

1974

Book Reviews

Criticism Editors

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Recommended Citation

Editors, Criticism (1974) "Book Reviews," *Criticism*: Vol. 16: Iss. 2, Article 6.
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/criticism/vol16/iss2/6>

Book Reviews

The Dialectic of Selfhood in Montaigne by Frederick Rider. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1973. Pp. ix + 115. \$4.95.

Montaigne's *Essais* are, in many respects, not unlike games of "cache-cache" between Essayist and reader. Anyone approaching the work with the expectancy of reading an Augustinian or even "Rousseauiste" autobiography must surely come away with the disturbing impression that the autobiographer's self-revelations have been nothing short of elusive, tentative, and at times, spectral. For Montaigne lays out no transparent fabric of external evidence by which one may reassemble a coherent biographic or historical form. His prefatory remarks to the reader forewarn us that what is to follow is based on eminently private goals rather than on the vanity of public glory. No self-portraiture here, at least not in the conventional sense. Chronological unity, the stuff of biographical cohesion, has been displaced by a psychological continuum. Even the biographer's view of life as a network of retrospective and circumstantial data has given way to unpremeditated design and to what Montaigne, in "De la vanité," calls "tumultuous change." In short, the biographical common denominator of the *Essais* is not historical evidence, fixed in time, but the changing Self, on the threshold of a literary adventure.

Judging from the wide array of critical scholarship on Montaigne's work, one cannot help but have the disconcerting notion that the *Essais* are all things to all people. Indeed, their frequent comparison with biblical ambiguity is neither altogether inaccurate nor overly audacious. Relatively few critics, however, have paid any prolonged attention to this complex question of Self, as if it described a level of consciousness impenetrable to the gregarious thinkers of the Renaissance world. Frederick Rider's perceptive study is thus a welcome contribution not only to Montaigne criticism, but also to our understanding of the Essayist's inner dimensions.

For those whose literary sensitivities are churned by the psychoanalytic method, Rider's book will not come as appetizing fare. Through the focus of ego psychology and existential psychoanalysis, the Author examines six essays as representative phases in Montaigne's personal development and as responses to certain circumstantial data in his life. In a sense, then, the organic links between biographic evidence and the demands of selfhood, set down in Freud's memorable essay on Goethe, form the guidelines of Rider's methodology. Developmental approaches to the *Essais* are indeed, as the author points out, not new. Villey, Strowski, Jansen, and Frame have, each in his own way, described an evolutive Montaigne, an organic unit passing from propaedeutic self-scrutiny into ultimate self-integration. More pointedly, however, Rider's purpose is "to make explicit some of the psychological assumptions that are merely implicit in other interpretations of his [Montaigne's] development."

The author then goes on to outline a triadic justification for his psychological

insights. First, he tells us, Montaigne's personal development or "individuation" (used, I take it, not in its Jungian clinical sense) is represented as a series of crises in which the ego acts to synthesize the Essayist's biological and social processes, and thereby to integrate the components of personality. Second, he acknowledges his debt to existential psychoanalysis, especially as it relates to the dual intuition of anxiety and freedom, and to the flight of "bad faith" imposed on the individual by this duality.

His third and perhaps most successful point involves the notion of Self as object and process, a subtle distinction continually requiring the reader to walk a semantic fine line between the terms "ego" (self as process and subject), the capitalized "Self" (self as object), and the non-capitalized "self" (reflexivity without differentiation between subject and object). The *Essais* are thus seen as a chronicle of objectification in which the Self becomes a literary construct independent from the Writer's ego formation.

Rider's third point is a crucial one, touching on a subject which heretofore has been treated at length (at least to my knowledge) only in dissertation form: Montaigne's point of view. Given the often thorny problem of ambiguity in Renaissance prose and, more specifically, the Essayist's ironic disclaimer that he cannot find himself where he looks for himself, the notion of a conscious exteriorization of the Self is a reassuring affirmation of his aesthetic control. Montaigne's self-revelations, while often proceeding without concerted forethought, belong to an over-all program of selfhood, premeditated in its broad contours and arising from certain underlying social anxieties. His work thus becomes a transcendent project. It enables him to make the fateful transition from old to new roles, from threatened psychic disintegration to inner wholeness.

Quite correctly, Rider emphasizes the propaedeutic function of the early essays in this personal development, although making perhaps too much of what he terms their "triviality." Recent critical opinion has, in fact, tended to revise Villey's assertions regarding the so-called "essais impersonnels" of the 1572-74 period. The author's effort to make these essays conform to a tightly knit psychological evolution is thus, it seems to me, an oversimplification. The chimeric world of imaginative forms described in "De l'oisiveté" and elsewhere expresses, for instance, much more than the prosaic fear of "becoming fertile and productive." Indeed, I find little evidence to suggest that Montaigne, in this enormously rich essay, means any more than what he says: namely, that the mind, cowering in *idleness* (from *otium*, and not laziness as Rider declares), brings forth only vain and ill-formed progeny. Funneled through the writer's pen, however, imaginative license is tamed by creative enterprise. Furthermore, my own research has confirmed here a curious refashioning of Horace's familiar stand on literary grotesquerie.

While it is not my intention to devalue the entire work on the basis of such minimal defects, I am nevertheless left with the uncomfortable, almost pyrrhonic, position of supporting and rejecting certain of Professor Rider's major points. On the one hand, for example, I can find little quarrel with the idea that Montaigne's Self is an object of the ego, a conscious imaginative construct given literary specificity at each turn of the page. Accordingly, language becomes the medium of the Self's exteriorization. Nor do I object to the psychological

confirmations taken from existential psychoanalysis; for their significance lies in what Sartre calls the "translucency" or pre-eminence of consciousness. That is to say, Sartre dispenses with the Freudian unconscious (out of a cursory and, I believe, erroneous understanding of Freud's theories), supplanting it with the "translucent" consciousness of being-for-itself. Rider's recourse to existential thought seems, then, to reinforce the idea of selfhood as a deliberate, premeditated act calling on the individual's total commitment.

On the other hand, however, when Rider concludes that "our literary analysis has also been a psychoanalysis," I wonder if perhaps he has expanded the latter at the expense of the former. He does indeed analyze the three "couches" of each essay, but never with the stylistic insights provided by modern scholarship. Although one does sense a vague attention to the principle of stylistic evolution, the author makes little effort to systematize these insights or to explore the precise mechanisms of Montaigne's self-scrutiny. In areas where Thibaudet, Gray, Sayce, and others might well have been called on for support and elucidation, Rider is curiously silent. Even his bibliography shows signs of malnutrition, offering a rather slender selection (10 out of 46 entries) of critical material on Montaigne. Finally, from this disproportionate use of psychoanalytic corroboration, it comes as no surprise when he lends to certain stages in Montaigne's development a cachet of crisis. I find less than persuasive evidence, however, to support what Rider terms the "anal crisis" (borrowed from E. H. Erikson) of the Essayist's middle years. The metaphor of anal retention, for example, seems to me slim proof of any deep-seated psychic upheaval. Philip Hallie, in fact, has argued more convincingly for its relation to classical skepticism.

