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Four Hundred Songs and Dances from the Stuart Masque edited by Andrew J. Sabol. Providence: Brown University Press, 1977. Pp. xvii + 661. $100.00.

This volume brings together all the surviving music, both vocal and instrumental, from the Stuart masque. It represents a phenomenal achievement: Andrew Sabol has edited, collated, rationalized and produced keyboard versions of fifty-one songs and choruses and hundreds of dances. Some of this music has been available before now, thanks largely to Sabol's previous and much more modestly produced book *Songs and Dances for the Stuart Masque* (Brown University Press, 1959). But a good deal of it is new, and derives from a bewildering variety of printed and manuscript sources. The material is often confusing, the manuscripts maddeningly uninformative, and most of the dance tunes cannot be related to any particular production or composer. Sabol makes his way through this morass with energy and good sense, and manages to reduce it to something like order. Charts, chronologies and concordances are provided; there is a historical and critical introduction, an account of the sources, a summary of literature on the masque as well as a detailed and extensive bibliography. Eyewitness accounts of two Jacobean masques are included in an appendix—the second, of Jonson's *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, disappointingly excerpted, and omitting a good deal of important material. A final appendix reprints a list of dances with instructions for their performance from an early seventeenth century commonplace book. More of this sort of documentation could easily have been included, and Sabol's choices seem excessively arbitrary—there is, for example, magnificent documentation of Shirley's *Triumph of Peace*, a work for which a good deal of music remains.

As a collection of masque music, the volume is necessarily spotty. Many of the most important productions at the Stuart court have no surviving music at all; of the 53 masques for which some music is preserved, 33 are represented by only one or two pieces. For 17 masques not a single dance can be identified. These statistics give a good sense of both the importance of the volume—it is literally all we have—and of the frustratingly ephemeral nature of the art it preserves. Sabol's work has made what survives magnificently available. Every student of English Renaissance culture is in his debt.

Having said so much, I hope I will not be considered churlish if I go on to express some reservations. Sabol's Introduction undertakes its history and critique of masque music much too briefly and casually. The writing is breathless; too often admiring and imprecise characterizations ("sheer brilliance," "sophisticated grandeur") are used to do the work of analysis and assessment. The generalizations are broad but the purview is limited: far too few kinds of evidence are taken into account. No use at all has been made of the most important body of material relating to the Stuart masque, the Inigo Jones drawings, nor of other visual material, and far too little of the information contained in the

compendious records of inventories, bills and payments. These, and the too infrequently cited eyewitness accounts, bring us closer to the realities of the masque's nature than do poets' texts or theorists' assertions. One example may suffice: Sabol is rhapsodic about how "the masquers function always as an identically accoutred group, moving simultaneously in sober splendor" (p. 12). This view of the masque can certainly be derived from Jonson's or Campion's or Daniel's texts. But if we look a little further, we get a different picture. From Jones's costume designs and his annotations to them we learn how much freedom the royal and noble participants in these supreme assertions of artistocratic community and independence had in the creation of their own costumes. They paid for them; their own dressmakers made them. They were based on Jones's drawings, but the aristocratic masquer adapted the final outfit to his or her own taste. A startling piece of evidence is preserved in the material relating to Jonson's *Hymenaei*. Jonson's text describes the ladies' garments in detail: the masquers were to be identically dressed, in a very elaborate costume with a double skirt. The outer layer was to be of carnation striped with silver, the inner of light blue cloth-of-silver laced with gold. Now it happens that three ladies who danced in this masque had their portraits painted in costume. Two accord closely with Jonson's description; the third, however, shows not a double but a single skirt. That was how this noble masquer preferred to appear.

Sabol's introductory essay is for the most part descriptive and historical, and despite its limitations it is genuinely informative. But readers who intend to move on to the the music and play through the keyboard realizations should be warned: nothing in the Introduction prepares one for the sheer tedium of most of the pieces. Of course an editor is entitled to place his material in the best light he can, and Sabol may, in any case, wish to argue that I am simply deaf to the charms of this music. But I think there is a real critical point here, which has either got lost or is being avoided: the masque did not bring out the best in its composers. The four Campion songs included here strike me as significantly less interesting than most of what appears in Campion's books of *Ayres*, and Campion considered only two of them suitable for preservation as independent songs, one with a new set of words. (It should be noted that this is not two out of four, but two out of all the songs in all of Campion's masques, most of the music for which he chose not to preserve in any form at all). Ferrabosco's music for Jonson's early masques earns judicious praise from Sabol; to me it sounds for the most part routine, as I compare it with Byrd, or Dowland, or the Campion of the best *Ayres*. Things start to get more interesting around 1620, after the innovations of Nicholas Lanier, a composer who seems to have had some genuinely new ideas about the musical form of the masque; and the Caroline examples of William and Henry Lawes, even when they fail to satisfy as musical compositions, reveal—to me at least—a good deal more vitality and variety. Now Sabol may feel that I have got this all wrong, and he has certainly lived with the music a good deal longer and more happily than I have. But something about his critical methods fails to inspire confidence. His account of his material relies too heavily on indulgent descriptions and quotations from contemporary enthusiasts to be either very helpful or entirely persuasive.

Sabol's claims, moreover, are not on the whole for the music but for the

dances—their richness and complexity, their metaphorical virtue as an imitation of cosmic order, the fact that they were the very *raison d'être* of the masque. Such claims are arguable, and I shall return to them; but I feel bound to point out at once that the volume brings us no nearer to being able to assess them. To begin with, once again much too much evidence is simply ignored. To illustrate the complexity of Jacobean choreography, Sabol quotes Daniel's account of a masque dance, "with great majesty and arte, consisting of diuers straines, fram'd unto motions circular, square, triangular, with other proportions exceeding rare and full of variety" (p. 11). But one man's complexity is another man's nonsense: Bacon, patron and eyewitness of innumerable masques, considered the sort of figure dances Daniel describes "a childish curiosity"—the charge appears in the essay *Of Masques and Triumphs*, surely an essential text, and one that is cited nowhere in the volume. But the problems raised by the book's claims go deeper than even this suggests, because Sabol has not in fact recovered dances from his manuscripts, but only the music for them, and one can no more reconstruct choreography from dance music than one can reconstruct the words of a song from its setting. Certain formal elements are apparent from the music, though not as many as one could wish: for dances that are not among the standard social types (galliard, coranto, etc.) the manuscripts preserve no information about tempo whatever; most of the pieces are exceedingly brief, notes for dances really, and one gets no sense from what survives of how the pieces were elaborated to produce the hours of entertainment we know they provided, or even of how long any individual dance lasted. None of this is Sabol's fault, but it does mean that his claims are strongest when he isn't bound by the evidence, and it does lead at least this seeker after the true nature of the masque to wonder whether the Introduction doesn't spend so much time talking about dance in order to avoid having to talk about the music.

And, indeed, this brings me to a genuine oddity about the book. Sabol is committed to the position that dance was the chief element and the *raison d'être* of the masque—his Introduction begins by rejecting the rival claims of Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones to responsibility for the "soul" of the form. Yet Sabol's whole sense of the masque is derived, as I have suggested, exclusively from its texts. Poets and theorists are continually being cited to show how we ought to be thinking of these entertainments. Thus Elyot is quoted quoting Plato to the effect that music and dance lead the soul "to embrace the divine principles of order"; Arbeau's *Orchésographie* makes dance a "dumb rhetoric"; in Jonson's *Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, "Dancing is a exercise/not only shows the movers wit,/but maketh the beholder wise,/as he hath powre to rise to it." In Campion's *Squire's Masque*, "the distribution of the twelve masquers into four groups of three...underscores the traditional symbolism, Pythagorean and Christian, of the number four as the pattern of the cosmos, or mundane sphere." And so forth. A particularly persuasive citation is included from Davies' *Orchestra*, about dance imitating the order of God's creation and partaking of the most profound mysteries of religion and state.

This is just the sort of thing that makes me distrust Sabol's discussion. Had the argument in *Orchestra* been followed to its conclusion, it would have been revealed as a courtly lover's trick, a temptation to impiety and unchasteness.

The invitation to dance is quite properly *rejected* by the moral and clear-sighted Penelope. Sabol knows this as well as I do; he has simply chosen to ignore it. But why? Why take the courtly lover's word for the truth about masque dances rather than Penelope's? What, indeed, is the value of Davies' evidence at all? Why is Jonson's or Campion's testimony to the significance of masque dances valid, while Jonson's or Jones's claims for the importance of poetry and design are set aside? There are profound problems of methodology here. The masque was an aristocratic entertainment, a game through which a particular social group idealized itself and asserted its community, power and independence. Is there any evidence that the participants ever thought about the enterprise they were so extravagantly engaged in as Jonson or Arbeau or Davies' courtly tempter did? Courtiers who were eyewitnesses have left us a number of admiring accounts of masque dancing; they stress social grace and athletic ability, but I do not know of a single one that says anything about the motions of the soul or the movement of the spheres.

My point is that all arguments that maintain that the masque was "essentially" one of its components rather than any of the others are tendentious. The masque was always a mixed genre, and its inventors and its participants always saw it differently. The exchequer accounts surely record quite definitively what the court thought most important in the preparation of its masques. In a typical year, the poet and designer would be paid £50 each—this was an enormous sum, almost as much as Jonson's annual pension of 100 marks (a little over £60), and enough to live on for a year in Jacobean London. The composer was lucky if he got £20: this was the annual wage of a skilled workman, about a shilling per day. (The one exception was Nicholas Lanier, to whom at least one handsome payment of £100 is recorded; but whether this testifies to his extraordinary qualities as a composer or to a recognition of his numerous other services to the court is uncertain). The choreographer was even less well rewarded than a skilled workman. The court paid for quality, and assumed a hierarchy in the arts of the masque. Poet and designer were securely at the top of the hierarchy.

