Book Reviews

Robert Kiely. *Beyond Egotism: The Fiction of James Joyce, Virginia Woolf and D. H. Lawrence.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1980. pp. 244. $14.00.

In *Beyond Egotism* Robert Kiely studies three authors who ushered in the modern novel and made it modern in both theme and technique. James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf were all born into a late-Victorian world whose literary standards and conventions they inherited, but shattered. More important from Kiely's point of view, all three were inspired by Romantic literature, but felt obliged to challenge and subdue that inspiration. Kiely — who has also written *The Romantic Novel in England* — is interested in how Modernism grew from but broke with Romanticism. In particular he examines the Romantic emphasis on the sensitive and creative self, the "egotistical sublime" which permits the poet to remake the world in his own image. Hazlitt noted that because Wordsworth "paints the outgoings of his own heart . . . his thoughts are his real subject. His understanding broods over that which is 'without form and void,' and 'makes it pregnant.' He sees all things in himself." By the same token, he sees himself in all things: the inspired ego expands to fill the world. This is also the aim of Stephen Dedalus, who pretends humility by cautioning that the artist must lurk invisibly behind his work, but who reveals his own pride when he asserts that the artist is "like the God of creation," and therefore is the brooding spirit implied in all things. Kiely contends that the modern artist restrains this subjective avarice. He acknowledges the objective world, finds his rightful place within it, and seeks a fruitful though precarious balance with it. Joyce, Lawrence and Woolf all wish to "escape from personality," in T. S. Eliot's famous phrase; they aim at a "diffusion of self" that will give responsibility and universal validity to their work. By advancing beyond egotism and mere self-expression, they pursue an ideal of equilibrium: "The quest for balance is revealed to be not simply a matter of plot, a journey to be completed by fictitious characters;

rather, it is the artist's own unfinished drama, his search for a relationship with his art, the world, and an unknown reader."

The attempt to move beyond egotism ensures that alienation will be a recurring modern problem because the self is chastized, humbled, set in opposition to a world that does not respond to it. For the novelist, who must create both fictional self and world, the result is a disruption of comfortable, unifying fictional forms. Instead his narrative grows sceptical and unruly. He composes a literature of "tension and conflict" based on pervasive ironies, multiple perspectives and authorial diffidence. Through these means he dramatizes the plight of the unstable individual in his quest for stable relationships. That popular and much-abused term, "relationships," is at the heart of Kiely's study. He quotes with approval D. H. Lawrence's comment: "Everything, even individuality itself, depends on relationship." Especially the alienated ego, Kiely implies, depends on its relation to its own past, to the world, and to other people. Accordingly, he devotes each chapter to a different relationship that serves to define the ego, that is quite literally, to give it limits, to counter its power yet sustain it by offering the required equilibrium. The first chapter studies the relation between man and nature, especially the sea. The man in question is the author, the character, the artist, and mankind in general. The second chapter studies the relation between child and parent, especially a mother who has died; the third, the relation between husband and wife; the fourth, between friends; the fifth, between actor and audience. Each chapter considers the three novelists in turn, choosing a specific text — sometimes only a few passages — for analysis. Each takes up the main themes of the study: the effort to move beyond egotism; the quest for balance; the problem of art and its relation to the artist.

Kiely usually begins these essays with a quick survey of traditional literary attitudes. For example, he notes how the Romantic poets regarded nature as a "mirror of a universal intelligence"; he comments on "the Victorian mother" and the fate of the orphan, and on matrimony as the conventional "symbol of human completion." In contrast, modern writers treat nature as an alien presence: they depict "the insensible, unco-operative, non-signifying sea," and measure their artistic powers against its formlessness. Stephen Dedalus uses it as a test of perception and contemplation; Lawrence's Siegmund (in *The Trespasser*) sees it as an object of adoration; Woolf's Rachel Vinrace (in *The Voyage Out*) finds it a turbulent medium that "heaves and sighs like some vast mystery" within herself, which she must acknowledge yet protect herself from. For the three novelists, motherhood becomes both more and less than the traditional Victorian blessing. All present a mother who dies but