This work will undoubtedly provoke critical controversy. While not always convincing, it is well written, to the point, and likely to sustain the interest of even the most general reader. When many recent works on Montaigne have suffered from imprecision and generality, Frederick Rider has chosen the commendable route of getting down to specifics and broaching the textual riches of particular essays. One may take issue with his critical approach and use of evidence; but his conclusion remains unassailable. The *Essais* are promethean in scope, conceived in forethought, styled around a project of individuation, and reflective of the dynamic, changing Self.

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Psyche & Symbol in Shakespeare by Alex Aronson. Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1972. Pp. vii + 343. \$10.00.

Shakespeare's Patterns of Self-Knowledge by Rolf Soellner. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1972. Pp. xxi + 454. \$15.00.

As the old quarrel between historical scholarship and the new criticism revives as the new debate between historicism and formalism, two midwestern university presses present us with exemplary examples of the two extremes. Professor Soellner, whose mentors were L. L. Schücking and T. W. Baldwin, promises in his Introduction a study arguing that

we must see the ideas expressed by Shakespeare's characters in the total context, and we should use only legitimate means to interpret their relevance to Shakespeare's philosophy. Such means are comparisons with sources and with moral attitudes as they can be identified by the study of the intellectual background. (p. xx)

On the same page, the author warns that Shakespeare's

infinite variety and the temptation of passing off one's own thoughts for Shakespeare's make this a notoriously perilous enterprise, but paying heed to dramatic and historical conditions can be something of a check to the threatening subjectivism.

In contrast to Professor Soellner's insistence on grounding our present understanding of Shakespeare's plays in their cultural milieu, Professor Aronson argues the following:

Changing stage conventions or the rise of a new class of spectators bringing with them to the theatre their political ideologies, moral assumptions, or religious beliefs, have often introduced new intellectual attitudes and principles of evaluation. But the spontaneous response to laughter or to tears, to the wedding feast that concludes the comedy, and the funeral march with which the tragedy ends, continues to be determined by emotions that are shared by all men. It is with these basic emotions, then, that this book is concerned. (p. 2)

Professor Aronson uses a lexicon of terms to unlock "these basic emotions" that derives from the universal archetypes of experience discussed in the writings of Carl Jung. Aronson sets his own approach off against "the academic emphasis on the remote and the irrelevant," (p. 2) and finds archetypal analysis "more persuasive than the pale surface objectivity of textual criticism or character analysis." (p. 5)

Clearly, these two books operate within two different and apparently incompatible universes of critical discourse. If Professor Aronson would find Professor Soellner's study a perfect example of "pale surface objectivity" with much "emphasis on the remote and the irrelevant," then Professor Soellner would no less find *Psyche & Symbol in Shakespeare* a work in which subjectivism no longer simply threatens, but triumphs wholly. Nor would either be completely wrong. *Shakespeare's Patterns of Self-knowledge* is, oddly enough, at its best when its author manages to free himself from an almost mechanical historicism, and indulges in interpretation. Such interpretation, however, is bound in by its own brand of historicism, since almost all of it repeats points already made by others. This creates a curious kind of schizophrenia, wherein interpretive and historical passages alternately interrupt each other, with often little relevance established between them. Professor Aronson's pursuit of archetypal patterns, while it sometimes illuminates isolated parts of various plays, is unable to deal with whole plays, in all of their dimensions of character, action, diction, thought, spectacle and rhythm. Finally, what strikes this reviewer (who received these two books together in a more-or-less haphazard manner), is the curious basic agreement-to-disagree that underlies the methodological differences in both.

Professor Soellner's long introductory section (pp. 3-61) operates on the tra-

ditional historicist dictum that anything written before or contemporary with Shakespeare must have influenced him (a standard formula in this study). Consequently, we are treated to discussions of humanistic doctrines of *nosce teipsum*, scepticism, the great chain of being, the microcosm-macrocosm topoi, plus the *de rigueur* planes of "correspondences" that fill up these topoi. *Love's Labor's Lost* is interpreted in terms of Stoicism, Erasmus, Palingenius; *Hamlet* is linked (once again) with Florio's Montaigne; *Measure for Measure* and *Othello* deal with the conflict between reason and passion (shades of the "slaves of passion" syndrome); and so on. A good example of the book's approach is its discussion of *Richard II*, in which interpretive analysis alternates with citations to *The Touchstone of Complexions* (1581) by one Levinus Lemnius. We are told that Richard's alternations between hope and despair are paralleled by Lemnius' description of the symptoms of melancholy: "And hereupon, in a manner all in one instant and without any time betwixt, do we see them suddenly changed from laughter and mirth into sorrow and pensiveness." (p. 102) On the next page, we find that Richard's meditation on man's clayey destiny is "echoed in" (echoed from?) the *De Humane Miseriae Conditioe* of Pope Innocent III (English trans. 1576). On p. 106, Diego de Estella's *De Contemptu Mundi* (English trans. 1586) is brought to bear on the mirror scene.

Soellner does not make much of a case that Shakespeare knew any of these works, and this leads to a question that nags the reader continuously: What purpose do these citations serve? The search for sources is not the purpose (an honorable pursuit traditional in historical criticism), for the book's self-proclaimed purpose is to illuminate the plays themselves. Such parallels as do exist in past and contemporary literature in themselves prove nothing. Rarely, if ever, do the adduced parallels add to our understanding of the plays' statements. More often than not, the parallels state the commonest of universal commonplaces. We have here, in short, the gestures of traditional historicism signifying little of that approach's declared consummation: illumination of the plays themselves. When interpretation does ensue, as mentioned earlier, little is learned that is new.

