

Book Reviews

Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies, eds. *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, Volume 1: 1861-1897*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983. pp. lxxvii + 446. \$39.50.

After his career at sea and his marriage in 1896, Joseph Conrad settled in small towns and farms near London. He lived in part through correspondence, conducting business, friendships, and literary discussions through the mail. Although not the equal of the great Victorian correspondents, he wrote regularly and at length in English, French, and Polish. Over 3,000 of his letters are extant, many of great biographical and literary interest. Temperamentally a solitary and even secretive man, he enjoyed the safety and formality of letters. He could indulge his narrative skill or protect himself through an elaborate style. He could adopt poses and tones to suit his readers: jaunty and sceptical to the eccentric R. B. Cunninghame Graham; intimate and plaintive to his mentor, Edward Garnett; avuncular to his protégé, E. L. Sanderson; gallant to women. He even wrote one letter to Henry James entirely in French, because it allowed him to address his "Cher Maître" with gallic courtliness. For critics and scholars his correspondence has long been important as key to an elusive personality, as source of facts, epigrams, intentions and attitudes, and as evidence of a Conradian "philosophy," to adopt a grand term which he, in these very letters, would disavow. Some of them have become crucial and familiar in Conrad criticism. A study like Edward Said's *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography* analyses the letters as closely as the fiction.

Critics have been hampered, however, by inaccurate or inaccessible texts. Almost 1,500 letters are unpublished; others are scattered in various journals, books, and libraries. Most troublesome have been G. Jean-Aubry's collections *Joseph Conrad: Life and Letters* (1927) and *Lettres Françaises* (1929), for many years the main sources of letters. Jean-Aubry knew and admired Conrad and was eager to protect his friend's reputation. Accordingly, he amended spelling, punctuation, and diction, corrected lapses in English and French, and omitted words, phrases, and whole paragraphs which he judged inappropriate. Conrad's many complaints about financial

woes, his occasional coarseness, his anti-American bias (at least in his earlier years), and his harsh judgment of some people were all weeded out by the diplomatic Jean-Aubry. As Frederick Karl remarks tactfully in his introduction to the volume under review: "In pointing out the errors and omissions of Jean-Aubry's work, we should stress that his conception of an edition of letters was very different from our own."

For these reasons the projected eight volume collection of Conrad's letters, of which this is the first, is most welcome. This volume begins in 1861 when Conrad was four ("Daddy, I am fine here, I run about the garden — but I don't like it much when the mosquitoes bite.") and ends in 1897 when he had launched his literary career with two apprentice novels, several stories and one masterpiece, *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*. The book is attractive and manageable for its 446 pages. It contains photographs, maps of the voyages, a good chronology, and numerous, unobtrusive footnotes identifying people and events and placing them in Conrad's life. Polish letters are given only in English; French in both French and English. Unfortunately the letters from Conrad's years at sea, when he corresponded with his uncle Tadeusz Bobrowski, have not survived, although his uncle's replies have and were published by Zdzislaw Najder in *Conrad's Polish Background* (1964). Consequently, most of the letters in this volume were written in the 1890's, and almost half of them between 1895 and 1897.

The most important letters from this period are those to Conrad's aunt, Marguerite Poradowska, a Belgian novelist. They are interesting because they were written during and after his journey to the Congo — the biographical basis for "Heart of Darkness" — and because they present for the first time Conrad writing at length, complaining, philosophizing, cultivating a style, and conducting a personal, literary, and perhaps romantic correspondence. However, this series has been available in English since 1940, when it was published by John Gee and Paul Sturm. Also interesting are the letters to his first editor, Edward Garnett (published by Garnett in 1928). They show Conrad establishing himself as a novelist, testing his opinions, discovering his powers, lamenting his weaknesses, lamenting his poor health. The series of letters to R. B. Cunningham-Graham (published by Cedric Watts in 1969) only begins in these years, but even here it shows Conrad at his freest, most playful and most engaging:

No man can escape his fate! You shall come here and suffer hardships, boredom and despair. It is written! It is written! You — as a matter of fact — have written it yourself (at my instigation — very rash of you) and I shall be inexorable like destiny and shall look upon your sufferings with the idiotic serenity of a benevolent Creator. . . .