I hope it is not necessary for me to add that nothing I have said here is intended to denigrate the tremendous value of Sabol's work. For anyone interested in the masque, that quintessential expression of the culture of the English Renaissance, the volume is indispensable.

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Dramatic Identities and Cultural Tradition: Studies in Shakespeare and His Contemporaries by G. K. Hunter. New York: Barnes and Noble Books. Pp. xiv + 362. $28.50.

This collection of essays, all of which were originally published between 1954 and 1974, are arranged explicitly according to topic and implicitly according to

certain critical assumptions about Elizabethan drama. They fall into three categories: 1) "the theatrical definition of the Elizabethan audience's English identity"; 2) the manner in which this identity modified literary traditions; and 3) the dramatic structures "used to predetermine meaning" for the Elizabethan audience. The first section contains Professor Hunter's well known essays, "Elizabethans and Foreigners," "English Folly and Italian Vice," and "Italian Tragicomedy on the English Stage." The second deals with the so-called Senecan influence on Elizabethan drama, *The Spanish Tragedy*, *Hamlet*, and also includes pieces on Bradley and Eliot. The last section contains his essays on the structure of *Henry IV*, of *Doctor Faustus* and of Shakespeare's early tragedies.

Generally, Hunter seeks to correct the claims of an earlier generation of critics who singlemindedly described literary history in terms of mere chronology, who ignored the power of the native tradition in favor of a classical one, and who failed to understand the pervasive theological underpinnings to Elizabethan culture. Against these views, some of which held sway up through the 1950's, he rightly insists on "complicating" literary history, on arguing for a Christian basis for much of the drama, and on offering a view of Elizabethan culture that is both more complex and conservative in assimilating various social and literary influences. Because he relies primarily on intellectual historical documents and literary texts for his cultural model, he is quite good on matters that involve literary representation and literary influence. Because he does not question the function these representations served, however, he does not discuss how the literary representations might have been meaningful as symbolic resolutions for conflicting cultural values and social norms. Moreover many of the earlier essays in this volume are clearly dated: they were part of a debate which has been resolved in the last ten to fifteen years, thanks to scholars such as Professor Hunter, and in turn form the basis for critical discussions which require more complex and sophisticated readings of Elizabethan literature in its cultural framework.

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Visionary Poetics: Milton's Tradition and His Legacy by Joseph Anthony Wittreich, Jr. San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1979. Pp. xxiv + 324. $18.50.

In *Visionary Poetics: Milton's Tradition and His Legacy*, Joseph Wittreich argues that many of our greatest poets, including Spenser, Milton, Blake, and Shelley, "have taken from John's Apocalypse the code for their art—a whole aesthetic system, together with those supports, structural and ideological, that any formally recognized genre lends to a poet" (p. 4). Milton's poetry, he emphasizes, is not "classical," but rather "prophetic," and attempts to return poetry to "its unperverted model, which is the Bible" (p. 14), and, more specifically, to the Book of Revelation.

In the first of two long and detailed chapters, Wittreich examines "the idea of prophecy," drawing upon Renaissance as well as recent commentaries on Revelation, and explores the nature and purpose of the "prophetic book." He also deals with pictorialism, "generic mixture," obscurity, allusive techniques, and the relations between prophecy and epic. Prophecy, Wittreich observes, is intended to transform its readers; it is "revolutionary" and "subversive," committed to overturning the present political and aesthetic orders. Epic, on the other hand, is a "conservative" form, written to preserve and commemorate "the collective ideology of the culture producing it" (p. 50). Both Milton and Spenser, states Wittreich, "join prophecy to epic" (p. 57), relying on similiar rhetorical strategies and structures. Milton, however, embraces the revolutionary ideology of prophecy, and endorses the "Christian radicalism" that Spenser "defuses" and "represses."

After reviewing the tradition and influence of prophecy, Wittreich concentrates in chapter two on "Lycidas," the most notable early achievement of Milton's "prophetic voice." His analysis is again wide-ranging and suggestive, beginning with a helpful comparison of "Lycidas" and the companion-poems "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso." Wittreich also traces the affinities between pastoral and prophecy (with reference back to Spenser), commenting well on the placement of "Lycidas" in the Edward King volume and also in the 1645 and 1673 editions of Milton's poems. There is still more in this chapter, including a comprehensive account of the structure, prosody, and rhyme-scheme of the poem, and a final section that moves forward from "Lycidas" to survey Milton's last poems as rich variations on the "Revelation model."

Visionary Poetics is an important book not only because of its provocative argument for Milton's "prophetic" role, but also because it signals–along with recent books by Christopher Hill, Boyd Berry, William Kerrigan, and others–a movement away from seeing Milton as a "Christian humanist" poet. It is difficult to generalize about a complex (and heavily populated) field like Milton studies. But during the past few years, we have witnessed a sustained effort to displace the work of Douglas Bush, C. S. Lewis, A. S. P. Woodhouse, and others–the great and influential generation of Miltonists who studied the poet as a spokesman for humanism and orthodoxy. New, highly-charged terms are now used to describe Milton; he is "radical," "heretical," "revolutionary." Rather than supporting the "Christian tradition"–Hill has even questioned whether such a tradition ever existed (*Milton and the English Revolution*, p. 3)–Milton is seen as one of its most powerful opponents, and as the precursor of the Romantic revolutionaries.

But while Wittreich's achievement in *Visionary Poetics* is admirable, his book does call for some sharp discriminations. His case for the "prophetic" influence in Milton's poetry is persuasive, but perhaps he brushes aside too quickly the poet's classical interests and values (scarcely a word is said on their behalf); and, in a few places, the argument is sketchy and imcomplete, or else overzealously schematic. In addition, many of Wittreich's critical tactics are, I think, ill-considered and self-indulgent. Readers of his previous book, *Angel of Apocalypse: Blake's Idea of Milton* (Madison, 1975), will recall Wittreich's dogged pursuit of every detail and scholarly reference. He persists in this

habit in *Visionary Poetics*, and his argument sometimes breaks down or becomes lost as he busily gathers all the relevant (and irrelevant) testimony of others. Let me concentrate on a short section for my examples: on page 116, Octavio Paz is reverently quoted to give authority to a vapid point about the "nothingness of death"; on pages 117-18, Wittreich tackles Louis Kampf's objections to the genre of "Lycidas"—objections that, first, have been presented by much better critics than Kampf, and that, second, have in fact been discredited many times before; finally, on page 121, Kathleen Williams, Harold Toliver, Angus Fletcher, Thomas Hobbes, and the eighteenth-century scholar Philip Neve are assembled and quoted to help advance a few simple points about pastoral poetry. Wittreich is an intelligent and careful scholar, and I am perplexed by his comically over-scrupulous citations and momentary displays of bad judgment. Do we always need this kind of solemn buttressing of the obvious: "Any one of Milton's last poems, as Frederick von Schlegel perceived of *Paradise Lost*, is marked by 'incompleteness'" (p. 193)? Equally remarkable are references to Caudwell, Barthes, and Mao-Tse Tung.

Visionary Poetics is also marred by occasionally reductive readings of Spenser's and Milton's poems (see, for example, p. 62), where the "Revelation model" is deployed to hammer the verse into "prophetic" shape. I am also uncomfortable with passages (pp. 76, 243) that devalue Spenser for failing, in Wittreich's view, to reach the "revolutionary" heights attained by Milton. Wittreich's concern for "historical" and "contextual" criticism (pp. xv, xxi) is commendable, but perhaps his own book is not quite "historical" enough. He does not fully consider, for instance, whether Milton's understanding of prophecy developed in significant ways during his career. At the time of "Lycidas" and the early prose works, Milton believed that his hopes for England's political and religious regeneration would soon be realized, and that he would himself "perhaps be heard" celebrating God's promise "in new and lofty measures" (*Of Reformation*, 1641). But by the second edition of *The Readie and Easie Way* (April, 1660), Milton's optimism had disappeared, and in the last paragraph of this tract, he refers to the prophet Jeremiah in the context of an attack on those who joyously greet the King, "choosing them a captain back to Egypt." Near the end of his second chapter, Wittreich states: "Waiting for Apocalypse—that was Milton's posture both when he completed 'Lycidas' and *Paradise Lost* and when he published his brief epic to which is added *Samson Agonistes*" (p. 212). But there are different attitudes towards "waiting," and Wittreich underestimates, I believe, Milton's growing doubts about his audience and its commitment to "revolution." Much of Wittreich's historical criticism is excellent, but if he intends to use terms like "revolutionary" and "radical" in his account of the prophetic Milton, he will have to be even more "historical" and discuss Milton's career as a politician and prose polemicist. To celebrate Milton for his political radicalism seems to me a questionable, if not an empty gesture, when his politics are examined as part of an "asethetic" system, and described in literary, rather than truly historical, terms.

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On Swift's Poetry by John Irwin Fischer. Gainesville, Florida: University Presses of Florida, 1978. Pp. 207. $10.00.

The Poetry of Jonathan Swift: Allusion and the Development of a Poetic Style by Peter J. Schakel. Madison and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978. Pp. x + 218. $25.00.