Like faulty circuit connections, other links only intermittently allow the juice to flow. The *nosce teipsum* motif (what a "pattern" of such a motif might be is never defined: "pattern" is spatial; "self-knowledge" is propositional) does not become a binding thread through the work. The author never demonstrates how the business of his interpretation—involving quite a few other items—is radically dependent on it. A further attempt to line up early, middle, and late plays according to problematic art history divisions of "Renaissance," "Mannerist," and "Baroque" fares little better. One feels that Soellner's heart is not in these divisions, for he passes through them rather cursorily. The purpose of the book is, presumably, to illuminate Shakespeare's plays. But by what grammar of terms? The book is at war with itself on this matter. If out-and-out interpretation is the end, then it is little served by the historical parallels. If, on the other hand, Soellner is arguing that interpretation must be based on demonstrable cultural sources and influences, then the method of historical criticism is—by the same split—ill-served as well. Some of the interpretations, such as those of *The Comedy of Errors*, *Hamlet* and *Othello*, while not original, state old approaches cogently enough. But what is one to make of the pseudo-question regarding what book *Hamlet* was reading when confronting

Polonius (Soellner decides that it could not have been Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, but Cardanus' *Comfort* or Montaigne's *Essays*, or perhaps "there was no book at all")? Clearly, with such questions any recognizable final end of either criticism or historical scholarship has been left behind.

Professor Aronson's study asks and answers some questions of Shakespeare's plays that are demonstrably relevant to them, and his is the more challenging of the two studies. His method involves, in general, the following procedure. Certain groups of characters are isolated from the play's action—for instance, Troilus and Cressida, Othello and Iago, Brutus and Cassius—and their interrelations are illumined by certain archetypal coalescences. In one of the more suggestive sections of the study, that concerning the Jungian archetype of the "Shadow," Aronson is able to explain how Cressida, Iago, and Cassius represent "unconscious projections" of the egos of their dramatic counterparts. Iago thus manifests that hidden side of violence and sensuality implicit in Othello's "conscious" love of Desdemona, itself characterized by romantic idealism. Cassius represents the morally questionable motives that are relegated to Brutus' unconscious by his conscious devotion to political morality.

Similar relations are explained between Cressida and Troilus, Angelo and Isabella, with Lear and Cordelia, Ferdinand and Miranda, Claudio and Hero, Antony and Cleopatra becoming various versions of the animus/anima archetype. American Shakespearean criticism has been justifiably leery of "psychoanalytical" (read "Freudian") interpretations of Shakespeare, because they fail to distinguish between an aesthetic verbal construct and a "real" case history. Aronson's study, however, does not fall into this trap; which is by no means to say that his method brings us much closer to Shakespeare's plays as poetic dramas. The fact that Jung's own interpretations of dreams, fairy tales, and alchemy involved not a little "literary criticism" leads one to discover that Aronson's Jungian method is actually a refurbishing of allegorical approaches to Shakespeare. Thus, this approach is perfectly willing to leave the characters as it finds them, without querying their childhood traumas. In place of such questions, Aronson's study is concerned with how the inner life of Shakespeare's major characters is "projected" outward into still other characters, so that the latter become putatively "allegorical" representations of aspects of the former.

Within its limits, then, Aronson's study does fulfill a reasonable critical goal: it illuminates the intelligible structure within the dramas that bind character to character. However, the reader must work to apply its conclusions to the plays themselves. The allegorical/archetypal method is capable, as this study demonstrates, only of illuminating "static" relations among characters. The "eternity" of the archetypes is reflected in a critical short-circuiting, by which the characters become intelligible as archetypes in inverse proportion to their intelligibility as characters moving actions in a drama. Aronson's disdain for the approaches represented by the mass of recent Shakespearean criticism may have something to do with this. Though his ample bibliography lists such people as Barber, Farnham, Frye, Goddard, Knights, and Traversi, he mentions only one critic who has "sustained inquiry into what constitutes 'the life of the play'"—G. Wilson Knight. (pp. 2-3) In short, Aronson's refusal of current methods of Shakespearean criticism creates a study in which it is just "the life of the *play*" that is ignored. Seasoned critics and readers of Shakespeare and Shakespearean

criticism will find, once they have taken account of this very great liability, that Aronson does bring together aspects of the plays that do not readily coalesce within other critical grammars. His treatment of the bed trick in *All's Well* and *Measure for Measure*, whereby both Bertram and Angelo confront the dark anima side of their rigid conscious animus is, for this reviewer, one such item. This is a book, however, to keep out of the hands of ingenious undergraduates.

Both books illuminate each other in the peculiar agreements that underlie their quite different approaches. Both Soellner and Aronson implicitly agree in sundering "present" or "eternal" categories of human experience from those indigenous and limited to a specific cultural milieu. Both (Aronson more belligerently) attack the alleged weakness of the methods underlying each other's books, as a justification for their own approach. In both cases, the plays themselves are interpreted by being translated into a grammar that originates outside of them; and consequently, both authors create interpretive constructs that lead away from, rather than back to, the plays themselves. Taking both books together suggests, to my mind, that their weaknesses are the same: neither has found a way, to use Blackmur's excellent comparison, to cut the lady in half without really cutting her in half. That is, criticism that seeks to make a literary work a function of its context wholly ("Renaissance culture" in Soellner's case, "universal archetypes" in Aronson's), can only break it apart along fissures and lines of demarcation that are foreign to it. One can only wonder if "subjectivism" versus "ever-present standpoints" ought to cease controlling the questions we ask of past literary works. In their place perhaps we ought to substitute more dialectical categories, whereby the work's status in the "past" and its status in the "eternally present" are perceived as dialectical functions of each other, neither is sacrificed to the other, and both are seen to generate each other. Such, at least, is one cautionary exhortation that these two studies deliver when read together.

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Cardinal Newman in His Age: His Place in English Theology and Literature by
Harold L. Weatherby. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press. 1973. Pp.
xv + 296. \$11.50.

As the leader of the Oxford Movement, John Henry Newman represents one important manifestation of the Romantic and Victorian effort to save organized religion in an age of secularization and fragmentation. In the polarities literary scholars are wont to establish, his place is archetypically conservative, the antithesis both of secular rationalism and of the religious liberalism of the Arnolds, Kingsley, and Carlyle. Theologians, however, tend to emphasize the philosophical modernism underlying Newman's defense of dogmatic orthodoxy—his acceptance of the individualism, subjectivity and idealism characteristic of nineteenth and twentieth century thought. Harold Weatherby points out that in the present era of sweeping changes in the Roman Catholic Church since the Second Vatican Council, "Newman has become the darling of a new generation of Modernists."

They view him as an intellectual ancestor in their effort to bring the Church into harmony with modern thought and feeling, though many of the practical changes brought about by that effort he would surely have despised.