What is new in this collection? Those expecting great revelations about the Jean-Aubry letters may have to wait for subsequent volumes. A comparison with the *Life and Letters* reveals variants in punctuation, spelling, and in deciphering Conrad's handwriting. Jean-Aubry's "attitude" now reads "aptitude"; "commission" becomes "communion"; "dam'" becomes "damn." His translation from the Polish, "I would hasten to manifest my joy to you" becomes the risqué, "I should at once come running to wag my tail." Remarks about Conrad's first publisher, T. Fisher Unwin, are restored to a few letters: "He numbs me like an electric eel"; "He may be of a vengeful disposition." These excisions reveal as much about Jean-Aubry as about Conrad. More noteworthy are comments (already published by Najder) which Conrad made about his fiancée only a couple of weeks before he married her: "She is a small, not at all striking-looking person (to tell the truth alas — rather plain!) who nevertheless is very dear to me." As for letters previously unpublished, many discuss business matters with Unwin. They make dull reading, but are useful biographically. Conrad was always short of money and always negotiating with publishers about terms, amounts, and dates. In these early years he is tactful and diffident; later he was to grow more forthright. One letter requesting a loan from a Polish friend, Spiridion Kliszczewski, is a masterpiece of diplomatic rhetoric. We also find his first letters, honeyed with flattery, to Henry James and H. G. Wells. We get prime examples of "Conradese" — grand sentiments expressed in a grand manner: "I myself have read only the one great page, the enormous and monotonous page filled by a life passed entirely outside myself, oblivious of my own individuality, in a struggle with the mysterious and varied powers which oppose our will." Best of all, we find some new examples of Conrad's early artistic judgments. Although he often acted bashful when discussing literature, Conrad had definite tastes and strong opinions. He read widely (we find references to Maupassant, Twain, Catullus, Emerson, Dickens, Brete Hart, Tolstoy, Vigny, Thackeray) and critically, and his vague terms often conceal shrewd judgments. His condemnation of *The First Fleet Family*, by Louis Becke and Walter Jeffery, is full of illuminating details: "It speaks of life — but it has no more life in it than a catalogue. . . . the note of truth is not in the possibility of things but in their inevitableness . . . A picture of life is saved from failure by the merciless vividness of detail." In another letter, his painfully restrained criticism of the poetry of his young friend, E. L. Sanderson, is comical in its desire not to offend: "It is only on third or fourth reading that a shadowy dissatisfaction — less than that — a shadowy doubt arises in the mind about the *complete expression* of the *last line*."

In 1897 Conrad was still signing some letters with his real name, which he never abandoned, Konrad Korzeniowski; but he was clearly settling into the role of Joseph Conrad, novelist.

JON KERTZER

Norman Page, ed. *Thomas Hardy Annual No. 1*. Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1982. pp. xii, 205. \$32.50.

Norman Page, editor of the *Thomas Hardy Annual Number 1*, and Richard H. Taylor, its surveyor of recent Hardy studies, both point to Hardy's current popularity among readers, critics, poets. If one asks whether or not still another study or set of studies is warranted on this occasion, the answer, as it often turns out, is "yes." The reason lies both in the rich and resilient nature of Hardy's work, material that yields new areas of discovery and old fields for fresh survey, and in the quality of the material gathered in this volume — not all of equal strength but none without firm muscle tone.

Hardy's fiction receives the largest amount of space, the essays covering a wide area of concern. While pointing out features of geography and the past that were important to Hardy, Arthur Pollard in "Hardy and Rural England" worries about a too limited "socio-literary criticism." He warns the reader against seeing in Hardy's novels a "simple 'country good/town bad' opposition" or interpreting the threshing machine episode in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* with too narrow an economic view. These are certainly legitimate concerns; all the same, they have been rehearsed before. Merryn Williams's "Hardy and 'the Woman Question'" is interesting for the literary context she provides for Hardy's later novels, in particular *Jude the Obscure*. Rightly, Williams finds it "too simple to call Sue [Bridehead] 'the woman of the feminist movement'." Strangely, although it is interesting to discuss Sue Bridehead against the background of "the Woman Question," such a discussion tends to flatten the wonderful idiosyncratic contours of her characterization and some of the problems associated with it. For example. Williams mentions Sue's children and her aversion to marriage. But what are Sue's feelings as a mother? What kind of mother is she to her own children? What change does her giving in to Jude's sexual requests bring about in her? Hardy is curiously reticent in this instance about Sue's responses to motherhood and sex. Some vital features of Sue's character are missing here, features important to a consideration of her within the context of "the Woman Question." Finally, in "Hardy's Use of the Hair Motif," Peter W. Coxon provides a lengthy and detailed examination of the way "the hair motif" helps "in the portrayal of female character," serving as "a

stable symbol of female sexuality." Though not stimulating in style, the article is substantial and well-documented.