These two studies of Swift's verse, appearing a year after Nora Crow Jaffe's book, *The Poet Swift*, and amidst a rash of journal articles and MLA seminar papers on the subject, attest to the sudden collective revelation in critical circles that, Dryden (if the often repeated quotation ascribed to him is true) be damned, Swift was indeed a poet—one, moreover, of significance and distinction. Needless to say, it is a circumstance to be applauded that so extensive a body of writings by so major a writer is now finally being recovered and accorded its due, given a recognition without which any study of Swift must necessarily be deficient and incomplete. At the same time, a new set of problems has been created by this sudden enthusiastic celebration of Swift's poetical talents and by the ensuing rush to provide critical validation for his poetical output, to legitimize it as an officially recognized part of Swift's canon. For the earlier fiction of Swift the non-poet (or in any case the insignificant poetic trifler) we are now being offered the myth of Swift the Poet: the myth, that is, of the meticulous, self-conscious craftsman religiously dedicated to the careful cultivation and development of his poetic art. Swift's verse writings are thereby rendered fitting subject matter for studies of the growth of a poet's mind or the unfolding of a poetic sensibility or the "Development of a Poetic Style": studies which by their very nature direct our attention away from the fact that Swift's poetry, however substantial, possesses no privileged status within his canon—the fact that the poetry continually attests to its own limitations as art, to the inability of poetic forms and fictions to create a transcendent world that can replace the messiness and turbulence of reality. It is perhaps inevitable—in any case understandable—that, in their desire to counter the earlier conception of Swift's verses as mere playful trifles or bagatelles, the recent books on his poetry tend to minimize (if not actually ignore) the way in which such terms, along with Swift's self-ironic, demystifying, mockingly reductive comments on his own verses, including his periodic reminders that they were amusements intended for private circulation or mere scribbles fit only for the fire, point to an essential aspect of their character by underscoring the fact, not that they are actually trivial or inconsequential, but that they were conceived and written as something other than high art in the sense other eighteenth-century writers like Pope would have defined it. That so large a proportion of Swift's poetry consists of broadsides, adaptations of popular ballads, street cries, and the like tends to suggest as much also. The profoundly personal and occasional nature of Swift's verse as a whole—its inextricable links to a particular place and moment in history—renders it fundamentally resistant to any form of New Critical approach (however modified or disguised) which brings to bear assumptions concerning art's transcendence of life, its autonomy from both the stuff of everyday personal existence and from concrete historical realities.

Fischer's book is in various respects a useful study which succeeds in identifying certain important aspects of Swift's poetry, such as its "radically dramatic character" (p. 2) and the extent to which it exposes the grounds of its own being as well as the bases of its own judgments, but as a whole the book suffers from the kind of methodological distortions suggested above. Fischer finds in the verse recurring celebrations of art's transcendent power. Thus in a poem like *Vanbrug's House* Swift is seen to "affir[m] his faith in the enduring capacity of human art to participate in that harmony which Amphion knew" (p. 88), while lines from *On Poetry: A Rapsody* express "Swift's belief that poetry is a vocation, requires heavenly influence, and is, indeed, the rarest and most graced of callings" (p. 184). These contentions are part of a broader view of the poetry which emphasizes traditional moral and religious as well as poetic values, all three being depicted as capable of resolving the struggles and tensions of empirical reality. Fischer sees in Swift's verse the enactment of a spiritual drama manifested in the movement from the railing satirist's righteous indignation to the humbled Christian's recognition of his own presumption in claiming to be morally superior to his fellow men, which results in poems whose subjects "at once suffer and escape the force of [Swift's] judgment on them" (p. 4). According to Fischer, "Swift's lifelong task was to temper his hubristic sense of righteousness with a standard of judgment larger than himself" as the means through which he could "transmute what was eccentric and potentially destructive in his personality into powerful moral vision" (p. 2). Words like "transmute," "transform," and "transcend" recur throughout Fischer's discussion—consonant with his assertion that "no other canon I know demonstrates so strikingly the ability of a human spirit actually to transform its very character through art and thus to transcend itself" (p. 5)—and suggest, among other things, his inability or unwillingness to deal directly with the concrete (at times graphic) particulars and immediacies of so much of Swift's verse.

Given Fischer's interpretation, virtually any poem's significance is determined by its expression of a basic spiritual drama which remains structurally constant despite the vicissitudes of time and changing historical circumstances: which, regardless of its supposed links to Swift's individual psyche and character, represents a universal human pattern. Fischer's interpretation is thus inherently ahistorical and impersonal, a fact confirmed by the absence of references to those topical issues which play so central a role in Swift's writings, whether poetry or prose, and by his treatment of the *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift*, which dismisses Swift's own experience with chronic illness, physical pain, and the fear produced by it, in order to incorporate the poem into the seventeenth-century tradition of meditations on death, with the *Verses* made to reveal a three-part structure consistent with Louis Martz's characterization of "The Poetry of Meditation."

Fischer's thesis, moreover, becomes something of a Procrustean bed with regard both to the selection of poems discussed in the book and to the manner in which they are treated. Although the book implicitly claims to be a study of Swift's poetic canon, its analysis is actually based on the evidence of relatively few poems—those, not surprisingly, which best fit the formula Fischer delineates at the outset. A substantial number of important and characteristically Swiftian

poems are never even once mentioned, for Fischer's interpretation largely excludes from consideration entire groups of Swift's political broadsides, coarse travesties, and virulent satires in which the element of attack completely overwhelms the presentation of positive norms and precludes evidence of either spiritual development or artistic resolution. Given Fischer's emphasis on a positive moral vision and on poetic expressions of affirmation in Swift's writings, it is hardly surprising that his discussion covers only a small proportion of Swift's verse, which on the whole, like his prose, is most conspicuous for its subversive energies, its mocking perspectives, and its overturning of exalted ideals. Along with serving as a basis for selection, Fischer's thesis generates a scale of values used to determine the relative worth of individual poems. Those which transform doubts and ambiguities into statements of belief or celebration are automatically put forward as Swift's most important and effective poems, while those lacking such positive resolution are in effect dismissed as inferior endeavors. Thus Fischer declares, "Often enough Swift found nothing to balance against the horror or anger some subject inspired in him. When this happened the effect on his verse was regularly dismal"; and he proceeds to devalue poems like *A Description of a Salamander*, the first version of *Vanbrug's House*, the second version of *Baucis and Philemon*, and *The Virtues of Sid Hamet, the Magician's Rod* on the basis of both their negativism and their supposed aesthetic shortcomings, the two being closely interconnected in Fischer's mind (p. 4). The fact is, however, that verses like *A Description of a Salamander* and *The Virtues of Sid Hamet*, with their grotesque bodily images, their sexual puns, their reliance upon the techniques of travesty, and their explicitly topical character, are far more representative of Swift than the few poems Fischer extols as embodiments of Swift's providential outlook–as "positive, dramatic demonstration[s] of Swift's belief that this is God's world" (p. 195). Fischer's insistence upon seeing only ennobling and immortalizing transformations in Swift's poetry prevents him from appreciating and exploring the ways in which Swift resembles, say, the Earl of Rochester more than Pope by reflecting throughout his writings a conversion downward far more frequently than a conversion upward as well as by growing out of a popular satiric tradition which has little to do with conveying the message that "art survives life" (p. 182). What Fischer deems a highly uncharacteristic vision of despair in *Baucis and Philemon* (p. 94) is actually a typically Swiftian use of parodic transformations, a bitterly mocking revision of Classical myth, which culminates in an emblem of decay, a vivid reminder that life, inextricably bound up as it is with the forces of mutability, cannot be artfully preserved or elevated to a finer tone.

Because it is more successful in relating Swift's poetry to the biographical and historical circumstances in which the poetry is rooted, Peter J. Schakel's book is in general more illuminating than Fischer's, more capable of offering valid and fruitful insights into the verse. Through his study of allusions he explores the topical dimensions of various poems, especially in his chapters on "The Poems on Ireland" and "Poems Personal and Political." And because he views allusions as "useful for considering Swift's own presence in the poems" (p. 5), Schakel brings relevant biographical matters into his discussion of certain verses. In several of his analyses he shows his sensitivity to the often complex ways in

which the poems are closely bound up with Swift's life and times. Rightly arguing that works like the *Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift*, the Delany poems, *An Epistle to a Lady*, and *On Poetry: A Rapsody* "cannot be fully understood or appreciated, individually or as a group, without attention to the context supplied by political writings of the day" (pp. 121-2), he presents discussions of these verses which serve to underscore, through contrast, the basic abstraction of Fischer's interpretations—their disconnectedness from the most immediate and relevant contexts of Swift's poems. A comparison between their respective interpretations of the *Verses on the Death* is particularly helpful in demonstrating the strengths of Schakel's approach over Fischer's; Schakel's identification of the eulogist ("One quite indiff'rent in the Cause") as a member of the anti-Walpole Opposition, while perhaps neither as clearcut nor as significant a revelation as Schakel wants us to believe, is certainly a more appropriate and fruitful view, and one more responsive to the tenor as well as the particular details of the text, than Fischer's conception of the eulogist as "an Old Testament narrator" (p. 175).

