1829.* By William J. Baker. Orono, Me.: University of Maine at Orono Press, 1981. Pp. xvi, 245. \$20.00.**

In faculty lounges of universities throughout North America, one can always find at least a small coterie of academics who compare their institutions with Oxford and find them wanting, at least between paydays. Oxford is indeed a fine university in a charming setting and has earned its reputation as one of the major centres of learning in the Western world. It is a very different Oxford which forms the background for, and ultimately dominates, William J. Baker's life of Charles Lloyd, the University's Regius Professor of Divinity from 1822 and Bishop of Oxford from 1827 until his death in 1829.

Lloyd himself was neither sufficiently talented nor interesting to merit the attention paid him in the book. Son of a poor Buckinghamshire curate, Lloyd came to Christ Church, Oxford, from Eton. He distinguished himself at mathematics and became a favourite of the College's eccentric and influential Dean Cyril Jackson. Returning to Christ Church as a tutor, Lloyd had the good fortune to supervise the work of the young Robert Peel and the political wisdom to campaign actively for his former student in Peel's bid for one of Oxford's safely Tory parliamentary seats. He parlayed his friendship with Jackson and Peel into appointments as Preacher of Lincoln's Inn in 1819 and Regius Professor of Divinity three years later. While more popular and attentive to professorial duties than his predecessors, Lloyd concentrated his efforts on advancing his own cause and, secondarily, that of his students and friends. He enjoyed a similarly unremarkable tenure as Bishop of Oxford, taking his first and only political risk by following Peel in his conversion to Catholic Emancipation and dying of pneumonia shortly thereafter.

Baker has tried valiantly, if unconvincingly, to credit Lloyd with a major role in academic reform at Oxford, in the inspiration of those, such as Newman, Froude, and Pusey, who later launched the Tractarian movement, and as a key advisor to Sir Robert Peel. Lloyd may have taught the Tractarians, but there is little firm evidence that he exercised a profound influence on their thought any more than on Peel's political judgments or on the struggle to reform anachronistic University practices. The quantity of his scholarly writing, in Baker's words, "was as unimpressive as its quality" (p. 84); the bulk of Lloyd's writing took the form of letters to prospective patrons, begging preferment or belittling the character of his rivals. But for its picture of Oxford at the beginning of the nine-

teenth century, the book would offer no more than a chatty, thinly documented life of a relatively unattractive clergyman and teacher.

Baker describes an Oxford gradually and grudgingly rising from its eighteenth-century somnolence, beginning, in the words of the *Edinburgh Review* from which this book takes its title, to "shake off the benumbing influence of port and prejudice" (p. xi), although it remained an arbitrary and anarchic institution where Cyril Jackson and his Chapter could oversee Christ Church without benefit of statutes. A chapter on Lloyd's work as a tutor presents the flavour of tutorial practice in the early 1800s, when unmarried clergymen entered into close, if not intimate, relationships with their students, attempted to prepare them for successful performance on examinations in a variety of subjects, some of which they knew themselves, and formed mutually beneficial connections for later life. The academic wire-pulling which characterized the University is illustrated in a number of incidents from Lloyd's own career and in a fascinating account of the Professor's elaborate and successful campaign to secure for his student, E. B. Pusey, the Regius Professorship of Hebrew.

Could it be that the University idealized and the academic style imitated by contemporary Oxoniphiles are those which Baker so capably describes? Do they long for an institution where faculty divide their time, in Gibbon's words, between "the chapel and the hall, the coffee houses and the common room," ignore their scholarly duties for the business of patronage, and confine their conversation to "college business, Tory politics, personal anecdotes, and private scandal" (p. 14)? Surely not?

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***The Africans.* By David Lamb. New York: Random House, 1982.**

1984 is an anniversary for Africa as well as for Orwell: a century since the imperialists' Treaty of Berlin. If Orwell projected one future for the "post-industrial" world, Bismarck *et al.* provided the basis for post-independence division and decay in the "pre-industrial": fifty-odd ex-colonies of diversity and opportunity yet characterised by underdevelopment and disillusion. This timely survey covers the latest hundred years of the "Dark Continent" and speculates on its next decade or two.