If any single novel wins in this collection, it is *Two on a Tower*, not simply because it is the only novel given individual attention but because of the interest sparked by the two essays dealing with it. In "The Experimental and the Absurd in *Two on a Tower*," Rosemary Sumner suggests that Hardy presents a kind of absurd universe that Hardy was not to draw "so fully or so clearly again until his later poetry." Although Sumner refers to a number of twentieth-century works — *Nostromo*, *A Passage to India*, various writings of Beckett, *The Myth of Sisyphus* — what is achieved by linking the novel with "the absurd mode" remains unclear. A reader is confused by the variety of ways Sumner uses the term — the universe is "absurd," the "intricacies of plot" are "absurd," and "the ways . . . characters try to stave off the recognition of possible ultimate nothingness" are "absurd." But she praises Hardy's portrait of Lady Constantine — "Hardy's most heroic character," she calls her — claiming that in this portrayal Hardy does succeed in exalting the human drama over the universal one, one of his professed aims in writing the novel.

A still more appealing case for the heroine, though, as well as a richer defence of the novel is made in John Bayley's "The Love Story in *Two on a Tower*." Expanding on his comments in *An Essay on Hardy*, Bayley examines the way Hardy uses juxtaposition and incongruity in the love story of Swithin St. Cleeve and Lady Constantine, playing off mode and convention against each other. He points out how Hardy mixes the presentation of real-life nature during the lovers' honeymoon with echoes of Cupid and Venus, with teasing suggestions that their relationship is vaguely adulterous, and with hints that Lady Constantine holds "the status of captive maiden." Hardy heightens the erotic content, according to Bayley, and turns the tower into a symbol of marriage. The pathos of Lady Constantine's discovery of her pregnancy is intensified by its implied juxtaposition to "the rural theme" of seduction — and hence given a wider universality. Most readers know Hardy through his "great" novels as most, for example, know Meredith through *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* or *The Egoist* — that is, through those novels available for university classes in paperback editions. If *Two on a Tower* should become more widely read, as it deserves to be, it will be so — following its being made accessible — on the basis of such examinations as Bayley's.

Hardy's poetry is served well in two essays that take what appears at first glance a sideline approach, though Tom Paulin's "Words, in all their intimate accents" is basically head-on in its effort to characterize Hardy's voice — "intimate," "tender," sensitized to a "rural folk culture." He analyzes sound and cadence, showing how

Hardy achieves varying vocal patterns. In our own age, when so many write poetry with so little feeling for sound or rhythm, it is invigorating to have Paulin point "to a connection, or an identity, between rhythm and mystical experience" and verify that connection through subtle analyses of passages from Hardy's poetry. We need to be reminded that there is a "rhythm of contemplation" and that there are "connections between poetic rhythm and the religious instinct," pulsing not with the hammer of rock music but to the thrum of much subtler accents. We need to be urged — to train ourselves if necessary — to read with the ear as well as the eye. This Paulin does.

In his two-part essay, "Hardy, Donald Davie, England and the English," John Lucas takes on what he infers is Donald Davie's case against Hardy in *Thomas Hardy and British Poetry*. This essay has a quality of intellectual adventure about it in the way Lucas briefly speculates on Davie's motives and describes the condition of England in the 1960's, in the voice of the essay that argues its opinions openly and charitably, and in the manner Hardy's poetry is defended. Since Davie's views apparently altered in the 1970's, Lucas concentrates on two points, defending Hardy against the charge of being "too much the engineer and too little the craftsman" by pointing — as Paulin does in his article — to the sensitivity of Hardy's ear; moreover, he credits Hardy against the charge "of an improper modesty" with a "generosity of vision" deriving from the poet's ability to be self-critical. Lucas's is one of the most stimulating pieces in the collection, showing as it does two keen and intelligent minds — his and Davie's — at work on Hardy's poetry.