There are, however, problems with Schakel's use of allusions to structure his argument and to provide a basis for interpreting Swift's poetry. Schakel's thesis that "Swift's search for truth in verse is revealed to a large extent through allusions, as he raised or reinforced central thoughts by alluding to the works of others" (p. 2), not unlike Fischer's thesis in a different way, makes it necessary for him to concentrate on one particular portion of Swift's verse and automatically eliminates a number of important (but alas, not allusive) poems from his discussion. And here too the thesis functions as a basis for evaluating the artistic worth of individual poems. From Schakel's perspective, Swift's best poems are those which utilize allusions with the greatest skill, complexity, and sophistication, while verses devoid of allusions are relegated to the status of minor pieces, dismissed as immature work, or neglected altogether. The fallacies of such a viewpoint become clear when a verse like "To Lord Harley...on his Marriage"—which happens to be "unified by its allusions to Ovid"—is put forward as a more significant piece than the "Progress" poems and the poems to Stella, which, "witty and vivid though they are...lack the depth and sophistication, in thought and theme, of the marriage poem to Harley" since they "do not rely to any significant extent on allusions" (pp. 99, 100). The typicality and centrality of the Stella poems and the "Progress" poems within the context of Swift's poetic canon, along with their importance as expressions of recurring themes in Swift's writings, is here virtually ignored because of the privileged status Schakel accords the use of allusion, which seems automatically to confer special graces upon a poem.

Other problems are created by Schakel's failure to define the term "allusion" with sufficient clarity and precision. Sometimes it is used to signify contemporary historical events; other times, literary models from the past. As a result, the book is frequently making somewhat abrupt shifts in focus from a discussion of Classical satire to an examination of eighteenth-century political affairs. To be sure, these two concerns are not necessarily unrelated and certainly not mutually exclusive, but in each case, depending upon how the word "allusion" is defined, we perceive Swift in a somewhat different light, on the

one hand as a traditional Augustan writer looking to literary models from the past for his inspiration, on the other hand as a man deeply preoccupied with his contemporary situation, responding in his verse to concrete, living realities more than to universal truths handed down from the past. It would have been helpful had Schakel at least acknowledged the different emphasis in interpretation growing out of these two kinds of allusions and perhaps explored the relationship between them insofar as Swift was concerned.

By the same token, and to an even greater extent, it would have greatly helped to clarify Schakel's argument if he had defined his conception of allusion in relation (or contrast) to Reuben Brower's study of Pope and "The Poetry of Allusion," particularly since his subtitle is likely to evoke associations with the latter in the reader's mind. Schakel does note at the outset that "An approach to Swift's allusions must not be patterned on the methods critics have developed for the poems of Alexander Pope" (p. 4), but he proceeds to identify these methods with Earl Wasserman rather than Brower, whose name does not appear at all in this opening discussion. It turns out that the distinction Schakel is making here is between the complexity and subtlety of Pope's allusions on the one hand, and the explicitness of Swift's allusions on the other: "Swift was rarely subtle about including allusions; usually, he footnoted them or even mentioned them without the poem itself. To a great extent, then, the important thing in a study of Swift's poetry is not the *discovery* of allusions, but the consideration of their *use* in the poems" (p. 4). Schakel's observation is probably true for the most part, but it is also somewhat beside the point since the central issue involved here is not the degree of subtlety or explicitness but the specific nature of the allusions and the way each poet adapts, adheres to, alters, or subverts his models, which can tell us a great deal about the poet's historical, ideological, and literary outlook. When Schakel later touches upon certain of these questions in his Chapter III, "Thoughts Borrowed from Virgil and Horace," he makes some interesting and important points about Swift's use of Horatian models and its difference from Pope's adaptations: "There is little in Swift of Pope's sense of identity with Horace, of the almost reverent treatment of the master. Pope alters his situations to fit Horace; Swift alters Horace to fit his situations.... Swift's relationship with Horace is totally receptive: he takes from Horace, uses him, turns him about with little reverence or respect, and gives back nothing in return" (p. 82). Given such insightful and provocative comments, one could only wish that they seemed less isolated and offhand—that they were part of a more extensive and systematic exploration of the relationship both between Swift and Horace and between Swift and Pope in their respective stances toward the formal satiric tradition that Horace represents.

It should be noted, in conclusion, that Schakel too embraces the myth of Swift the Poet, as is clear from his recurring references to "Swift's development as a poet" and "Swift's growth and maturation as a poet" (p. 5). Swift's own development is paralleled by that of his poetry, which, despite Schakel's emphasis on allusions, is seen in many ways as a self-contained, autonomous body with its own principles of internal coherence and growth. Hence there is in Schakel's interpretation a heavily teleological bias, with Swift's earlier poems invariably being viewed as adumbrations of later ones, as stages in a poet's steady march

along the road to poetic maturity. This is confirmed by the repeated assertions that "Swift's poetic style has begun to move toward what it will be at its best" (p. 37), that "there has been a decisive step forward in his development as a poet" (p. 41), that a particular poem (in this case *Vanbrug's House*) "indicates the directions his poetry would take in the future" (p. 42), and that "The ingredients of Swift's mature poetry are already present in 1708, awaiting only further practice and an increasingly sophisticated use of sources and allusions" (p. 37). Such a view necessarily emphasizes the primacy, self-sufficiency, and internal symmetries of art over the urgencies, unexpected intrusions, and disjunctions of life. True to the implications of this view, Schakel in the final analysis cannot accept the topicality and particularity of Swift's verse on their own terms, but instead seems to feel the need to legitimize them in terms of traditional artistic values such as "breadth, complexity, and universality" (p. 4). Thus the first version of *Vanbrug's House* is denigrated because "The focus is narrow, dealing only with a temporary, local situation and lacking the universal implications that give poetry lasting interest" (p. 33) while the final version is praised because it demonstrates the "use of allusions or of an external source to expand an initially local or personal situation or incident into a significant statement on art and morality" (p. 41). Here again Swift's poetry has been assimilated into the realm of high art, transcendent vision, and universal truth. I personally look forward to the appearance of a critical study of Swift which is as skeptical of art's healing, immortalizing power as Swift himself was, and which does not find it necessary to apologize for or dismiss poems "dealing only with a temporary, local situation" because it recognizes that neither Swift himself nor his writing can be separated from—or elevated above—such a situation.

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Jane Austen's Novels: Social Change and Literary Form by Julia Prewitt Brown. Cambridge, Mass. and London: Harvard University Press, 1979. Pp. 185. $10.00.

For Julia Prewitt Brown, in this lively and innovative study, Jane Austen is as revolutionary an author "in her own way" as Mary Wollstonecraft (p. 154). The claim is not supported by a comparative study of Austen's fictional predecessors and contemporaries, as Marilyn Butler's contrasting claim for an essentially conservative author is, in *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas.* Instead, Brown relies on a few secondary sources, such as Lawrence Stone and Mary Beard, to argue her rather general thesis that Austen's fiction records the shift from a tradition-directed to an inner-directed society (p. 19). In such a society women were aware both of the pressures of making financially advantageous marriages and of a new freedom of personal choice. Jane Austen's importance as a historical novelist, then, has little to do with the Napoleonic wars, but stems from

her analysis of a particular phase of feminine consciousness, characterized by "a generational definition of moral life, a concern for the actual and immediate quality of social existence, a belief in human interdependence, and a value for social cooperation and personal adaptability" (p. 157).

If the last element of this feminine ethos seems hardly revolutionary, and reminds one of the conservative Elinor Dashwood, the effect is intended. Brown's view of Austen's "revolutionary" fiction does not lead her, as one might expect, to endorse Marianne Dashwood's individualism or to value the novels only insofar as they foreshadow the anti-social attitudes of the Brontës. As she nicely observes, Austen clearly distinguishes between the "cooperative integrity" of an Elinor and the "calculating conciliation" of a Lucy Steele, and, at least until *Persuasion*, "the adjustments people make to preserve social harmony [in the novels] are not failures but successes of the spirit" (p. 163).

On the other hand, the author has no truck with readings (such as Graham Hough's) that discover social norms in Austen's fiction. What she calls the "drive toward cooperation" (p. 23) is dictated by anthropological rather than by moral or religious imperatives, and the attitudes one finds in a novel like *Pride and Prejudice* are "unexplained," resembling Freudian taboos as distinct from moral or religious prohibitions (p. 77). Moreover, to the extent that the norms are institutional and therefore, in Austen's society, associated with the male, they are demystified as when, for example, the institutional authority of Collins and Darcy is ironically stripped away.

Such a denial of Austen's genuine socio-moral concerns may be hard for some readers to accept. While it can be argued that Maria Bertram's marriage to Rushworth, as sanctioned by Sir Thomas, "shows the basic materialism and inertia of the society" (p. 21), what is to be made of Knightley, admittedly "Jane Austen's most attractive conservative"? Surely he shows society at its best. Brown's response to this is that Knightley is a realist (as if conservatives were not realists?) who recognizes how badly society can treat its poor and displaced. In *Emma*, however, Knightley not only recognizes the dangers posed to Miss Bates and Harriet Smith but successfully does what he can to prevent them. When Emma insults Miss Bates on Box Hill, Knightley rebukes her; as Brown observes, Emma has violated "the most basic human law... the protection of the weak" (p. 119). True, such a law may be found in any society "whether barbarous or advanced," but it is not a taboo, and it may be sufficiently "explained" in terms of the golden rule shared by Knightley, Emma and their author.

Brown has more success arguing her case for Jane Austen as a historian of feminine consciousness in the three "novels of satiric realism"—*Sense and Sensibility*, *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion*—than in what she terms "the novels of ironic comedy." Her interpretations of characters and scenes in *Pride and Prejudice* are sometimes a little stale—the pompous absurdities of Mary Bennet and Mr. Collins have been too often rehearsed to bear much more going over. And her insistence on the indeterminacy of *Emma* (the character as well as the novel), while according with current objections to fictional closure, seems somewhat strained. One need not insist on the humiliation of Emma Woodhouse to believe that she grows morally through the course of the novel. Concerning the heroine's marriage to Knightley the author seems, in any case, to be of two minds. At one

point, she explains the sense of stasis in *Mansfield Park* and *Emma* in terms of "the incestuous marriages with which they end" (p. 99). Yet in the next chapter it is the (presumably healthy) "sexuality" of Emma's relationship with Knightley that is stressed. "Brother and sister! no, indeed."