Notwithstanding all the depressing characteristics and statistics, and despite all the difficulties of capturing the spirit of such a chameleon-like continent—"Perhaps nowhere in the world do individual countries mirror the character of their presidents as much as in Africa" (p. 65)—David Lamb ends his stylish safari still an optimist if no longer an idealist—"The thin elite class that has established itself largely through corruption and nepotism will give way to a growing middle class that is legitimately founded on individual merit, education and honestly earned money. A new nationalism may even evolve ..." (p. 342). In an informed, insightful

and intense overview, this accomplished and perceptive American reporter attempts to provide human interest as well as historical analysis. His realistic and revisionist reportage also seeks to rewrite past misperceptions: "No continent has been more mistreated, misunderstood and misreported over the years than Africa" (p. xii). Whilst Lamb treats international affairs and ideological flirtations—"With Africa floundering economically and meandering politically, the continent remains as ripe for exploitation today as it was a hundred years ago . . . outside influence in Africa has increased and Africa's control over its own affairs, military and economic, has decreased" (p. 22)—he also recognizes the continent's degree of responsibility for its own dismal condition and unpromising projection. Yet he appreciates still the mix of the indigenous and the exotic in both politics and personalities: "Mobutu is, in fact, more a creation of western capitalism than he is of African custom" (p. 44).

Although continent-wide and quite catholic in scope, Lamb's safari concentrates on eastern and southern Africa and concludes in a liberal and pragmatic vein: the rich range of observations and altercations encourage him towards Nigeria and Numeiri—"His benign dictatorship could be the forerunner, instead of the tombstone, of a democratic, socially just political system. It is, I believe, the Numeiris, not the Bokasas or Machels or Nyereres, who symbolise Africa's hope for the future" (p. 76)—rather than towards Ethiopia or Nkrumah. Yet he recognizes the limited prospects for such *laissez-faire* and relatively open political economies notwithstanding the perverse promise and influence of Nigeria (pp. 299-312). Black markets in goods and currencies, the return to subsistence agriculture and continued faith in fate (p. xi) all mitigate against benign scenarios; "two decades of African independence has provided an invaluable lesson: progress is not inevitable" (p. 24).

One hundred years after Berlin, Lamb is scornful of OAU pretensions but respectful of Africa's potential. However, he laments the squandering of scarce resources and the repression of imaginative responses. He also reflects on the underlying tendency towards regression rather than renewal:

Sadly, there is little to suggest that history won't keep repeating itself. If any trend is likely, it is that Africa will have more coups, not fewer, in the decade ahead, because few presidents have addressed themselves to the causes of instability . . . if national economies continue to wither and presidents continue to keep closed the safety valves of public expression, there can only be one conclusion: Africa's era of instability is just beginning (p. 132).

This dialectic between popular pressure and regime repression is central to Lamb's many dichotomies: between ideology and reality, resources and poverty, pride and pathos. Out of a judicious balance between folksy thumbnail sketches and broad abstract generalisations Lamb extracts some telling points: "the Christian Church is probably the most powerful institution in sub-Saharan Africa" (p. 140); "Marxism has been no more a

disaster in Mozambique than capitalism has been in Ghana" (p. 210); and "Given all he has had to endure from the beginning of slavery to the end of colonialism, the African displays a racial tolerance that is nothing short of amazing" (p. 160). Such statements reflect the author's personal as well as professional intensity about and involvement with the continent characteristic of "Africanists": "Africa had become [after four years in Nairobi] in obsession, a state of mind. You can love it or hate it but you cannot be indifferent to it" (p. 338).

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***Can The Third World Survive?* By Jacques Loup. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983. Pp. xv, 244. \$25.00. Paper, \$8.95.**

Originally published in France in 1980, and now just released in English by the Johns Hopkins University Press, the translated version of Jacques Loup's book has retained a clarity and vividness of style that is refreshing. Of more significance, the contents are as timely in 1983 as they were three years ago.

Loup's book could be argued to be one of the most coherent treatments of the Third World predicament that has been published in the past decade. Whereas it does not culminate in very specific policy recommendations (as for example do the two reports of the Brandt Commission), Loup's work rigorously blends a survey of post-war development philosophies and experience with an analysis of the dilemmas facing the Third World today. He sifts and presents data and the main conclusions of a wide range of studies in a manner which never clutters his work, but adds breadth and substance. Relevant examples similarly colour the book as do insights that are the product of his working experiences with agencies that include the World Bank and French Ministry for Cooperation and Development.