In " 'Old Tom and New Tom': Hardy and His Biographers," Peter J. Casagrande attempts to bolster Hardy's image as a human being against Robert Gittings's harsh and diminished portrait of him in Gitting's two-volume biography, not by denying the writer's negative features but by showing the need for a fuller and more balanced portrait, something one would have if one recognized that "the inhumanity and pettiness of the man" were "the sources of the humane sympathy of the art." In his long and beautifully presented essay, Casagrande describes Hardy's attitude toward earlier biographers — F. A. Hedgcock, Ernest Brennecke, and Samuel C. Chew — and argues that in his work Hardy examines his own shortcomings and their effect upon others over whom he had power or influence. The essay explores what seems an area of growing interest with the large number of new literary biographies being written in recent years — the relationship between the writer's life and his art.

If there are any major ideas cutting across the essays in this collection, the matter of this relationship is one of them. The other is that which argues the value of considering the sound of Hardy's poetry. The collection includes besides these essays a short and informative

article on "Hardy and His 'Literary Notes'" by Lennart A. Björk, "Three Unpublished Letters by John Addington Symonds," "A Survey of Recent Hardy Studies" in which Richard H. Taylor, by judicious selection, provides a good overview of work done since 1978, and a moving poem of commemoration by Christopher Wiseman. The volume closes with a clutch of reviews of recent books on Hardy along with "A Hardy Bibliography, 1978-81."

Hardy's literary reputation is strong. If the tides of current critical taste have him at a high water mark, the position is warranted. So, too, a collection of material such as this. One looks forward to further issues of the *Thomas Hardy Annual*.

University of Saskatchewan

LEWIS HORNE

Del Ivan Janik. *The Curve of Return: D. H. Lawrence's Travel Books* (No. 22, *ELS Monograph Series*). Victoria, B.C.: English Literary Series, 1981. pp. 119. \$5.00 pb.

Janik's study of Lawrence's travel books — *Twilight in Italy* (1916), *Sea and Sardinia* (1921), *Mornings in Mexico* (1927), and *Etruscan Places* (1932) — is prompted by the fact that "critics have rarely dealt at length with the travel books themselves, and they have not recognized the pattern in Lawrence's development as a thinker and artist that they implicitly trace" (p. 9). It is especially this implicit "pattern" that Janik attempts to clarify, for he believes that the implications of the travel books can be helpful to readers of Lawrence because of their priority to the more purely creative works: "The special significance of Lawrence's travel books is that they chart the course — generally in advance of his fiction and poetry — of his changing responses to, and his approach toward a reconciliation of, the demands of mind and world" (p. 21).

The overall pattern that Janik sees in the travel books is "the curve of return" of his title. Each of the books records an encounter between the modern, European, intellectual Lawrence and a more ancient, integrated, and passionate culture, although the integrity of some of the Italians in the first book is already being lost because of their rising awareness of and fascination with things "European." The "curve" lies in Lawrence's recognition of the importance of an individual's, as well as a society's, "return" to the integration of these cultures, although a full-circle "return" is gradually seen by Lawrence as undesirable and, in any case, impossible. Hence, the "curve" allows for the European's new awareness of what must be regained, but also permits Lawrence's developing awareness that modern man cannot go back to these cultures, that he must go

forward more richly after having learned the integrity of personality displayed in these cultures.

Devoting a full chapter to each of the travel books, Janik charts the systematic clarification and development of Lawrence's views and the ever-increasing artistic confidence shown in Lawrence's rendering of his immediate responses to people and places as well as his subsequent intellectual insights distilled from his immediate experiences of these people and places. Janik also uses a fair portion of each chapter in demonstrating how the insights given by each of the travel books inform the more significant fictions and poetry that Lawrence was writing at about the time each of the "travels" was completed.