For many Victorians as well—for Matthew Arnold, for example—the source of Newman's attraction was not just his stylistic "urbanity" and it was certainly not his doctrinal rigidity. Rather it was, at least in part, the "modern" sensibility implicit in his work—his sense of the "disappearance of God" from His creation, of a visible universe characterized by fragmentation and alienation, darkness and despair. "I look out of myself into the world of men," Newman wrote in the *Apologia*, "and there I see a sight which fills me with unspeakable distress. The world seems simply to give the lie to that great truth, of which my whole being is so full. . . . The sight of the world is nothing else than the prophet's scroll, full of 'lamentations, and mourning, and woe.'" For Newman, the workings of God were not clearly manifest in the external world; reason and faith, nature and spirit, the objective and the subjective were at odds. He was most powerfully a man of the Romantic and post-Romantic era both in this vision and in his refusal to accept its implications—in his effort to transcend the dichotomies and to find God if not without, then within, in the individual's subjective perception of His reality. The orthodoxy that Newman embraced separated him from many of the Victorians who shared his world-view; he adopted, wrote Arnold in 1885, "for the doubts and difficulties which beset men's minds to-day, a solution which, to speak frankly, is impossible." The "doubts and difficulties" which he perceived and shared, however, were those of his age.

Weatherby's study is a lucid examination of Newman's attempt to reconcile this modern sensibility, and the philosophy to which it gave rise, with orthodox Christianity. His thesis is that this attempt was ultimately a failure, with important consequences for the Church of which Newman was the most significant English figure in a two hundred year period. In order to arrive at orthodoxy from his individualistic and relativistic philosophical assumptions, to avoid the abysses of skepticism and liberalism, Newman was obliged to curtail at crucial points the logical developments of those assumptions. The resulting theology was, in Weatherby's view, philosophically too weak to preserve the traditional Church and society for Newman's age and our own. Newman resigned himself to the end of the "old idea of a Christian Polity"—the Thomistic world-view of an orderly and heirarchical human society in harmony with nature and the divine because animated by and reflecting the same "law," the same principles originating in the mind of God. In so doing, Weatherby feels, Newman rejected what is probably the only completely satisfactory defense of orthodox Christendom.

Cardinal Newman in His Age is divided into four parts. The first contrasts Newman's vision and philosophy with the "old orthodoxy" of the Caroline divines and the Metaphysical poets. The second places Newman's thought in relation to that of his own age—in particular, to the subjective idealism of Wordsworth and Coleridge. The third criticizes Newman's system in itself, its fusion of philosophical modernism and doctrinal orthodoxy in a "theology of safeguards." The final section considers the consequences of Newman's position for both modern theology and modern poetry.

For the student of literature, the first two sections of Weatherby's study

are especially interesting because of their illustrations of the literary implications of the change in philosophical vision between the Caroline writers and the Romantics. For Hooker, Andrewes and Laud—all firmly rooted in the Thomistic tradition—God was clearly visible in nature and human society. The exercise of human reason, of “natural religion,” led directly to a perception of the divine order in the created universe. Faith and reason were in harmony; man’s present state was one of at least partial light. In the work of a Metaphysical poet such as Donne, the natural and social are analogous with the divine; the workings of everyday life offer concrete images of the operations of God. Newman, on the other hand, though he accepted intellectually the doctrine of God’s presence in His creation, *saw* a universe alienated from its Creator; the only light for him was that of Christ, a beacon “amid the encircling gloom,” and the characteristic images in his work are the journey, the battle, the quest by night.

Weatherby discerns in some of the later Metaphysicals, especially Traherne, a deepening skepticism about the goodness of nature and the sweetness of man’s life. Already in the seventeenth century, the old medieval model of the world was beginning to lose its imaginative force. The great central search of the Romantics and Victorians, in Weatherby’s view, was for a new model of the world to replace it—a search that turned inward, into the mind of man itself. In contrast to the realist epistemology of Aquinas and the Carolines which based cognition on sense perception, the philosophy of Newman and the Romantics was idealist and subjective; the mind, not external reality, became the primary source of knowledge. Newman’s proof of the existence of God “from conscience” starts with an act of intuition based on his awareness of his own internal existence; it is independent of external reality and Newman is thus able to relinquish the external manifestations of traditional belief, the old “Christian Polity.”

Like his Romantic contemporaries, Newman saw nature and the physical as symbols or “economies” that shadowily reveal the invisible when interpreted by the enlightened intellect, a position close to the “gnosticism” of Clement of Alexandria. The key to this sacramentalism is the human mind, which must pierce the veil of nature to the supernatural it conceals. Newman’s “implicit reason,” the faculty of this perception, is close to Coleridge’s “philosophical imagination.” His closeness to the Romantics is further evidenced by his recognition of the value of poetry in this regard. “Poetry . . . is our mysticism,” he wrote in 1839; both have the same capacity “to draw men away from the material to the invisible world.”

Weatherby underlines an important distinction between the epistemology of Coleridge and Newman and that of their Patristic and neo-Platonic forerunners: the nineteenth century writers’ contention that “the whole man reasons.” For Coleridge and Newman, cognition involved the heart and the conscience as well as the intellect. From this it followed that each individual’s perception of the truth was unique, the product of his personal experience. Newman placed great emphasis on autobiography and biography, on the process by which the individual arrived at truth as much as the truth arrived at. Like Wordsworth’s *Prelude*, with which Weatherby compares it, Newman’s *Apologia* is a typical nineteenth century spiritual autobiography, its shape determined by two movements—sickness

and the return to health, exile and homecoming, destruction and reconstruction. A similar pattern is evident in Newman's other autobiographical writings, in his *Callista*, and in a work that Weatherby does not discuss, *Loss and Gain*.

Newman's philosophical subjectivism, individualism, and relativism all radically distinguish his thought from the central tradition of English orthodoxy. The conclusions at which he arrived, however, were completely orthodox and necessitated what Weatherby calls "safeguards," a series of brakes on the development of his philosophical assumptions. Thus, for example, Newman's idealism made the "idea" or "essence" of Christianity something separable from the forms and doctrines in which it was expressed. A similar premise led Carlyle and Arnold to the conviction that the central religious "idea" may be preserved while its external manifestations are radically modified to suit the age. The logical conclusion of this approach is the abandonment of all forms of dogmatism for the religious liberalism, the "anti-dogmatic principle," which Newman vehemently opposed. Newman "safeguarded" dogmatism by his concept of "enlargement" in which new forms complete or fulfill old ones rather than supersede them. Furthermore, his "idea" of God was an image corresponding to a fixed reality rather than a somewhat nebulous "religious principle" as in Arnold or Carlyle.