returns to haunt her children, forcing them to define their own sensibilities and duties as artists. The mother is both a muse and an obstacle to creativity for Stephen Dedalus, Paul Morel and Lily Briscoe. On one hand her death is a betrayal and a source of guilt: it represents "a lost focus and link to concrete reality." Yet she reminds the errant son or daughter of the need to restore the lost balance within the self, with the past, and with the world: "To repair the break, the artist, like the maturing child, is forced to look for new links with life outside the self." The orphan-artist transcends his egotism in the family, as well as in marriage and friendship. Modern marriage is not the happy ending of a tale, but the beginning of two competing versions of a story, one told by the husband, one by the wife. Like friendship it is a vital relation which balances the individual's integrity and solitude with his need for communion with others. The partner of a marriage or a friendship is not an extension of the ego — the Romantic silent partner, good listener or co-operative companion — but a worthy opponent, as the combat between Poldy and Molly, Birkin and Gerald, Mrs. Dalloway and her suitors, demonstrates. These loving antagonisms become "the most tangible, reliable, and authentic indication of the existence of a self and of a reality outside, with which the self can establish occasional contact." In the last chapter, Kiely explains how the modern novel becomes a "theatrical event," a spectator of its own performance. By adapting dramatic forms and introducing actual plays into the story, the author depersonalizes his work and offers a detached, shifting perspective. He undermines the rationalistic, empirical, egotistical depiction of character, which is peculiar to the novel, by offering a means of perception that is "sensuous, intuitive, physically symbolic, universal, and direct."

Kiely enlarges his argument by noting how his three authors develop the themes of egotism and equilibrium in linguistic terms. A writer's treatment of character will influence his style; conversely, his attitude to language and the complex craft of the novel will determine his portrayal of character and its intercourse with reality. Therefore the relationships described above are also verbal in nature. For example, in Jane Austen's depiction of marriage. "A bad marriage, like bad grammar, is always to be regretted, sometimes to be corrected, but never to be blamed on the institution itself." A good marriage is "like a well-constructed sentence." In contrast, the husband and wife in Joyce's "The Dead" do not even share a common grammar; they are authors of different matrimonial "texts." "The crisis occurs when the 'texts' of the two marriage plots are brought together. . . . The confrontation is a verbal one, a clash not of events but of languages that have derived from differing situations and failed to merge." Similarly Kiely links the idea of friend-

ship with "a conception of experience and literary narrative as dialectic." This fusion of deed and word, of personality and its verbal rendering, explains why he devotes so much of his discussion to a close reading of selected passages. He is extremely perceptive in analyzing rhythm, voice, points of view, ironies — all the features that give a dialectical quality to narrative and make it a "relational model" for the characters' wavering relationships. When he examines the "parodic juxtaposition of incompatible texts" in *Ulysses*, or the "alternation of antithetical ones" in *Women in Love*, or the "continual movement of minimal coherence toward and away from absolute nothingness" in *The Waves*, he demonstrates how style, narrative and character are all expressions of the same, modern artistic vision.

He also demonstrated through this analysis how the inner workings of fiction reflect the workings of the human mind. Here is another relationship, between technique and theme, and it explains why Kiely, like his Romantic predecessors, regards the artist as the key, fictional character. Dedalus, Bloom, Morel, Aaron Sisson, Lily Briscoe and Bernard are all — in their own ways — aspiring artists, and some are surrogates for their authors. Through their aspirations they show that the artist is still a creative egotist, though he is something less than sublime. All the tensions and disputes in which they engage, and all their linguistic conflicts, express the very nature of their art. They must create egotistical fictions which somehow permit a revelation, not just of the self, but of reality. When they confront the sea, for example, they find a bewildering mass of literary images and myths that hinders the perception of reality and the recording of it in their art. They see in the deceased mother a model of the "artist as matrix": she represents the haunting, passive, intuitive power of the imagination which they must balance with the masculine, rational designing power. In marriage, friendship and the theatre, they see "separate worlds" sustained by generosity and harmony. The artist, like the husband or friend, "is free to create, give independent life and order, only if he relinquishes the right of possession and subjective identification." He must become simultaneously the author, actor and audience of his own drama.