For Janik, the first three of the travel books are "essentially diagnostic" in defining Lawrence's view of the apparently irreconcilable split between "the modern world of reason and instrumentality and the ancient world of spontaneous being, "between "modern linear, rational consciousness and the primitive cyclical, sensual consciousness," as this split manifested itself in Lawrence's encounter with Italy, Sardinia, and Mexico, respectively. According to Janik, *Twilight in Italy* "reflects in its manner and content the tension in Lawrence himself between modern 'northern' intellect and primitive 'southern' sensuality." *Sea and Sardinia* marks a clear, if unsatisfactory, step forward by presenting "Lawrence's self-conscious, contradictory, and unsuccessful attempt to embrace the European past as a substantive basis for contemporary action" (p. 23). *Mornings in Mexico*, perhaps because its setting was even more "foreign" to Lawrence, completed "his recognition of the radical incompatibility" of his "modern" consciousness and the "primitive" consciousness.

Janik sees *Etruscan Places* as a significant development beyond the first three books; it "is not a diagnosis but a tentative prescription. It is an imaginative projection of Lawrence's views of the roles of communal and personal experience upon a mysterious dead civilization. It explores the possibility — Lawrence would say the necessity — of resolving the quest for meaning first on a personal level, by putting aside modern mindfulness in order to recapture the spontaneous sense of wonder known to the American Indians and the ancient Etruscans" (p. 23). Probably because the Etruscan culture must be imaginatively reconstructed, mainly on the evidence of graves and grave-art, Lawrence is able to interpret its potentialities according to his own developed vision, unfettered by the discouraging actualities that he had to acknowledge in earlier "travels." In any case, according to Janik, the last travel book moves Lawrence past his momentary consideration, in *Mornings in Mexico* and the "leadership" novels, of the need for "forceful" leaders and resolves earlier problems by emphasizing individual fulfillment and the importance

of "wonder" and "touch." These new insights colour his last works, especially *Lady Chatterley's Lover* and *Last Poems*.

In his attempts to keep his focus on the travel books, and on how they inform Lawrence's fiction and poetry, Janik sometimes oversimplifies matters. While his reading of the potentialities of the travel pieces is usually convincing and his attention to the shaping of the material provides real insight into Lawrence's artistic control of his experience, the focus causes Janik to gloss over the questionable nature of certain of his assumptions concerning the priority and essentiality of these pieces. For instance, Lawrence himself has warned of the danger of assuming that his stated concepts preceded their embodiment in his more purely creative works. In an often-quoted passage from his Foreword to *Fantasia of the Unconscious* (1921), Lawrence states that "This pseudo-philosophy of mine — 'pollyanalytics,' as one of my respected critics might say — is deduced from the novels and poems, not the reverse. The novels and poems come unwatched out of one's pen. . . . These 'pollyanalytics' are inferences made afterwards, from the experience." And, indeed, even Lawrence's first novel, *The White Peacock* (1911), shows its author's realization of the disastrous result of the "split" between the "primitive" and "modern" impulses within the human psyche. Santayana believes that the seeds of all the major ideas which an intuitive thinker and writer has during his lifetime are present in his earliest work, and Lawrence shows such intuition from the beginning.

Another example of the difficulty that Janik encounters arises from his attempt to establish that Lawrence's vision developed through the four travel books. In discussing the ultimate attainment of vision in *Etruscan Places*, Janik points out that Lawrence "now" calls that state of desirable balance between the two contending impulses of the psyche "the soul," whereas formerly it had been called "the Holy Ghost." Hence, "the change in terminology is significant, because it shifts the location of ultimate meaning from the realm of the abstract to that of the particular; Lawrence now makes clear his belief that the polarity exists, and has its dynamic reconciliation, first within the individual" (p. 86). These rather emphatic "now's" must bother any sensitive reader of Lawrence, for surely the "particular" implications of the "soul" metaphor are there in as early an essay as "The Crown" (1915), in which the Crown itself quite explicitly represents the "soul" preserved between the contentions of the Lion and the Unicorn (the master metaphor of the essay being the Royal Coat-of-Arms). And the same balance is surely signified, in *Women in Love* (finished in 1916), by the "golden light" that Birkin succeeds in drawing out of Ursula finally.

Janik does acknowledge "The Crown" essay, as well as another

important distillation of Lawrence's "pollyanalytics" entitled "Study of Thomas Hardy" (written late in 1914), but, apparently because of his desired focus on the travel books, he does not really pay much attention to these other essays. Closer attention to them would, while admittedly diffusing his focus, undermine his argument that Lawrence's vision, as well as his artistic control, developed throughout the travel books.