Nonetheless, in Weatherby's view, the primacy of the "idea" in Newman's philosophy served to undermine the old "Christian Polity," to separate Christianity from its traditional social and institutional manifestations. The conservatism of the Oxford Movement was, in effect, accidental; the premise was radical, the defense of the anti-Erastian "idea." That Newman's radical, ideological mode of thought was never translated into religious or political activism reflected another "safeguard"—Newman's piety, his respect for authority on moral rather than intellectual grounds. For Weatherby, however, Newman's underlying radicalism contributed to his failure to offer sound theological and philosophical grounds for the defense of traditional Christendom.

Weatherby sees the literary consequences of Newman's philosophy as involving another failure, the failure "to deliver modern poetry from the bondage of subjectivism which secular Romantic thought imposed upon it." Like the Romantics', Newman's view of the literary symbol was subjective and expressive rather than objective and mimetic. For Weatherby, the loss of objectivity in poetry, of a common consent to the meaning of symbols, was an additional factor in the breakdown of a closed traditional Christian community in England and Europe; in the advent of fragmentation, alienation, atheism and loneliness; in the exile or departure from the traditional "City" to the "desert" of modern human experience.

Weatherby's point of view is that of an orthodox Catholic (though whether Anglican or Roman is not clear). He believes that probably no system of philosophy or society "accords so well with the truth of Christian doctrine (and therefore with the deepest needs of man) as does the *Summa* and its legacy, both Scholastic and Caroline, and as does the traditional hierarchy of medieval Christendom." This set of mind by no means lessens the validity of Weatherby's lucid criticism of Newman's philosophical arguments, but it perhaps weakens his grasp of the extent to which Newman's importance and influence as a theologian are dependent upon those compromises with modern thought that Weatherby regrets. Weatherby points out that Newman "was obliged to take the new world

view into account"—either to oppose it or to make terms with it. He believes that Newman's mistake was in not opposing it, and he strongly suggests that the only satisfactory opposition would have been a reassertion of the Thomistic, medieval world view. For Newman to have made such a reassertion, however, would have negated that important part of his significance and influence which lies in his reflection of the sensibility of his age and in his personal approach to theological speculation and to proselytism. Both these aspects of Newman's power are, as Weatherby clearly indicates, closely related to his philosophical subjectivism and individualism. A Newman who firmly set his face against his age and the sensibility he shared with it is not a Newman who could have spoken so powerfully and poignantly to that age and to the one that succeeded it.

Nevertheless, Weatherby's book is a clear and well-written introduction to Newman's thought and an important effort to place that thought historically. It illuminates Newman's position in the history of English theology and reveals the firmness of his roots in his own age—despite the "last enchantments of the Middle Age" of the Newman legend. The literary insights provided by Weatherby are not in themselves particularly original, but they are given new perspective and depth by his correlations between them and the philosophical and cultural assumptions they reflect.

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Rhetorical Form of Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus" by Gerry H. Brookes. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972. Pp. x + 201. no price; *Puritan Temper and Transcendental Faith: Carlyle's Literary Vision* by A. Abbott Ikeler. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1972. Pp. xii + 226. \$10.00; *Carlyle and Dickens* by Michael Goldberg. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1972. Pp. vi + 248. \$10.00; *Dickens and Carlyle: The Question of Influence* by William Oddie. London: The Centenary Press, 1972. Pp. x + 165. £2.80.

A renaissance of interest in Thomas Carlyle is at hand. With recent publication of major books by G. B. Tennyson and Albert LaValley, the appearance of the first four volumes of the *Letters of Thomas and Jane Welsh Carlyle*, and now the publication of four books on Carlyle in one year, studies in Carlyle have very much come to the fore. And well they should if Victorianism is to be understood, for no prose writer of that period deserves more extended study than Thomas Carlyle, purveyor of heroes and the heroic to his age.

Of the four titles under discussion, Brookes's *Rhetorical Form of Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus"* offers most in method and content. Particularly significant is it to have Brookes say "Nay" to the everlasting question of *Sartor* as a novel and "Yea" to it as a book of apocalyptic rhetoric. Those who have read *Sartor* as though it were a novel take their initiative from Carlyle himself who wrote to James Fraser (27 May 1833) that "*Sartor* is put together in the fashion of a Didactic Novel. . . ." In his 1896 introduction to *Sartor*, Archibald

Macmechan referred to it as a "novel,—with appendixes fore and aft." And such other distinguished critics as Morse Peckham, C. R. Sanders, Carlisle Moore, Daniel P. Deneau, John Lindberg, G. B. Tennyson, and George Levine have further developed Carlyle's evaluation. In Brookes's reading, *Sartor's* fictions do not define it as a novel "because its narrative is not consistent, because its characters and other fictions do not have the intrinsic and sustained interest that fictions have in a novel but serve the persuasive purpose of the whole work." (p. 9) True it is that Carlyle frequently conjured various *personae* in his prose: Sauerteig, Smelfungus, Pilpay Junior and Oliver Yorke are characters who distance author from work (perhaps, as well, from some types of criticism), and build comic and ironic tones into the material. But in all of these cases—as is also true of Diogenes, Hofrath, and the Editor in *Sartor*—interest in the characters remains low since they do not evolve or have a controlling force over the events or ideas in the prose. In *Sartor*, although the Editor has the potential of being a clearly-drawn representative of middle class English common-sense mentality, Carlyle does not make him a consistent figure with identifiable perceptions and voice. Instead, the Editor waxes hot and cold on the genius of Teufelsdröckh and speaks and writes in a manner often indistinguishable from the transcendentalist whose prose he edits. To those who read *Sartor* as a novel, such weaknesses or inconsistencies of characterization are distressing, but to the reader of *Sartor* as persuasive rhetoric designed to establish ideas through particular emotional responses, such matters bear small significance. Brookes is not concerned with arguments about the consistency or the uniqueness of the voices of Teufelsdröckh and the Editor; he is concerned about the more fruitful analysis of *Sartor* as rhetoric which uses fiction "in which a single, true voice is implicit." (p. 68) That is the voice of Carlyle himself, a voice that dominates the prose in the form of the implied, off-stage orator. To be sure, Brookes's study is particularly valuable in Chapters 3, "The Editor and the Controlling Voice in *Sartor*," and 4, "Intuition Quickened by Experience." But more can be done in the study of rhetoric in *Sartor* as other readers explore Carlyle's figurative language, structure of sentences, paragraphs, and chapters, and the peculiarities of diction and tone. As Brookes well puts it, "Teufelsdröckh's rhetoric makes us feel ourselves Titan spirits, mysterious, wonderful, and powerful." (p. 163) But the question remains, *How* does Carlyle create such effect? By what rhetorical means does he do so? Brookes has changed the course of study in *Sartor* from novels to rhetoric, and others can profitably develop the curriculum.