On *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion* Brown is at her most brilliant and provocative. Her reading of the earlier novel rivals those of Reginald Farrer and Kingsley Amis in the venom of its diatribe. Fanny and Edmund, we are told, "finally emerge as monsters, if only because they overpower the Crawfords so completely.... After the tyranny of victory, questions of moral sincerity or insincerity seem trivial" (p. 100). And in the chapter on *Persuasion* there are many individual interpretations with which one might disagree. It seems hardly likely, for example, that the view we are given of the grotesquely vain Sir Walter Elliot at the start of the novel is Anne Elliot's own view, or that Jane Austen, with her two beloved and successful sailor brothers, was "decidedly satirical" concerning Wentworth's war profiteering. Yet, despite disagreements, many readers are likely to respond favorably to the intelligence and verve of this study, to the general excellence of its stylistic analyses, and to the clarity of its critical formulations. Brown may not have justified her sub-title in terms of original historical research, but she has written a readable and perceptive study that will be of much interest and value to critics of Jane Austen.

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Images of Romanticism: Verbal and Visual Affinities edited by Karl Kroeber and William Walling. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1978. Pp. xv + 232. 63 illus. $18.95.

The general subject matter of this book is the network of relationships between literature and the visual arts in the Romantic period, or, more broadly, between word and image in a wide variety of Romantic art forms. The book makes no claim to comprehensiveness or systematic organization, providing something on the order of a miscellany, a series of essays linked only by the notion of "images" in Romantic art. Except for one rather specialized foray into French literature (Jean Starobinski's close analysis of "André Chenier and the Allegory of Poetry") the Romanticism is all English, and except for the opening essay in theory (Rudolf Arnheim's "Space as an Image of Time") the methodology is familiar historicist humanism. Kroeber's and Walling's introduction sounds a muted polemical note in its claim that "the methods of literary criticism most in fashion" (i. e., deconstruction) "are intensely, even desparately, verbal," and therefore of doubtful efficacy in the analysis of pictorial, imagistic, visual, or non-verbal matters. But this claim and its corollary charge that deconstruction leads criticism toward "intellectual abstracting" never becomes a serious part of the argument in the essays which follow, serving instead as simply a fair warning of the shared prejudices of most of the contributors.

It's only fair, then, to make my own prejudices as a reviewer as explicit as possible. I'm totally sympathetic to the subject matter, and to a method which attempts to see a wide variety of art forms "as complexly engaged in a cultural density of particular time, place, and circumstance" (xii). I'm not satisfied, however, that this is all we need, and that "the other approach" inevitably "leads into ever more critical abstraction in the Blakean sense of separation" (xii). It might also just conceivably lead us toward the kind of synthetic hypotheses that could relate the present miscellaneous collection of insights to a coherent and falsifiable theory. It is notable, for instance, that in an anthology so largely devoted to the relationship between painting and poetry in a particular era, no systematic attention is paid to the understanding of that relationship as such. Carl Woodring tells us that Coleridge "with Lessing's *Laokoon* as his starting point... developed a deep distrust of the Horatian adage *ut pictura poesis est*" (p. 98), but does nothing to elaborate or even defend this assertion. Ronald Paulson speaks of "the incompatibility of visual and verbal structures" in Turner's painting (p. 167), but leaves us to wonder whether this incompatibility is paradigmatic or exceptional in Romantic art. In an anthology containing essays that advance general theses about such matters as color perception (Heffernan), the esthetics of the sublime (Hagstrum, Kroeber, Meisel), and the nature of historical understanding (Kroeber), why is there no reflection on institutionalized relations between the various sign systems (verbal, pictorial, musical, architectural, even "natural") in which cultural systems are encoded? One can only hope that the suspicion of deconstruction, semiotics, and other avant garde modes in recent criticism will not become entrenched as a suspicion of theory, abstraction, and generality in general.

In the meantime there is much to commend and to learn from in the present volume. Jean Hagstrum's essay on "Blake and British Art" is a valuable inventory of Blake's immediate forebears and contemporaries that fills a surprising gap in Blake scholarship, and will be a useful starting point for students for many years to come. Carl Woodring tells us exactly "What Coleridge Thought of Pictures," and takes us a long way towards understanding why. Lorenz Eitner provides a useful survey of pictorial treatments of "Cages, Prisons, and Captives in Eighteenth Century Art," although his claim that "the artistic barreness of the subject of 'Liberty' springs from *its very nature*" as "an ideal abstraction" (p. 14; italics mine) strikes one as quite unhistorical (how did "Liberty" *ever* bear fruit as an artistic subject if "its very nature" makes it barren?). L. J. Swingle makes a number of interesting points about "Wordsworthworth's 'Picture of the Mind,'" although one feels that he would have benefitted from some consideration of Cary Nelson's chapter on Wordsworth's pictorialism in *The Incarnate Word*. Swingle's essay seems to operate on the assumption that the "of" in "picture of the mind" means "in" or "belonging to" (thus he refers mainly to the "mind's pictures" in Wordsworth). One wonders how his argument would be modified if he took it more literally as a picture which *represents* the mind.

One of the few essays which attempts a straightforward comparison of particular paintings and literary works is William Walling's "More Than Sufficient Room: Sir David Wilkie and the Scottish Literary Tradition." Walling's com-

parisons seem quite illuminating at a general level, when he explores Wilkie's, Fergusson's, and Scott's common participation in the crisis of Scottish culture confronting the challenge of London and the continent, but his claims for more particular formal analogies seem rather thin. Wilkie's *Pitlessie Fair* and Fergusson's ballad "Hallow-fair" are likened in "the denial in painting and poem of any secure formal center," a negative and nebulous similarity which could link all too many works of art. Walling's particular distinctions (*Pitlessie Fair* can only picture a drum, while Fergusson's ballad can suggest the sound of it; p. 115) belabor the obvious in a way that requires no further comment.

Perhaps the most interesting and substantial group of essays in the volume is the last five, all of which deal in some way with the work of J. M. W. Turner. Martin Meisel's essay contrasts the way in which the style of Turner and John Martin was employed for theatrical stage effects in Victorian stage shows. This is one of the most original and penetrating essays in the entire volume, opening up fascinating connections between the realms of elite cultural and popular art, and making novel suggestions about the reception of Turner and Martin in terms of psychological theories of taste. The other essays which deal with Turner are, in various degrees, provocative or at least provoking. Only R. F. Storch's reductive psychoanalyzing of Turner (uniting him with Shelley and other Romantics as regressive, schizoid personalities) seems to me totally misguided. James Heffernan's essay on "The English Romantic Perception of Color," while useful in presenting what poets and painters said about color, does not take into account the problem of claiming that this amounts to a history of *perception*, rather than theories about, or representations of perception. Art historians like E. H. Gombrich have been warning against the equation of the history of representation with that of perception for many years, and Heffernan's conclusions should be evaluated with this caution in mind.

The essays which I would most like to argue with—in the context of general praise and approval—are those by Karl Kroeber and Ronald Paulson. Kroeber gets praise for constructing an absolutely convincing case for what he calls "the temporal sublime" in Romantic literature and art, a historicist mode of vision that finds in the uncertainty and obscurity of historical understanding a temporal analogue to the Burkean spatial sublime. He gets criticism for presenting this thesis as a logically exclusive alternative to the "critical cliches of the 1960s and 1970s," the idea that "the primary thrust of Romantic art was toward ... apocalypse" or "transcendence" (p. 149). It is not clear to me why Kroeber's historicism and his "temporal sublime" cannot co-exist quite happily with, and enrich the apocalyptic theory of Romanticism. One feels that to take Kroeber completely seriously on the incompatibility of the two theories would be to make his historicist theory the critical cliche of the 1980s, an oversimplification that would not do justice to the impressive power of his hypothesis.

In a similar way Ronald Paulson's examination of the verbal element in Turner's paintings ("Turner's Graffiti: The Sun and Its Glosses") provides an excellent analysis of compositional semantics in Turner, but one which seems independent of his central thesis that visual and verbal structures are "incompatible" in Turner's painting. This incompatibility is demonstrated mainly with reference to the bifurcated nature of Turner criticism, which tends to see him either as a forerunner of

modern abstractionism or as the last true classicist. But an equally plausible thesis would be that the "two Turners" are a creation of inadequate critical assumptions, and that it is our need to provide historicist labels like "classic" and "romantic" that makes Turner's achievement seem contradictory or paradoxical.

Whatever arguments we might wish to raise with particular essays in this volume, the main impression is one of rich, provocative variety. Any student of English Romantic literature who wishes to extend his work into the fine arts should consult this anthology, especially if his interest is in Turner. He will find haphazard illustrations (many paintings discussed in great detail in the text are not reproduced), a totally unreliable index (many recurrent proper names, such as Michelangelo and Thomas Gray, are not indexed at all, and other entries, such as John Howard, are incomplete). He will also find a stimulating collection of essays by some of the best scholars and critics now exploring the uncharted territories on the borders between Romantic painting and poetry.

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New World, New Earth: Environmental Reform in American Literature from the Puritans through Whitman by Cecelia Tichi. New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1979. Pp. xii + 290. $18.50.