The travel books *are* significant, as well as artistically exciting, and Janik is right in stressing that they have not been examined closely enough. His study corrects this situation and provides real insight into their quality and manner. However, the sharp focus and one or two of the basic assumptions raise some questions concerning the overall fairness to Lawrence of Janik's treatment.

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WILLIAM C. LATTA, JR.

Harrop, L. and Noel Stock, eds. *Ezra Pound in Melbourne, Helix 13/14*. Ivanhoe, Australia: Poetry Helix, 1983. pp. xiv, 211. A\$7.50.

It is appropriate that this double issue of the Australian little magazine *Helix* is intended to mark thirty years of association between the guest editor, Noel Stock (best known to the academic world for the *Life of Ezra Pound*) and Pound. As students of the literary history of the early twentieth century are well aware, the major writers of the Modernist movement in the Western world, including Pound, struggled to little avail in the early years of the century to place their work with the established commercial publishing houses, and were indeed almost totally dependent initially on a handful of little magazines and their presses for publication. Without *The Egoist*, *The Blue Review*, *The Little Review*, *The English Review* and *Poetry* (Chicago), to name only a few of these magazines, readers would have had a long wait to see in print *Portrait of An Artist*, *Ulysses*, the first *Cantos* and *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*.

For Ezra Pound in particular little magazines were essential to the carrying out of his "agenda," his list of "things to be done." He used the magazines (at times ruthlessly) for most of his working life, even after he had secured more regular sources of publication, in order to place the work of other artists, to comment in prose on the state of contemporary culture, and to encourage an international conversation about culture which he saw to be the most lastingly important business of little magazines. Eventually, Pound came to believe that all art and all expressions of cultural ideas are a statement of politics, and his view of the little magazines as propaganda

platforms for presenting "agenda" echoes the origins of the medium in early nineteenth-century French-cultural little magazines.

Ordinarily, *Helix* presents itself as an arena for a multitude of diverse genres and views, providing publishing space for new poetry, for graphics, and for reviews of new books and exhibitions. *Helix 13/14* is unusually academic in its choice of articles and its contributors, many of whom are practising university professors and most of whom are concerned with the field of criticism that has grown up around the work of Pound and his contemporaries. The purpose of this double issue is ostensibly to mark the presence of *Ezra Pound in Melbourne*, a slightly misleading title for the unwary. In 1953, Pound was firmly settled in St. Elizabeth's Hospital in the U.S.A., and his presence "in" Melbourne was courtesy of the mail service and the urgent enthusiasm of two Australian men, Noel Stock and William Fleming, for Pound's work and views. Always a gatherer of disciples, Pound devoted a great deal of his twelve years in St. Elizabeth's to gathering together a new band of young followers and to attempting to set up new vortices in place of the old, spent ones of pre-war days. Through Stock and Fleming, Pound hoped to draw Australia into his net of world-wide correspondence. According to the evidence presented in *Helix 13/14*, he failed, which was generally true of other similar attempts in the post-1946 years.

Pound *afficionados* will be disappointed with the overall tone of this issue, which is debunking, mainly, but they will scarcely be surprised since it is in line with a growing trend in Pound criticism to put Pound in his place, as it were. One thinks, for instance, of Alan Durant's *Ezra Pound, Crisis in Identity*, a book which has many fine points but which seems to be taking Pound to task in the grave for not having considered, in the creative process, theories of the psyche as a language system, and for daring to presume a Self as a functioning creative unit, a position that the majority of mankind would probably consider entirely reasonable, then and now.

Noel Stock's twenty-page article, "Ezra Pound in Melbourne, 1953-57," besides being a negative estimation of Pound's activities in the period, is a bit heavy on self-flagellation. Obviously, looking back thirty years, the older Stock rather wishes that the younger Stock had had more sense than to become so much of a proponent of Pound's work and ideas as to alienate himself from the cultural environment in Melbourne in 1953 and after by attempting some heavy-handed proselytizing. Put simply, it appears that Stock now considers himself to have been a fool and wishes to disassociate his present self from his younger self. The extent of his self-aversion, worryingly summed up in the article thus:

My first contribution came out in June 1955: a review of Pound's *Classic Anthology* and *Literary Essays*. Some of what I say there may be true,

but the style, my best Poundian already fully developed, is so embarrassing to me now that I am quite unable to read it; and so I must leave conclusions, if drawing such were thought worthwhile, to others with stronger stomachs than I.