The book comprises three parts followed by a brief conclusion. The first section, entitled "Three Decades of Development", reviews the post-World War II economic growth records of a cross-section of Third World and industrial countries in a conventional manner. It is a workmanlike treatment, provides a useful overview and culminates in a chapter on the 'turning point' of the 1970s, that saw oil and food crises, seemingly endless but generally uneventful meetings on the 'New Economic Order' and the Brandt Commission's first report, with its emphasis on the interdependence of the rich and poor countries. Cancun and its disappointing aftermath post-date the book. At the same time, Loup remarks, "The universities woke up in turn and started asking questions. [Such as] What had two decades of development meant for the poorest?" In drawing together the development lessons of the post-War years, Loup might usefully have

drawn upon the experiences of industrial nations, such as Italy, France, and Yugoslavia, with regard to their regional development efforts. The poorer regions of some of the industrial countries generated ideas and lessons that bridge some of the experiential gaps between the richer parts of the industrial nations and the Third World countries. At the same time, a more extended treatment of the theoretical underpinnings of the broad development strategies of the past four decades would have been a good addition. References are made, but they could usefully have been examined in more depth.

The second section, entitled "The Problems of the End of the Century," is something of a misnomer. While indeed it does point ahead, the core of the section is anchored in the experiences of the past few years. Far from being narrowly a futures section, it is a succinct and analytical treatment of recent trends and experiences, under the broad themes of demographic transition, energy, food supply and poverty/income distribution. Whether talking of energy or food options, growth or income distribution, the author warns against single-minded approaches either to understanding Third World problems or to designing solutions. For example, "the food problem, be it in India or at the world level, is all too often approached exclusively from the production angle even though this approach alone cannot lead to an effective fight against malnutrition. Only when the two aspects of the problem—production *and* consumption—are considered together will there be any possibility of real progress in this area". The weight of the evidence, amassed in the second part, is disquieting at best. Yet, as Loup remarks, "All is not negative. Since we understand more clearly today the complexity of the problems, it is presumably easier to recognize the main elements of their solution." He continues to remark, "Common to all these elements is the necessity to challenge a certain mechanistic and authoritarian conception of development."

Loup, however, is no 'revolutionary'. This emerges clearly from his third part, "Outline of a Strategy." After a thought provoking section on what really is meant by a 'basic needs' strategy, and how such can be reconciled with growth, he concentrates on two main themes "Agriculture and Development" and "Tapping the Potential of International Trade." In between is a rather meagre section entitled "Developing the Productive Capacity of the Poorest." It merited more extensive treatment. A main finding of the section on "Agriculture and Development" might be highlighted to reflect Loup's experiences and leanings. "The first and perhaps most effective measure that should be taken by governments wishing to encourage agriculture would therefore be to review and modify the complex system of economic policies determining prices—and thus economic incentives—in the various economic sectors..." A similar 'pragmatic conservatism' colours his approach to the potential of international trade. "Whatever my sympathy for a development strategy that would start from the bottom up and give priority to the rural sector, and in spite of my admiration for China's economic development, ... Foreign trade has already played an important part in the development of many Third

World countries, and I believe it can continue to do so in the coming years." After a review of selected trade and development experiences over the post World War II years, including some success stories, Loup concludes, "We also hear that 'miracles', whether they are Korean, Brazilian, or 'made in Hong-Kong', are due to particular circumstances and cannot be replicated. On closer examination, however, the "particular circumstances" turn out to be intelligent economic policies and—to plagiarize Keynes—a few entrepreneurs and their animal spirits. If miracles cannot be replicated, they can be imitated, and this is exactly what many Third World countries, currently busy developing their export industries, are now doing."

In his all-too-brief conclusion, Loup echoes the first Brandt Commission report, arguing that it is necessary "to redefine the economic relations between rich and poor nations in an interdependent world.... We must now transform this passive interdependence into an active solidarity".

Loup's work is impressively clear, well-argued and informative. Despite the volume of detail included, the reader is unlikely to feel submerged because of the lucid style of Loup's writing. It should prove a constructive work for those working in the broad development field in both Third World countries and the international development aid agencies of industrial nations. If fault is to be found, it is largely in the economy of Loup's book—at the same time its very strength. Many chapters could have helpfully been extended and additional ones added. A bibliography would have added to its completeness, a somewhat surprising omission. Finally, no prizes are due the publishers for the quality of presentation. The dull grey cover and unimaginative lay-out fall far behind many of the books Johns Hopkins has published of recent years, for example, in co-operation with the World Bank. Loup's book is such an excellent addition to the literature on development, it merited improved packaging.

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