In 1971 Cecelia Tichi published a remarkable essay in *William and Mary Quarterly*, "Spiritual biography and the 'Lords Remembrancers,'" on the unique tribal dimension in Puritan writings. The essay was reprinted in Sacvan Bercovitch's *American Puritan Imagination: Essays in Revaluation*. Now Tichi has written a bold but disappointing book arguing for the existence of a major social tradition in American literature: the fusion of calls for spiritual redemption with calls for environmental reform. Even her title, with its deliberate twist on the Biblical vision of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21.1), presents the Puritan tradition as this-worldly, not other-worldly. The basic millennial thesis has been recently established by Bercovitch, who is more central to this study than Thoreau; Tichi's originality lies in applying the thesis to specific issues of environmental perception. Any readers who privately admit to being baffled by Bercovitch's abstruse doctrine can turn to this book for clear-headed uses written in readable, if repetitive, prose.

For Tichi the environmental reform tradition begins with the joining of metaphorical and literal perception in the "Christian militarism" of Edward Johnson's *Wonder-Working Providence* (a good chapter). It continues through Joel Barlow's "engineered millennium" in his *Columbiad*, along with a glance at Barlow's friend Robert Fulton, then divides into "celebratory" George Bancroft and "denunciatory" James Fenimore Cooper. After lumping Frederick Olmsted together with Edward Bellamy and too many others as Whitman's contemporaries, Tichi reaches the tradition's only aesthetic pinnacle: Whitman's "Song of the Broad-Axe," which at last unites the South's timeless Eden with

the North's New Jerusalem. A secondary and more other-worldly strand begins with Bradford and Cotton Mather's *Theopolis Americana*, runs fitfully through Thoreau, and also ends in Whitman. Tichi grapples with the aesthetic inadequacies of so many of the works at hand; in fact her writing is most alive when she allows herself some negatives, especially on Barlow and Bancroft. Her case for Whitman's poem, while overstated, vigorously presents the poem's "birth" of a new world through a reformed imagination transcending the "programmatic" or "mimetic" minds of earlier writers.

Unfortunately the book's simple virtues, like those of her theme, avoid more complex problems. First, the tradition Tichi describes is simply *not* one of environmental reform, in the sense either of correcting man-made evils or more broadly of establishing ecological harmony for its own sake and ours. The "obsessive" American "imperative," as she says, is to impose an "a priori vision" of social perfection on the landscape. To call it reform, though catchy, is ahistorical and inaccurate. Worse, its positive connotations encourage her toward an indulgent cover-up of the tradition's tendency to legitimate material exploitation as spiritual development. Bancroft's "environmentally arrogant, insensitive, supremely anthropocentric" vision (p. 200) is typical, not idiosyncratic. Moreover, most of her writers show an intolerance amounting to snobbish or fearful contempt for plurality, diversity, and ordinary people in ordinary places. Cooper hated townspeople, Jedidiah Morse hated democracy, Freneau hated the Irish, Thoreau despised everybody. Even Crèvecoeur, more tolerant and therefore less central, hated frontiersmen. These ironies, like the irony of claiming for the height of American environmental consciousness a paean to an axe, are half exposed but not explored. At the very least her theme is closer to Ernest Lee Tuveson's *Redeemer Nation* than she would like.

A related problem is the book's undiscriminating tone. Tichi's discussion of Frederick Olmsted, for instance, allies his Central Park with what she calls the environmental reform tradition even as she shows him arguing for the reverse, that spiritual renewal follows from environmental improvement. Every other writer makes an improved world not the beginning but the end, an outgrowth of spiritual reform. It's no accident that Olmsted became a genuine reformer while the others were not. Another example: her epilogue claims that no writer after Whitman creates the New Earth in imaginative literature. Tichi blames this "collapse" on "the failure of the national imagination." It seems at least arguable that modernism means more than the Waste Land, that writers like Norman Mailer, Hart Crane, or William Carlos Williams (whom she briefly discusses) do partially identify themselves with the nation, and that in any case environmental reform doesn't require grandiose national selves. Leo Marx's *Machine in the Garden*, with its old-fashioned pastoral polarities, is much more subtle and sophisticated.

My major quarrel is really with Sacvan Bercovitch's thesis. Where she and he find a triumphant imaginative rhetoric compensating for social failure with a vision of social redemption, I see defensive grandiosity, a rescue fantasy of the Imperial Self designed to deny personal anxieties and social conflicts. Like Bercovitch, Tichi opens the door to private unease but doesn't walk through it. She notes private anxieties and fears of failure, especially in Barlow but also

in Johnson, Cotton Mather, Freneau, and others. She comments on Thoreau's "dread" of actual wildness. Yet she doesn't pursue the connections, as Stephen Black has done for Whitman or Gordon Wood and Marvin Meyers have done for popular rhetoric. And why is the tradition so second-rate, except for Whitman? An environmental vision that deliberately avoids "topographical sight," people as they are, private tensions, social conflicts, and true wildness needs more probing questions. What kind of tradition is it whose only living legacy, by her own account, is Joel Barlow's word "utilize"?

Lesser quibbles abound. Tichi has a penchant for saying "ineluctable," "important," and even "importantly." Secondary scholarship is slim, except for predictable titles. Several chapters, e. g. on Cooper, are derivative. Tichi cites Annette Kolodny three times in the text but never in the notes, thus avoiding both the title and the thesis of *The Lay of the Land*. I noticed more than the usual number of missed references and glaring typos, of which my favorite is Bradford's "top of Pigsah" (p. 24); Yale Press has not served her well. *The Great Gatsby's* narrator is not Nick "Carroway" (p. 255). At least one Whitman quotation has a minor but unacknowledged omission, as does her transcription of Lawrence Buell's transcription of Bronson Alcott (p. 162). The list could go on.

New World, New Earth usefully calls attention again to The American Connection between landscape and millennium. Specialists will value the chapters on Johnson and Barlow, and perhaps the close reading of Whitman's poem. American Studies students may find it an accessible introduction to various infrequently considered texts, while frustrations with Tichi's overstated simplifications may even prompt a reconsideration of Bercovitch's thesis. But readers who want to see Tichi's mind at its best should look at her earlier essay.

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The American Jeremiad by Sacvan Bercovitch. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1978. Pp. xvi + 239. $15.00.

Democracy and the Novel: Popular Resistance to Classic American Writers by Henry Nash Smith. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978. Pp. viii + 204. $13.95.

Each of these studies measures its argument from the sturdy fact of the American middle-class. Sacvan Bercovitch traces the history of the American jeremiad over three centuries as it enlarged its audience, adapted its rhetoric to meet the crisis of the moment, and finally enabled middle-class Americans to chastise and congratulate themselves by means of a ritual that had repeatedly joined "social criticism to spiritual renewal, public to private identity." Henry Nash Smith attends to the manner in which our major nineteenth-century writers of fiction demurred from the "secular faith" underlying American popular

culture. Bercovitch examines texts so that we may understand the protean appeal of the American jeremiad. Mr. Smith examines texts so that we may see how novelists questioned the reality which gave Americans an easy sense of confidence in themselves and in their future as a nation.

Expanding the argument of his earlier monograph, "Horologicals to Chronometricals: The Rhetoric of the Jeremiad" (1970), Bercovitch reminds us that the New England jeremiad was the product of the first emigrants. Crucial to his discussion is the idea that the Puritan "cries of declension and doom were part of a strategy designed to revitalize their errand," that "a promise of ultimate success," emerging from the traditional rhetoric of vengeance, became the signature of American jeremiads of whatever century. Inspired at first by the insecurity of the earliest settlers, the Puritan Jeremiad came (by the 1670's) to feed on crisis, on events—and they were never wanting—that enhanced the drama of the New England experience. And by the time of the second and third generation Puritans, a principle of *enlargement* had manifested itself, so that "the New World at large—not just New England but the entire continent—was destined for an errand in sacred history." It was precisely this capacity to evolve, to convert social and political problems to a rhetorical structure at once denunciatory and beguiling, that saw the jeremiad through the transition from Puritan New England to Yankee New England. The jeremiad survived "the failure of theocracy," Bercovitch demonstrates, because the Puritans had of necessity enlarged their vision to include basic American concerns that carried their own sense of urgency. If Cotton Mather's *Magnalia* epitomizes "the last stage in the growth" of the seventeenth century jeremiad, Jonathan Edwards' "effort to link regeneration to the destiny of the New World" sets the conditions by means of which the jeremiad could flourish anew in the cause of the American Revolution. Only this rhetorical form, concludes Bercovitch, as it "was developed from the Puritans through Edwards, could have sufficed for the occasion."

Facilitating the movement from "visible saint to American patriot," from "colony to republic to imperial power," the jeremiad provided an impetus for renewing the principles of revolution in the nineteenth-century. Quite rightly, Bercovitch discusses Fourth of July addresses as annual rituals in the jeremiad tradition. Indeed, these addresses support his argument even more forcefully than he has the opportunity to show: for the basic strategy of the Fourth of July address is to lament the injustice and manifold evils of the present day, then to say that if we will only rededicate ourselves to the ideals of the Founding Fathers and the Declaration of Independence the nation will yet realize its full and unique promise. The major writers of the American Renaissance, on the other hand, reveal "the pervasive impact" of the jeremiad in a different way. In their "divergence from 'popular culture,'" these writers simultaneously lament and celebrate the national dream to which they subscribe in frustration. Reaching beyond the categories of their culture, their classic works "are the most striking evidence we have" of the power and resilience of the American jeremiad.