Nevertheless, in spite of the tone, Stock's article is a useful piece of literary biography, if such matters are to your taste. One wonders, though, why the editors follow this article immediately with Earl Philrose's "Melbourne Papers." The bulk of the information in Philrose's article has already been given to the reader by Stock and by Les Harrop in his lead article, "The Cabbala of Ezra Pound," and its effect is diminished by its placement within the issue. Indeed, of the three articles mentioned above, Harrop's is by far the most interesting, and even exciting, to read. A fascinating picture is drawn by him of Pound's insistent and persistent vision of modern culture as a species of "cold war," with its paranoid emphasis on conspiracy and spying, and its determined polarizatoin of mankind into "them" and "us." Before and during World War I, Pound's little magazine prose made gleeful use of images from the "hot" war, and his combative stance was openly (and also joyously) aggressive. By the 1920's, much of the delight in open battle had gone from Pound's prose, and the four issues of his own little magazine, *Exile*, published in the period around 1928, show, in stylistic changes, the aftermath of open warfare and the beginning of the images in his work of the underground, the spy, the secret meeting and so on. (Incidentally, it's probably worth noting here as an aside that the same language tendencies play a large part in the early poetry of W. H. Auden. *The Spy Who Came in From the Cold* has honourable origins.)

There is, in *Helix 13/14*, a great deal of biographical and historical information about Pound and his contemporaries, such as Flint and Lawrence. Some of the articles, such as Hugh Underhill's on F. S. Flint, and Corrin's on Pound and G. K. Chesterton, will be of considerable future academic use, particularly to critics involved in the re-estimation of Imagism, not only because of their factual content but also because of the superior quality of the authors' commentary. The only one of the biographical articles that caused me any dismay was "Lady with Poet," by Martha Ullman West. It is a sketchy account of Pound's association in Paris in 1911 with a young American woman named Margaret Cravens, whose unexplained suicide in 1913, it is strongly hinted, was connected to her relationship with Pound. The tone of this short article is, I think, distasteful because of the amount of innuendo generated by the long passages quoted from the memoirs of a relative of the author. This article is part of a longer piece of work that Martha Ullman West is now working on, and it was surely a mistake to publish this excerpt which

is bound to read badly when taken out of the full context in which justice will no doubt be done to the facts.

Undoubtedly, the three best contributions to *Helix 13/14*, apart from Les Harrop's fast-paced lead article, are the reviews by Colin McDowell at the back of the magazine, the bibliography of books relating to Pound that were published between 1975 and 1981, and Cairns Craig's high-powered ten pages of "The Ghost of the Modern," a most thought-provoking and satisfying piece of critical commentary. In general, for all but post-structuralist and deconstructionist Pound scholars, *Helix 13/14* is worth buying, in spite of the occasional oddities of tone. There's enough information and comment in the 211 pages to keep students of Pound hopping for quite awhile. The magazine is full of leads and hints that should generate interest in new avenues of explorations, at least of the biographical and historical sort, in Pound criticism.

SANDY WEST

Books Received

- CARAMELLO, CHARLES, *Silverless Mirrors: Books, Self & Postmodern Fiction*. Tallahassee: University Presses of Florida, 1983. pp. xii, 251. \$25.00; \$12.00 pb.
- CHAKOO, B. L., *Aldoux Huxley and Eastern Wisdom*. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1983. pp. xiv, 308. \$16.25.
- ELLISON, DAVID R., *The Reading of Proust*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984. pp. xvi, 213. Unpriced.
- GIAMATTI, A. BARTLETT, *Exile and Change in Renaissance Literature*. New Haven: Yale University Press. pp. xii, 172. Unpriced.
- GROSS, KONRAD and WOLFGANG KLOOS (eds.), *Voices from Distant Lands: Poetry in the Commonwealth*. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, 1983. pp. 174. \$15.00 pb.
- KIDMAN, FIONA, *Mandarin Summer*. London & Aukland: Heinemann, 1981. pp. iv, 186. Unpriced.
- MAITRE, DOREEN, *Literature and Possible Worlds*. London: Pembridge Press, 1983. pp. 128. £9.50.
- NILES, JOHN D., *Beowulf: The Poem and Its Tradition*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983. pp. x, 310. \$27.50.
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