Ikeler's study of Carlyle's attitudes towards literature will be especially welcomed by graduate students beginning their work in the Sage of Chelsea, but it adds little to the experience of more knowledgeable readers. Ikeler traces Carlyle's "divided allegiance" to literature from the polarities of German aestheticism to Calvinistic moral preachings. In his early work Carlyle saw the poet as the singer of "an unfathomable mystic song" that should be loved for itself without concern for effects. To Ikeler, *Sartor* is a lyric expression of transcendentalism even though the Calvinistic counter-melody runs through the lower register. But the transcendental song is the more powerful, the more persuasive, even though the Calvinistic call to duty and work persists. The inversion of melodies occurs in *The French Revolution* as Carlyle's interests pulled him more towards Calvinism and away from German aestheticism. The

weakness of Ikeler's work becomes apparent in the third chapter, a study of Carlyle's religious development, as he reviews much that we already know—Carlyle's indebtedness to his parents for their "stoicism in a Miltonic universe," his parents' Burgher faith, his reading of Hume, Gibbon, and the French *philosophes* and his subsequent development of religious skepticism. Professor Ikeler knows what must be done; *viz.*, "an analysis [must be written] at close range, of those principles set out in Calvin, Knox, and the mainstream of Puritan preaching that may have—through the authority of his father—colored Carlyle's view of the arts." (p. 121) But missing from the analysis is a sense of place and a broad reading of primary materials on Scottish Calvinism. It is one thing, I suspect, to discuss Scottish Calvinism from *The Institutes of Christian Religion* and another to consider implications of religion in the quiet village of Ecclefechan shortly after the turn of the 19th Century. If anything can be gained from an examination of church records and if the spirit of place can be captured better to know the peculiarities of Carlyle's religious background, the book does neither. Of an impressive 160-item bibliography, only seven titles are by early authors who could have formed Carlyle's Calvinistic faith. Surely, that itself is a paradigm of some American scholarship.

Except for the grace of god, the books by Michael Goldberg and William Oddie might both have borne the title, *Carlyle and Dickens* or *Dickens and Carlyle*. Happily, Goldberg chose *Carlyle and Dickens* and Oddie *Dickens and Carlyle*, and both did so six years after Professor Goldberg had completed his doctoral dissertation, "Dr. Pessimist Anticant and Mr. Popular Sentiment: The Influence of Carlyle on Dickens." Happily, too, although both deal with the same subject of influence and indebtedness, Oddie's work is different because it is, at one level, a book-length review of and reaction to Goldberg. And materials cited in each bibliography are also different. While 39 titles are common to both, Oddie uses another 73 and Goldberg 134.

Thus, the reader can proceed through similar titles to different treatments and opposed conclusions. Readers who hope to find proof of Dickens' indebtedness to Carlyle should read Goldberg and stop there. The others who want to negate the view that "Dickens was a humble disciple of Carlyle, who sat at his master's feet, and carefully evolved his own view of society from a study of the Sage's social theory" (p. 149) should appreciate Oddie. Goldberg's handsomely bound and composed book is somehow simplistic and unswerving in its development of thesis. It suffers from an *idée fixe* as it marshalls hundreds upon hundreds of correspondences of theme, image, action, and symbol in the works of Carlyle and Dickens. The weakness, however, and the one that Oddie hits hard, is that Goldberg does not differentiate clearly between the conscious or the unconscious Dickensian echoes of Carlyle and the body of ideas and attitudes universally known in the times and society of the two authors. Critics have long perceived the thematic closeness of *Hard Times* with "Chartism," "Signs of the Times," "Characteristics," and *Past and Present*, and equally noted have been the similarities between *A Tale of Two Cities* and *The French Revolution*. Goldberg, however, extends the Carlylean influences through Dickens' last seven novels and attributes Dickens' developing pessimism to his acquaintance with an increasingly frustrated Chelsea oracle. The method falters, I suspect, when one ties "Louisa's dalliance with Harthouse" (Goldberg, p. 56) to Carlyle or when he finds that Dickens'

motive for writing the *Tale* was akin to Carlyle's in the *Revolution*: they were "composed under conditions of personal distress . . . [and] corresponding inner turmoil." (p. 104) Again, Goldberg rightly concludes that both Carlyle and Dickens supported "Education, sanitation, and emigration" as solutions to social ills but one wonders about the novelty of such answers in the mid-nineteenth century, and one must also note Carlyle's and Dickens' additional reliance on the good heart and Carlyle's emphasis on a working aristocracy. If "influences" be the grist for scholars' mills, the grinding stones of general backgrounds should also be counted in the product.

In his narrowed examination of Goldberg's theme, Oddie searches Carlylean overtones in *Hard Times* and *A Tale of Two Cities* by establishing the following caveat: "To point to Dickens's admiration for Carlyle, to summarize the respective social philosophies, to point to the similarities, and then to pronounce without any qualifying framework that something called 'influences' exists is surely not helpful. . . ." (p. 3) Oddie's review of possible Carlylean stylistic influences on Dickens results in a detection of some mannerisms which Dickens uses only superficially. The themes of industrialism, education, political economy, and employer-employee relationships in *Hard Times* are not localized in the thoughts of the two authors, but—in Oddie's presentation—are areas of general topical concern in the early and mid-nineteenth century. Nevertheless, Oddie does acknowledge Dickens' indebtedness to Carlyle in Stephen's story and Louisa's education and spiritual crisis. Essentially, however, Oddie consistently diverges from Goldberg's position of seeing Carlylean influence in Dickens by tracing similar ideas in a broad historical perspective. Thus, the parallel attitudes towards Negroes and prisoners flow from conservative streams in both men rather than the well-spring of one.

Surely the nineteenth century had its overlapping ideas and modifications of themes and surely the genius of Carlyle is not in his ability to impose his will on other authors but to enliven ideas through a style that forced readers to attend his books and essays. For that reason, Brookes's small book should point the way for new research into the uniqueness of Carlyle's language and remains the most satisfying of the four reviewed here.

EDWARD SHARPLES

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William Carlos Williams: The Later Poems, by Jerome Mazzaro. Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1973. Pp. 14 + 203. \$8.75.

For all his stark phrasing and apparent directness, William Carlos Williams has often proved puzzling. His poems are pieces of mosaic shaken loose from their context in the narrative of a complex life. Though a literalist, he often neglected connections and the formalities of lucidity: his writing sprang from an internalized guerrilla theater of his personal circumstances and his role in the art of his time.