It is characteristic of Kiely's approach that he does not present the argument that I have abstracted from his book and summarized above. Apart from a short introduction, he devotes himself to particulars, leaving the reader to assemble the many fragments of the discussion. The result is a piecemeal study which can grow irritating and, if the reader is not attentive, confusing. The pieces do not always fall readily into place. It is easy to get lost amid the details. Each chapter suggests material enough for three books, but deals

only with a few suggestive specimens. There is no time for discussion of nature in *The Rainbow* or marriage in *To The Lighthouse*, only in *The Trespasser* and *Mrs. Dalloway*. There is little attention to correspondences between the five relationships, and therefore no coherent picture of the work of any one author. There is little effort to consider the three novelists together, except for passing references and periodic contrasts. The very orderliness of the study, with its many divisions and sub-divisions, acts as a divisive rather than unifying force. Consequently, Joyce, Lawrence and Woolf often seem to be joined as much by Kiely's admiration for them as by the thematic unity of his study. The strength and daring of his criticism, however, lie in his devotion to particulars. He is very skillful in discriminating the smallest points of style — of diction, syntax, tone, even alliteration — and in arguing from them to nothing less than a philosophy of the modern novel.

J. M. KERTZER

Carolyn R. S. Lenz, Gayle Greene, Carol T. Neely, eds. *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1980. pp. x, 348. $17.50.

Some of the most rewarding criticism of Shakespeare, these days, emerges from oblique coigns of vantage whose angled perspective permits us a fresh view of familiar things. Such a perspective is often Stoppardian — Hamlet's story filtered through the bewildered consciousness of Rozencrantz and Guildenstern, for example, or, taking the woman's part as Carol T. Neely does in her fine essay here on *Othello*, the "isolated, rigid, hostile, foolish" masculine world seen through the sensible and affectionate eyes of Emilia. Indeed, the most successful essays in this rich and entertaining collection seem to be the ones least cluttered by other minority considerations, those most avowedly and passionately feminist, written as Carol Neely writes from her perspective "as an Emilia critic." Conversely, the cluster of essays I find less than persuasive attempts to co-opt to the feminist cause other recent critical approaches to Shakespeare — in particular the psychoanalytic and the linguistic — obscuring all of them in the process in clouds of turbid expertise in which people do such things as "encourage cipherization by confounding the integrity of titular markers."

Most of these essays, however, brush aside titular markers in their anxiety to get to the rich heart of things, to find out Polonius's centrally hidden truth. And what is exciting about reading these seventeen essays (or thirteen of them, anyway) is precisely this sense of their writers' urgency, their feeling that their time has at last

come, that they can now put right much that has been distorted by 300 years of predominantly masculine criticism. (Not surprisingly, fifteen of the seventeen critics in this collection are women: a residual chauvinism obliges me to point out that Charles Frey's essay on *The Winter's Tale*, building on his distinguished work on Shakespeare's romances, rivals Carol Neely's in imaginative perspicuity.) A case in point is Rebecca Smith's cogent, heartfelt defence of Gertrude from Hamlet's rank, enseamèd accusations — that "soft, obedient, dependent, unimaginative woman" as she describes her, whose "decorous, bewildered lines" ("Introduction," p. 5) reveal the extent to which Shakespeare has abandoned the simplistic characterization of his sources for a treatment far more appropriately problematic. Noticeable, here, as elsewhere in these essays, is the emphasis Rebecca Smith places on the evidence she finds for her position in the play itself. It's something of a shock to realize the extent to which our perception of *Hamlet* — of Shakespeare's plays generally — resides either in a distorting theatrical tradition or in equally distorting critical *obiter dicta.*

Rebecca Smith's emphasis on the reality of the play's words and actions in turn reflects an earnest desire in these essays not to appear to be rabidly feminist — or rabidly anything — not to be seen indulging in the frenetic advocacy that many supporters of the critical establishment like to think is the hallmark of feminist writing, or any criticism that takes up the cudgels for a moral reassessment of traditional opinion. In their essay-length Introduction, the editors warn that "Feminist critics of Shakespeare must use the strategies and insights of this new criticism selectively," for their open commitment to the feminist position makes them especially sensitive to the dangers of anachronistic thinking in dealing with "a male dramatist of extraordinary range writing in a remote period when women's position was in obvious ways more restricted and less disputed than in our own." In fact, what lingers in the memory from this collection of feminist writing on Shakespeare is the contributors' recognition of the sober truth about the limited power of women in Shakespeare's plays, reflecting — Elizabeth herself notwithstanding — their peripheral status in the Elizabethan power structure. So in romantic comedies like *As You Like It*, as Clara Park notes in her essay, while someone like Rosalind can be tough, witty, charming and controlling, her sphere of action is nonetheless severely limited. Like her sisters throughout the canon, she has no real political, economic or social influence; even Portia in *The Merchant of Venice* turns out to be suspiciously like Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew* in the way she is forced to affirm her subordination to her drab fiancé, Bassanio. The sobriety of all this is best summed up in Charles Frey's essay on Shakespeare's "imperiled