It is at this point that the inquiry of *The American Jeremiad* intersects with that of *Democracy and the Novel*. For in what he presents as a "handful of essays," Henry Nash Smith investigates not so much the "Popular Resistance" to our classic writers promised in his sub-title as the "divergence" of major

writer and mass culture to which we so often refer. As he concedes at the end of his opening chapter, Smith's investigations are preliminary, suggestive, the product of "hit-and-run" tactics. As one would expect, however, they are both provocative and useful, necessary steps toward a fuller understanding of the relationships of a writer's style and a writer's culture. Hawthorne's work, for example, subordinates "the outer world of institutions and observed behavior to the inner universe of private experience" and thus evokes a reality at odds with the extra-mental reality sanctioned (and assumed) by his society. In the figure of Captain Ahab, Melville presents an identity rooted in madness in an effort to express "an impulse originating below the threshold of his own consciousness." Some of the recurrent words of *Moby-Dick–ineffable, inexpressible, inexplicable, unimaginable*–suggest that Melville was reaching beyond the formulations of his culture, demanding by intensity of style that a reader confront matters ordinarily ignored by by a reading public committed to fantasies of assurance.

And that, of course, is why *Moby-Dick* had few readers and a novel like Henry Ward Beecher's *Norwood* (1867) had many. Smith's chapter on *Norwood* (a "textbook of the genteel tradition") makes the pieties of several generations critically and conceptually available in a compelling way. It also provides a context for his consideration of Howells, who challenged Beecheresque conventions but was unable to sustain a revolt against them. By analyzing closely ten passages from *A Modern Instance*, Smith distinguishes two conflicting styles in the narrative, one precise, assuming the moral complexity of the world, the other turgid and oratorical, informed by rigid moral categories. And the second style, he believes, ultimately restrained the possibilities of the first. One chapter on Mark Twain and two on Henry James complete *Democracy and the Novel*. Once again Smith is refreshing and lucid on *Huckleberry Finn* and *A Connecticut Yankee*; if a few of his observations seem second-hand, at least he has had the good sense to borrow from himself. The chapters on Henry James, however, have a different perspective than one finds in the rest of the book. Smith remains, as it were, on the outside looking in, first at the fortunes of James's career in the 1880's and 1890's, then at the image of the writer in "Greville Fane" and "The Next Time," and finally (in the last chapter) at reviews of James's work over a period of thirty years. One cannot argue with the value of such considerations; but they are different in kind from what Smith has done in his earlier chapters.

The argument of *The American Jeremiad* brings one to see the structure of a rhetorical form as a ritual enactment of the American temperament. Bercovitch conducts his study with care, rigor, and an exciting sweep that yields implications for all students of American literature and American culture. The analyses of *Democracy and the Novel* suggest ways of understanding the work of our classic writers of fiction in the context of the society in which they lived. Only a person with a wealth of experience and an enduring desire to begin could have written the essays in this book. It is to Smith's credit that, having accomplished so much, he now starts us, points us, goads us, in directions future scholarship will find rewarding.

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Time and the Novel: The Genealogical Imperative by Patricia Tobin. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978. Pp. xi + 235. $12.50.

It has now become a familiar notion that the repetitive nature of modernism's constitutive refusal of history is itself historical and problematical. Versions of "post-modernism" that are not themselves aware of that problem tend to become repetitions of the modernist denegation. The dilemma often finds expression in two strategies, each with its own varying degree of self-blindness. One strategy, of which I am perhaps guilty, is to adopt modernism as a way of reading, to see all texts as modern insofar as they are texts. I immodestly confess this anachronistic tendency, or bias even, at the outset to offer the reader some perspective on the following remarks about Patricia Tobin's book, which, it seems to me, succumbs to an opposite bias. Tobin's procedure is to measure the past—periods, actions, texts, whatever—by the supposedly enlightened ideas of the present. She grades the past, marking elements of sophistication or lapses into blind error, and delivers harsh judgment on the way it falls short of our advanced level of comprehension.

Tobin valuably extends Edward Said's analysis of the historical and metaphoric link between mimetic representation and biological engenderment, and between narrative structure and the dynastic, linear ordering of patriarchal descent. Said's insight was more subtly and carefully worked out as he demonstrated in *Beginnings* the progressive crossing back and disturbing of that link until the engendering author was subsumed by the logic of writing and biological continuity was increasingly pre-empted by the textual ordering which at first served as its metaphorical substitute. This imprisonment was, in his phrase, "the scriptive fate" of the modernist writer which one can now extrapolate as always already there in such novels as *Don Quixote*, *Tristram Shandy* or even *Bleak House* or *Middlemarch*. The history of the movement of that scriptive fate is thus made uncertainly the creation of the textual logic there from the beginning (the "always, already" there)—the originating author (or authority) becomes the creature of the text rather than its generator. History is thus made possible and cancelled out by the same textual movement. Tobin's line is simpler. She exaggerates the idea in a different way by offering her own genealogical history of the genealogical imperative, her own "irreversible moral progress"—the phrase she uses for the totalizing plot of certain "classical" novels.

In fact, her description of the novel of the genealogical imperative could too easily be applied to her own historical argument:

> Everything in the novels prepares us for the end—every word, gesture, detail, and episode is fraught with portent. When time is moralized as the primary ordering principle, interpretation is encouraged at every point, and because of the book's integrity, always rewarding. Even within a looser, more panoramic form, the traditional nineteenth-century novel reverberates with a moral thud at its culmination. (p. 33)

While her analysis of individual novels shows a fine awareness that the tyranny of the telos is just as absolute, just as much a part of the genealogical imperative, as the tyranny of the origin, her own historical scheme does not allow for that awareness. (The immediately evident problem with such pro-

gressive literary histories is to believe that the form moves, as Leslie Fiedler once noted, from the technical naivete of Hawthorne laboriously toward the heights reached by, say, William Dean Howells!) This history, then, for Tobin —a history of both social and literary forms, moves apparently from a primitive "before" when narrative was mythic, and society was natural, matriarchal—though non-hierarchical and free, through a patriarchal dynastic control in which the meaning and value of the individual person or discrete element are subordinated to the totalizing whole dominated by an enabling origin, finally to post-modernist fresh air, when narrative is freed from linearity and causality, eroticism breaks free of conjugal procreation, textual surface from the depths of romantic obscurity. The symbol is defeated and the literal is restored as the individual is restored to his or her implied "original" and "natural" status. Though Romanticism is for Tobin a deluded ideology, the romanticism of her own "post-modernism" should be self-evident. The description of an historical "before" and "after" would seem theoretically impossible, if not inconsistent with her own attempt to "deconstruct" the genealogical imperative.

The eighteenth-century novel then, in her history, is made up of "a merry troup" of texts which "appear irresponsibly playful or frivolously manipulative" next to *Clarissa* "whose offspring populate the nineteenth-century literary scene" and *Robinson Crusoe* whose hero "comes to represent the paternal principle in its purest personification." As for the others, "since [. . . their] protagonists are not expected to depart from their human nature given at the outset" and because the enabling fictions of a transcendent author or of a providential God guarantee their destiny, "the sequence and succession of their life events need have no causal significance." We can be safely delighted by "their generously muddled middles of erratic adventures, any of which could be substracted from these 'histories' without seriously affecting their final outcomes" and in which adventure can follow adventure in nicely haphazard order without regard to the strict paternal logic of cause and effect. This idea seems the old "rise of the novel" coarsened and thinly disguised as poet-modernism.

Except for such "precursors" of the "triumphantly primitive" post-modern novel as *Wuthering Heights*, *Pierre*, and *The Way of All Flesh*, the genealogical imperative reigns supreme in the structures of nineteenth-century novels. In *Wuthering Heights*, for example, the mythic yet anti-genealogical and erotic relationship between Cathy and Heathcliff makes unconvincing the genealogical substitution of the second Cathy and Hareton which is "meant" to conventionalize the narrative structure of the novel and submit it to genealogical order. Aside from some difficulties with this notion, Tobin's suggestions here and about *Pierre* and *The Way of All Flesh* are illuminating and interesting—Tobin is always better, often acutely and freshly perceptive, about texts with which she finds a deep affinity.

After what seems to me her least satisfyingly elaborated analysis, her treatment of the genealogically conservative *Buddenbrooks*, Tobin takes up the modern novels which successfully and structurally contest the genealogical imperative: *The Rainbow*, *Absalom, Absalom!*, *Ada, or Ardor*, and *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. These admirably elaborated chapters seem to constitute the center of the book, its *raison d'être* and the ground for the shallow history that

emcompasses them. Her enthusiasms here are well-argued, her analysis the most probing and most consistently cogent. There is occasional recourse to a kind of naive intentionalism and to romantic notions of the natural priority of the individual and of myth (as opposed to history, which apparently must, for Tobin, always and only be genealogical) and to unnecessary thwacks at the earlier novel, which make one wish that the analysis of these chapters had been extended even more and the historical generalizations dropped. She reads these novels closely and develops stylistic analysis into structural generalization in a striking way. Her studies of Nabokov and Garcia Marquez are useful and needed; her reading of the structural and thematic implications of the style, rhythm, and organization of Lawrence's novel is one of the best I've seen.

The oracular Tobin reaches a sort of stunning climax in the final chapter, "Wager on Surface" in which she speculates on the future of the novel and society. She offers some brief and perceptive remarks about recent novels, arguing for a return to the *literal* (mimetic and genealogical?) and to the erotics of the surface (a watered-down version of Susan Sontag's "Against Interpretation" and Barthes's *Pleasures of the Text*) as opposed to the patriarchally dominating Romantic symbol and the illusory depth of classical (most pre-postmodernist) literature. The book then ends on the uncertainty of whether current literature reflects a true liberation and return to the natural (for which she seems finally to opt in her "wager") or merely the breakdown of cultural order and a new consumerism dedicated to instant gratification.