Sifting of these internal factors that structure the poems is the main subject of Mr. Mazzaro's volume. This book confronts enigmas and brings them into

clarity by means of biographical information; further, the author does not hesitate to supply his own insights on topics in art and life that Williams treated.

So intricate are some of the issues that only a fit reader can benefit from the compact pages of criticism. Consider the background assumed in a passage like this one:

The relationships of the Orphean song and not the process of the Orphean descent and return become the subject matter; the world sung becomes by the very fact of the song different from the world unsung. Here Steinmetz's description of the difference between mathematical and physical space bears most relevantly on both modern art and Williams. . . . (p. 35)

Abstruse points and brief allusion make hard going, early on; but later pages open out more easily.

Allusion to modern art above indicates a topic that exercised Williams for long—for all his life. And those of his poems explicitly on art are only a portion of the evidence for its importance to him. Cubism, "multiple views," Braque, Gris, Picasso, collages—these terms and many other such occupy Williams and perforce occupy Mazzaro's pages, which boldly assess the blending of visual and poetic art:

. . . however impossible it may be to translate cubist art into cubist poetry, Williams clearly conceived the problems of dimensionality in poetry to be similar to the problems of dimensionality in cubism, and sought, however wrong-headedly, to solve these problems by poetic equivalents of paint. (p. 49)

The strain of making language attempt effects equivalent to visual effects put a number of quirks into Williams' poems. Though Mr. Mazzaro does not identify the language strain in just these terms, it might be helpful to say that when a reader expects to read content by way of words, he may come to realize that he is reading words for themselves, just as one can look through a window and by a shift of attention come to realize designs on the glass. This playing back and forth between the communicative function of language and its immediate sensation—an oscillation highly appropriate in reading Williams—is realized by means of successive analyses in this book.

A further realization about Williams and his practice looms here, though not in full focus: at one place Mr. Mazzaro says, ". . . in his earlier poems the recurrent myth of Kora had suggested that those descents and returns were related to a psychological need to 'gather the assets of the whole personality together' into the form of a personified thought at moments of despair and spatial closure 'and with this united strength to fling open the door of the future.'" (p. 64) It is this reference to a psychological need that prompts speculation. Throughout his life Williams escaped repeatedly into revised formulations of his poetics. Like a number of other modern poets who move away from analysis, he continually surfaced with new explanations for developments in his work. He may have had a need to stay just beyond anyone's categorizing.

It is as if the artist, carried along in a trance of self and song, is repeatedly framed and classified by the critic, is made to seem purposeful when he is only *en route* with the streaming material, not expressing a position or doctrine,

but adventuring into new formulations that the material suggests.

But this speculation is by the way—Mr. Mazzaro does not thus explain shifts in Williams' poetics; in fact, the poet is given full credence in his emphatic statements. And it is true that Williams is given to emphatic passages, as in the following, quoted from his "Prose about Love":

To a man of spirit the loss of his chosen wife will be a spiritual catastrophe of such magnitude that he cannot envision it without experiencing at the same time a sense of insecurity extending down to the foundation of his personal consciousness. (p. 93)

Such a passage is clear enough, whatever its validity; but out of apparent clarity Williams often managed to be enigmatic.

Mr. Mazzaro cites an instructive example. Williams knew and admired a man who heroically suffered hardships in his work. This man had in his yard, among white chickens, a red wheelbarrow. The poem famously linked to this scene presents the elements starkly, without the comforts of a context, and as a result the phrasing "so much depends upon the red wheelbarrow" has proved sufficiently puzzling. But in the prose world it just happened to be that kind of wheelbarrow.

By being literal, but communicating only intermittent, selected portions of a vividly felt life, Williams built poised, artful poems, around which there swirled his own successive versions of the poetics involved. Critics have been scrambling ever since. Mr. Mazzaro is helpful in that scramble.

WILLIAM STAFFORD

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Lyric and Polemic. The Literary Personality of Roy Campbell by Rowland Smith. Montreal and London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972. Pp. xii + 249. \$12.50.

Undoubtedly we were due for a full-scale study and re-assessment of Roy Campbell; and here is Rowland Smith's splendid *Lyric and Polemic. The Literary Personality of Roy Campbell*, a very model of a study. It has taken time for the dust to settle from Campbell's dithyrambic demolitions of the Georgians, of Bloomsbury and of Thirties poetry, to say nothing of his zealous support of Franco Nationalism. And Campbell's position in the survival leagues of anthologies has always been touch and go quite simply because so much of his best work lies buried amidst prolixity. But *Lyric and Polemic* convincingly implies the need to re-think this energetic, flamboyant poet.

The book proceeds chronologically through a career that was, at least publicly, never tranquil and at times positively exotic. For each stage of Campbell's career—and the several periods prove clearly defined—Smith carefully builds up social, literary and, where relevant, political context, shows how the poetry was a consequence, examines the work itself, quoting generously, and rounds off by discussing the contemporary critical response. Smith has had access to hitherto private correspondence and draws from it revealingly. Accordingly, we follow

Campbell on his ambulatory career: South Africa to England, back to South Africa and attacks on racism; then to England for more battles; Provence, Spain and conversion to Roman Catholicism; to England and subsequent wartime service in East Africa; England again, and finally Portugal. Each shift of milieu tended to prompt fresh allegiances ranging from the Byron of *Don Juan*, through the metaphysicals and Kipling to St. John of the Cross. And in tone and attitude there are passing intimations of Yeats and Lawrence.

Yet, finally, there is the sadness that accompanies any career, *pace* Wordsworth, that begins glowingly but displays thereafter only intermittent gleams. Smith must conclude that "Campbell did not fulfill the promise shown by *The Flaming Terrapin* or *Adamastor*." These books appeared, respectively, in 1924 and 1930; Campbell died in 1957 at 55. His strengths were vigor, an eye for evocative nature, and a natural facility with rhyme; his weaknesses were unsubtlety of thought and monotony of rhythm.

Smith does a judicious job of sorting out the best of Campbell and demonstrates how considerable a body this is. He has a very tactful way of handling poetry, emphasizing the strategies, leading the reader to the tactics without underlining them. His chapter on Campbell in Spain is, as he recognizes, disproportionate in length given the value of the resultant poetry. Doubtless he feels he must explore fully this especially embarrassing portion of the career. Here as elsewhere he is poised and fair. The book concludes, "There is a bigness about Campbell's work, in spite of its moments of crassness. The delight, vitality, and colour which he so consistently captures have as distinctive and personal a note as that struck by any major poet of this century." Smith does both his subject and poetry criticism a real service.