and chastening daughters of romance" whose limited roles as "potential wives" and "father-comforters" indicate the extent to which the romances "may be more patriarchal and patrilineal in perspective than Shakespearean interpreters have yet cared or dared to recognize." This somewhat daunting conclusion for a feminist critic underscores the intriguing responsibility to historical truth that throughout the book stiffens feminist ardour. In its combination of fierce partisanship and careful scholarship, this collection of essays deserves to outlast many more guarded treatments of Shakespeare, though male hegemony may have the last word if the book becomes one of the minor victims of the cultural revisionism of our times.

MICHAEL TAYLOR

C. S. Ferns. *Aldous Huxley: Novelist.* London: The Athlone Press, 1980. pp. 240. $26.00.

This study, highly questionable in its underlying theory and in the judgments that depend on that theory, nevertheless presents a cogent analysis of some elements of Huxley's works. Ferns is very good at the things he is good at. First, there is the examination of the early novels in terms of the influence of Peacock. Ferns is, of course, not original in pointing out Huxley's indebtedness to the techniques of Peacock but he shows clearly the limits of that indebtedness and the existence in the early novels of feelings and tendencies that transcend the convention. Indeed, it is the examination of Huxley's indebtedness to Peacock that provides Ferns with the key to understanding the general evolution of Huxley's novelistic techniques. In his demonstration that the rejection of Peacock in *Crome Yellow* leads to the realism of *Point Counter Point* and *Eyeless in Gaza*, that the rejection of realism leads to the fantastic satire of *Brave New* and *After Many a Summer*, that the rejection of fantastic satire leads to the utopian idealism of *Island*, Ferns presents a cogent account of the relationships among Huxley's works and makes a valuable contribution to Huxley criticism.

But further than this, in his readings of the novels, both those traditionally well-received and those not so often praised, Ferns leads us to see virtues which generally go unnoticed. He is particularly good at demonstrating, among other things, Huxley's skill in character portrayal, in conjuring up contrasting worlds and styles and in exploring the consequences of various views of life and reality. He rescues *Brave New World* and *After Many a Summer* from the critical contempt with which they are often greeted ("not real novels after all, are they?"). His examination of *Island* leads the reader to

look again at that work with enhanced perceptions, particularly as one recognizes the strengths of Ferns' defence of Huxley's position and outlook in *The Doors of Perception.*

In these ways, Ferns pays tribute, though by implication, to the power of Huxley. Yet Ferns' ultimate judgments and the theories that lead to them belie the tribute. Theory first rears its head in the introduction where Ferns, after accounting for the limitation in scope of the twentieth century novel, invokes the name of Wayne Booth to assist him in formulating grounds for judgment appropriate to the form. But the grounds Ferns chooses are strange indeed: Huxley is to be evaluated in terms of the success with which he realizes his worthwhile intentions as confirmed by the experience of the "ordinary reader."

The logical circularity involved in suggesting that excellence resides in the realization of intention (worthwhile or not), the subjectivity involved in divining intention and evaluating it as worthwhile, the impossibility of identifying and obtaining the opinions of the "ordinary reader," the doubtful value of an ill-informed response — these and other objections raised by critics from Coleridge to W. K. Wimsatt — have long justified the rejection of "intention" and "vox populi" as critical tools. Undeterred by such theoretical considerations (indeed never acknowledging them), Ferns in his next chapter, sees Huxley's intentions as "didactic" and sets himself the task of discovering what is it Huxley is attempting to teach. As in most cases of intentional fallacy, an author's intention is seen to be present in more accessible form in his non-fiction where "aesthetic considerations" do not get in the way. The paradox continues here as Ferns first examines Huxley's non-fiction to discover the "didactic intent" of the fiction.