The history of ideas that Tobin offers at the outset is valuable in its underlining of the importance of the genealogical metaphor and, though it (somewhat perfunctorily) cites such texts as Filmer's defense of patriarchal absolutism and Locke's refutation of it in his first *Treatise*, it does not pursue such lines far enough. The relationships between genealogical and patriarchalist assumptions, social order, and the emergence of historical ways of thinking have been explored a lot more than Tobin acknowledges. One thinks, for example, of J.G.A. Pocock's valuable *The Ancient Constitution and Feudal Law* and some his more recent work which extends his study into the English eighteenth-century, Peter Laslett's valuable introductions to his editions of Filmer and Locke, Isaac Kramnick on Bolingbroke, Gordon Schochet's *Patriarchalism in Political Thought: The Authoritarian Family and Political Speculation and Attitudes Especially in Seventeenth-Century England*, or even John Nelville Figgis' *The Divine Right of Kings*. What these works demonstrate is that the ideological basis of genealogical assumptions and the absolutist claims of the Stuarts which depended on those assumptions are already problematized *before* the eighteenth century and the problematization extends into and is made acute by the eighteenth century debates about the nature of history, of narrative (historical and fictional), of political authority in the war between Hanoverian ideologists and Jacobite supporters of Stuart restoration. The debate about genealogical authority and its relationship to narrative structure is much more overt in the novels of Fielding, Sterne, and Smollett than Tobin allows for. Also, the metaphoric relationship between temporal succession and cause and effect sequence is also more obviously problematic (in Hume, for example).

Moreover, the nineteenth-century novel much more openly probes and ques-

tions "the genealogical imperative" than Tobin presumes. Take, for example, Dickens' novels which both structurally and thematically raise questions about patrilineal or dynastic tyrannies (*Great Expectations*, *Martin Chuzzlewit*, *Our Mutual Friend*). Typically they begin with parallel and isolated groups, narratively move back and forth laterally in temporal slices, proving hidden relationships between apparently unrelated sets, and end with the creation of artificial families made up of orphans and outcasts, "cousins," who find some sort of haven outside of society. The disturbing relationship between repetition, doubling, substitution, fragmentation, simulation, and exchange or communication in Dickens' novels, or in *Wuthering Heights* for that matter, suggests more complex possibilities than can be accommodated by Tobin's linear pursuit of the simple line of genealogy. It is possible to read these novels as possibly subverting or deconstructing, but at the very least complicating, the genealogical assumptions, on which they are, in part, based. The old opposition between *the* novel and the ubiquitous anti-novel is now notoriously confused.

The problem is that Tobin's analysis turns into its own kind of imperative and, while she acknowledges practical criticism's perhaps inevitable dependence on genealogical assumptions, her own surrender to the metaphor is more profound and less ironic than she admits.

Recent critical theory has dwelt (perhaps too long) on the impossibilities of relating literature to history, but the project of turning the weapon of historical knowledge against itself is still a necessary one. As Tobin attempts to do this, she should be applauded. Aside from its brilliant analyses of individual texts, Tobin's book is valuable for the nature of the questions it raises and the arguing thought it provokes in the reader. We also owe it a debt of gratitude for the light it sheds on the relationship between narrative structure and a pervasive and too long taken-for-granted metaphor.

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Faulkner's Narrative Poetics: Style as Vision by Arthur F. Kinney. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1978. Pp. xviii + 286. $15.00.

Faulkner's Career: An Internal Literary History by Gary Lee Stonum. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979. Pp. 207. $12.50.

These two explorations of Faulkner's poetics proceed by quite different methodologies. Both emphasize Faulkner's intense epistemological concern in his novels, and the self-reflexive nature of his fiction. Kinney develops a context for his study in literary history but ends up focusing on the reader as the final shaper of each fiction. Stonum is involved with the author's own developing sense of a personal canon.

Kinney locates Faulkner within a modern tradition of novelists of consciousness, then explains his achievement as a writer demanding a dynamic process of reading. In the first half he traces a series of influences on Faulkner including

James, Flaubert, Balzac, Melville, Dostoyevsky, Conrad, Joyce, and Proust, but surprisingly not Mann. Each of the sections is too brief to be as useful as Kinney's recent study of Faulkner and Flaubert is. Many of the references to such figures as Arnheim, Braque, Ortega, Hellström, and Polanyi, moreover, seem gratuitous rather than functional. In the second half of his study Kinney argues that Faulkner appeals first to our "*structural consciousness*." We are then "helped to the meanings of Faulkner's novels by the pressures of their *narrative consciousness* on events." Most important, however, is "our *constitutive consciousness* as readers, the integrated sum of our awareness of the structure of the work and the perceptions of all the characters whose thoughts are explicitly or implicitly provided for us: the epistemological emphasis in Faulkner's narrative poetics is finally on the reader." Beneath the terminology and the thesis, however, lie rather conventional ways of approaching modern fiction—through image clusters, juxtaposition, analogous or parallel actions, unreliable narrators, multiple perspectives, and spatial form. Consequently the insights Kinney provides into works such as *The Sound and the Fury, Absalom, Absalom!*, and "The Bear"—those so fully worked over by other critics—are few. The value of the book lies in the critical commentary on novels such as *Flags in the Dust* and *Sanctuary*, and in the assimilation of much earlier Faulkner criticism into a coherent, if not original, consideration of Faulkner's narrative poetics. The book's limitations are most evident in Kinney's attempt at the end to explain Faulkner's decline. Because he has established neither sufficient distance from the author nor a methodology for explaining the reasons for the adoption or the success of these poetics, Kinney cannot *explain* the reasons for the decline. He can only *show* that the successful poetics no longer inform Faulkner's late fiction.

Stonum adopts as his model the literary career—the relation "between the texts a writer has already written and the writing of new texts. . . . Career as past output becomes an active force in shaping career as continuous production." To Stonum Faulkner's works take on much more coherence when each new major novel is perceived as an aesthetic or intellectual response to or extension of a previous book, usually a questioning of the enabling assumptions "on which the earlier work depends." As the key for opening up this intertextuality, this anxiety of internal influence, Stonum selects the concept of arrested motion, not as a consistent method throughout Faulkner's career—so frequently discussed by critics like Karl Zink, Olga Vickery, and Richard Adams—but a central concern whose significance keeps changing for Faulkner. At first it suggests a pure aesthetic state transcending life (the poetry). Since motion is the source of significance, "arrested motion" becomes, in Faulkner's "representational period," the only means by which art secures meaning out of reality (*As I Lay Dying*). Then as he questions the validity of fiction-making itself and puts the writer into the world of motion being considered, he tries "to arrest motion from within" (*Absalom, Absalom!*). Finally, as Faulkner understands art to be only one of many "cultural forms" that arrest motion, he develops an elegiac fiction as a meta-fiction for evaluating such codes, forms, and fictions (Snopes Trilogy).

Central to Stonum's model is the distance between subject and object in Faulkner's fiction. During his period of visionary romanticism in which arrest-

ed motion was a theme or goal rather than a method, Faulkner assumed a separate and autonomous writer who at least in art can be in quest for the absolute. Then he discovered the incompatibility of the absolute and consciousness, and the fact that the writer himself is an inseparable part of the "real world" he is transforming, that he therefore alters that which he sees merely by being there (Quentin Compson embodies Faulkner's recognition not only of the impossibility of arresting motion but of exerting control over motion, i. e. Caddy.). Design, therefore, became for Faulkner not just a goal but a theme. Whereas *As I Lay Dying* is "Faulkner's most sustained consideration of the theme of motion," *Absalom, Absalom!* is "his most sustained meditation on the activity of arresting." No longer is the writer's ability to represent characters' inner lives something to be assumed. Meaningful design, moreover, requires a prior establishment of a relationship to the raw material; but such a relationship, which makes forms and fictions possible, hardly allows for detachment. In fact Faulkner begins to question whether fictions, forms, and codes—which can have a restrictive and negative influence on individuals and identities—may themselves not be the villains, the corrupters, rather than the crass flux of materiality itself. In his final period Faulkner makes no further profound challenges to prior assumptions, but the gap between subject and object closes. He does develop in his final novels a meta-fiction that explores "the fate of design," that studies the consequences of customs, rituals, codes, patterns. The problem of values is central, because their existence depends on certain relationships of individuals and situations to cultural designs and perhaps discursive fictions. A central issue, even if not handled profoundly, becomes the relative worth of personal responsibility and public forms.

One of this book's merits is its new perspective on Faulkner's work as a whole. It explores in a new way the aesthetic implications of Faulkner's extreme, if typically modernistic, concern for epistemological issues in fiction, and the shifting nature of the self-reflexive qualities in that fiction. It shows that the relationships between a novel and its predecessors clarify the meanings of each. Stonum has read much current critical theory and has benefitted from it without being subservient to it. On the other hand, the book is built on a fragile framework. "Internal literary history" clearly means internal to the texts rather than the author. The model Stonum assumes for the choices a writer makes is dubious: are they all really so consciously planned as he implies? The Faulkner that emerges from this study, moreover, is a writer divorced from familial, social, economic concerns, bothered exclusively by aesthetic and epistemological issues, the validity of fiction as knowledge. These were crucial to him, but in a study of the author's sense of his own developing career as dynamic process, it seems questionable to divorce the writer from his most significant personal conflicts and social attitudes.

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