ALLAN E. ANSTIN

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Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass, A Norton Critical Edition*, Sculley Bradley and Harold W. Blodgett, eds. New York: Norton, 1973. Pp. 1008. \$3.45.

In the original version of his most famous poem, "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," Whitman cried out against the pain of introspection. After "translating" the "arias" of the abandoned bird, the poet tried to "awaken" himself to the meanings latent in the old songs of loss and rejection, steeling himself against the agony which attended his poetic processes:

- O give me some clew!
- O if I am to have so much, let me have more!
- O a word! O what is my destination?
- O I fear it is henceforth chaos!
- O how joys, dreads, convolutions, human shapes, and all shapes, spring
as from graves around me!
- O phantoms! you cover all the land and all the sea!
- O I cannot see in the dimness whether you smile or frown upon me;
- O vapor, a look, a word! O well-beloved!
- O you dear women's and men's phantoms!

(*Leaves of Grass*, 1860, p. 276.)

The "chaos" Whitman fears is nothing less than the dissolution of the assumptions by which the poet "understands" his world. So radical is his effort to reinterpret his world and himself that he feels his very sanity threatened.

Years later Whitman deleted all but the first two lines of the passage quoted above. We may guess Whitman later felt that such agony was unmanly, or irrelevant to this poem; perhaps he saw that those lines betrayed the doubt Richard Chase detected beneath the assurances Whitman tried to make in the end of the poem. But the fact remains that the agony and doubt were once integral to this great poem. If modern scholars present this poem to their students in Whitman's later versions, have they not an obligation to indicate that its tone and meaning were profoundly changed by the poet's deletions—especially since recent studies (by Chase, Stephen Whicher, Edwin Miller and myself) have argued that agony and doubt are the essential characteristics of "Out of the Cradle"? When teaching Whitman, shall our first loyalty be to the poet's later wish to present to the world a serene, untroubled face? Or are we responsible to the original force of his poems?

Can there be any justification for printing yet another version of the "Death-Bed" edition of 1891-92, especially one so inadequately annotated as this one, which not only fails to give the omitted passage in a note or in brackets, but even fails to mention that something has been omitted? The problem of inadequate notes and text goes back nearly a decade to the "Comprehensive Reader's Edition" of *Leaves of Grass* (which is part of the "Collected Writings" being published by the New York University Press). Norton's new Critical Edition makes it seem that we are going to have to live with the shortcomings of the CRE for a long time.

The first 759 pages of the present volume are identical to the CRE previously reprinted by Norton in 1965 and 1968: it includes the "death-bed" edition of the poems, various prefaces, 115 rejected, uncollected or unpublished poems, and 88 poetic fragments. To the CRE this new Critical Edition adds more than two hundred pages of excerpts from criticisms and appreciations of Whitman and his poems. The scholar-teacher who is not troubled by the problems of the text and notes which I complain of may at first be grateful that Norton has made all this available in their usual attractive format and at modest cost.

Gratitude may turn to annoyance, however, as this scholar-teacher discovers evidence of apparent carelessness in the preparation of this volume. The "Selected Bibliography" is unannotated, overly brief and error-ridden. Under the second heading, "BIBLIOGRAPHIES" [sic] comes a list of *biographies*. (p. 995) The second entry is "Bliss, Perry" [sic]. The fourth entry is Jean Carel's, his French title given in initial caps. (There are numerous such errors in the footnotes and text of the critical selections.) The student for whom this "Critical Edition" was prepared might well be interested to know that the first biographical entry, Dr. Bucke's *Walt Whitman*, was written mostly by or under the direction of Whitman himself; or the student might want to know that Gay Wilson Allen's *The Solitary Singer* is rightly regarded as the standard biography. Scholars and teachers will be puzzled at the location of such studies as those by Barrus, Bychowski, Chari and Waskow under the heading "Related Studies and Sources" instead of under "Biographies" and "Critical Studies" where they belong.

More serious questions are raised by the selection of criticism. Not only does the poetic text of the present volume fail to reflect the fact that most modern Whitman scholars have felt obliged to study early as well as late versions of the poems, but also, the criticism fails to represent the direction of Whitman studies in the last two decades. A non-specialist like Denis Donoghue may continue to believe that

Whitman was never troubled by the problem that confronted every major Romantic poet—the nature of the self. He does not hunt and trail and worry the problem. . . . [His poems are not] vexed by question marks, plus and minus signs, and Whitman's act of faith has erased these as impertinent. For him life is—in Yeats' phrase—"the fire that makes all simple": simple because equal. (p. 964)

Few modern Whitman scholars would assent to Donoghue's notion of Whitman; yet something like this passage seems to have been the secret motto for the critical selections in this new volume. Of numerous Whitman scholars who have been influenced by psychoanalysis—Catel, Lawrence, Griffith, Bychowski, Whicher, Kenneth Burke, Chase, Edwin Miller—only Lawrence and Chase are represented and Chase's article is not one of his better efforts. Whitman's profound and pervasive personal conflicts are seen by many modern interpreters as central to the meaning and composition of the poems; these conflicts are almost never acknowledged in the criticism excerpted for this Critical Edition. A more general and an even more serious problem is that not a single one of the 29 critical excerpts presents a close reading of a poem. Instead of reasoned, analytical interpretations, the editors have chosen general and impressionistic sketches which tend to reflect more of their authors than of Whitman and his poems. Might it not be helpful to students to learn that Whitman's poems do repay a close reading? It is all too easy for students to read Whitman casually and to assume that his language is fuzzy and imprecise without having this assumption implicitly (if unintentionally) confirmed by the exclusion of demonstrations to the contrary. Students seeking a larger view of Whitman studies might have been directed to Edwin Miller's excellent collection, *A Century of Whitman Criticism*, 1969, unfortunately omitted from the "Selected Bibliography" of this Critical Edition.

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After all is said, the most important problem remains the text itself. The Norton series rightly enjoys wide distribution and an excellent reputation; it is a major influence not only on academic literary taste but on the way literature is studied and understood. In the present case, all of this is unfortunate. Neither the text nor the scholarship presented here is likely to make Whitman any clearer or more accessible than he was a century ago. Norton might have given us a much more unusual and valuable *Leaves of Grass* had they printed the first published texts of all the poems, and recorded editorially the major changes which occurred in later versions. A couple of brief efforts of this kind have been made in the past, but neither was comprehensive enough either in texts or annotation to do the job I have in mind. If we had such an edition, then might Whitman truly speak "without check, with original energy."

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