Yet discovery of the intent is not enough to enable Ferns to make judgments; he must *evaluate* the teachings and so he devotes many pages to refighting the intellectual battles of the twenties and thirties and pointing to the supposed flaws in Huxley's ideas and values, flaws which result, in Ferns view, from Huxley's alienation and social isolation. Measured by the yardstick of worthwhile didactic intent, the early novels, *Point Counter Point, Eyless in Gaza* and *Brave New World,* are seen as flawed, if not second rate. *After Many a Summer* and especially *Island* then become works of great value and merit since they embody a major change in Huxley's character and views. Ferns rejects approaches to the novel which see its excellence in the artistic expression of significant experience or in its universalization of foibles, absurdities, and struggles or in its integral combination of artistry and idealism. Instead, all is sacrificed to "didatic intent" and the traditional evaluations of Huxley are overturned. As proof of the validity of his judgments, Ferns cites the

continuing appeal of the later works, especially *Island*, to the "ordinary reader." What is meant by "ordinary reader" is never defined, and Ferns quotes no surveys, sales charts or objective proof of "continuing appeal." Indeed, he does not seem aware that *Point Counter Point* and *Brave New World* still capture the greatest readership of all of Huxley's works.

A study of Huxley's novels (and his other works of fiction) in terms of criteria relevant to the form is, as Ferns recognizes, long overdue. But *Aldous Huxley, Novelist* is not that study. In some ways, it offers original insights and astute analysis; however, in its evaluation and ranking of Huxley's works, it constructs a critical edifice which the slightest push of logic and common sense at once overturns.

W. M. LEBANS

Louis L. Martz. *Poet of Exile: A Study of Milton's Poetry*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980. pp. 356. $22.50.

Professor Louis L. Martz begins the "Preface" of his recently published study of Milton's poetry, *Poet of Exile*, with an account of the origins of this book. This opening explanation is a wise precaution, for many of those who read the book will recognize the several chapters as essays or lectures with which they have long been acquainted. The book is, as Professor Martz explains, an anthoology of separate lecture length essays prepared over the past fifteen years for emergent occasions. These separate lectures were nevertheless, Professor Martz states, severally undertaken as parts of a book designed to "deal with the whole body of Milton's poetry in a consistent, coherent way."

Paradixically, Professor Martz has published precisely such a coherent study — within the limits of the several related theses of the individual lectures. Not all readers, particularly those who are Milton scholars, will agree entirely with those several theses or with Professor Martz's emphasis in presenting them, but the total result is informed, readable, and generally convincing — convincing, that is, within the limits of each essay as Professor Martz has gracefully set forth those limits. If a reader doubts, for example, that Ovid was quite so important in determining the conventions of *Paradise Lost* as Professor Martz argues, he will nevertheless be convinced that the echoes of Ovid's poetry and of his ideas, as Milton's contemporaries interpreted those ideas, are present in Milton's poetry and serve to reinforce the content, the "doctrine", of Milton's epic. More important perhaps, even those readers who have long been fully aware of the importance of Ovid to Renaissance English poets and who are

themselves competent in Latin will understand as never before the poetic process by means of which Milton incorporates Ovid among others in his Christian humanism and of the techniques which Milton used in adapting the subtleties of Ovid's Latin prosody to English epic poetry.

Above all, Professor Martz demonstrates again and again his encyclopedic awareness of content, melody, and rhythms of classical and Renaissance poetry in Greek, Latin, Portuguese, and Italian but particularly Latin to demonstrate his theses. Despite his own superb command of even the most subtle implications of the poems which he cites and generally of the languages in which they are written, Professor Martz provides clear translations so that his readers will understand at least the content of his examples. For this reason alone the book should prove a boon to those teachers who wish to make their students, now almost universally ignorant of all classical languages, aware of the poetry which Milton drew upon, synthesized, and, as Professor Martz demonstrates, often transcended.

The order in which Professor Martz presents the essays on Milton's poetry follows the order in which Milton published his own works. Part I, which treats the 1645 edition, is entitled *The Shepherd's Trade, Poems of Mr. John Milton, Both English and Latin.* Parts II and III consider *Paradise Lost*, and Part IV *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*. The theses of the several essays reinforce one another. The method, particularly in the sections which deal with *Paradise Lost*, is a cursory interpretation of the passages in Milton's poetry which demonstrate the thesis of each essay. This interpretation includes, of course, discussions of the passages quoted from other poets.

Those who teach Milton will above all else find this book of essays on Milton's poetry of great value because it makes available in one book as no previous study has done both precise and subtle elements of Milton's incorporation and subordination of pastoral, epic, and tragic elements of the poetry which Milton knew so well — especially Greek and Latin poetry. Each demonstration includes full documentation in footnotes, which are unfortunately printed in a separate section at the back of the book, and in appendices which are also essays on content and techniques of Virgil and Ovid.

DON E. RAY

Ramona Cormier and Janis L. Pallister. *Waiting for Death: the Philosophical Significance of Beckett's "En Attendant Godot."* University: University of Alabama Press, 1979. pp. iv, 155. $13.75.

"The purpose of this study is twofold. First, our intention is to evaluate the deluge of critical opinions concerning Samuel Beckett's *En Attendant Godot* and through a careful analysis of the text to establish what appear to be the most satisfactory among these opinions. Second, and more important, we are concerned with extracting from this play the 'world view' of Beckett" (p. 1).

These, the opening sentences of Cormier and Pallister's recently published monograph on *Waiting for Godot*, cast immediate doubt on the value of what is to come. Though it is standard scholarly practice to review the criticism of a work prior to offering a new reading of it, the two co-authors imply that because so much has been written about *Godot*, originality must give way to evaluation of what has been published. Certainly there is nothing original about attempting to extract Beckett's world view from the play. Cornier and Pallister, however, seem even less aware than some earlier critics of the doubiousness of trying to separate form from content, an especially dubious operation when the purpose is to derive an author's world view from only one of his works.

The faultiness of their method becomes more apparent as the book progresses. On the basis that *Godot's* four characters represent "universal man" (p. 5), they argue in chapter two that the characters' failures of memory represent a generalized human weakness. "[Beckett] seems to say that memory, by which we recognize others, upon which we base our habits and our knowledge of personal as well as cosmic history, via which we interpret the present, and upon which we construct plans for the future, is inconsistent and unreliable. . . . The fallibility of memory results in a skepticism toward everything we know, be it ourselves, others, or the world around us" (p. 23). In their concern to comment on the content of *Godot*, Cormier and Pallister neglect the role memory plays in defining its form. The relationship between the world of *Godot* and the world at large, for example, is questioned at the beginning of Act II when Vladimir recalls something Estragon has forgotten — namely, that the onstage tree, which now has leaves, was barren the day before. In drawing attention to the suddenness of the change, Vladimir reminds us that *Godot* is not a straightforwardly naturalistic play: the tree is not real but symbolic. Some critics have argued that it symbolises the Tree of Life, others the Cross or the Tree of Knowledge; altogether, a great many suggestions about its significance have been made. But the fact that the tree is a wide-ranging symbol does not mean that the play is wholly symbolic: its four elderly male characters do not necessarily represent all hu-

manity and the failings of human memory, as the two co-authors claim.

Their unwillingness to venture beyond established critical positions is most evident in chapter six. Here Cormier and Pallister consider a question which has not attracted much attention — the very interesting question as to why Beckett subtitled the English *Godot* "a tragicomedy in two acts." In commenting that "the grotesqueness underlying the [play's] superficial comedy is what leads us . . . to the tragic mode" (p. 98), they come tantalisingly close to Artaud; but although it has recently been discovered that Beckett had read *Le Théâtre et son double* before writing *Godot*, they make no mention of the possibility of influence. Work thus remains to be done on how Beckett's interest in the Theatre of Cruelty manifests itself in the play.

Diffidence about being original is one of the factors inhibiting Cormier and Pallister's discussion. Another is their well-meaning desire to be faithful to Beckett's belief (as expressed in an early essay) that explication of an art work in terms extrinsic to itself is invalid. In accordance with it, they place severe limits on their treatment of Beckett's relationship to various philosophers — and in so doing, put themselves at a serious disadvantage. A book subtitled "the Philosophical Significance of Beckett's *En Attendant Godot*" *must* include discussion of the influence of Descartes, Berkeley and Schopenhauer, at the very least; yet in spite of Beckett's well-known interest in these philosophers, none of them is mentioned.

Waiting for Death: a Review of Selected Criticism of Beckett's "En Attendant Godot" would be a more appropriate title for what Cormier and Pallister have written. As a survey of secondary literature it can be recommended, for in fairness it must be said that the two co-authors are scrupulous in their acknowledgement of earlier works. But as a study of the literary complexities and philosophical significance of the play, the book leaves much to be desired: it leaves us waiting for a more original and critically sophisticated study of *Godot* to appear.

JAMES ACHESON

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