

colonies are necessarily radical voices, thus challenging the automatic oppositional status of postcolonial writing as constructed in the theory of an empire "writing back" (6) in an adversarial way. It might be more accurate to say (instead of overextending the now too-familiar Rushdie phrase) that, as Anaya puts it, "colonization destroys the roots that bind you to the authentic self," and thus our roots are fed in a special way by this literature (248). Anaya speaks of his writer's quest for inner liberation which sets others free (254). Postcolonial writers are writers who, having experienced the multiple impact of forms of colonization and dispossession, use English to engage in a particularly intense quest for self-integration through literature. Arriving at a set of fictional coordinates which forcefully create a new space within which to live and be themselves, they have become the artists who increasingly express with great passion the plight of rootless and migrant beings who are always in a "spiritual corridor" which must become home. The courageous, candid, and thoughtful voices which speak through these interviews remind us how important it is that storytellers tell the story the way they see it, "not the way the emperor wants it to be told" (Achebe 81). Postcolonial writers create the conditions of their own freedom in fiction by exploring the "multicultural consciousness" (Jussawalla to Selvon 113) which has been the legacy of colonization and cultural imperialism. This collection exposes the "deliberate and instinctive" acts (Desai 164) out of which their fictions are made. Everyone working in the field of postcolonial literature can learn from these writers of the historical constraints and paradoxical freedoms out of which they create the postcolonial world and thus recreate themselves and others.

CHERRY CLAYTON

M. R. Ghanoonparvar. *In a Persian Mirror: Images of the West and Westerners in Iranian Fiction*. Austin: U of Texas P, 1993. pp. 177. \$18.95

The sudden reversal in the Iranian attitude towards the West since the Islamic Revolution of 1979 has prompted a great deal of interest in the analysis of this phenomenon. The Western media often portray the Iranian position as irrational and inexplicable or simply "fundamentalist," rejecting the West as the hostile Other. This view is buttressed by the well-known *fatwa* (edict) issued against Salman Rushdie by Ayatollah Khomeini. In fact, the Rushdie affair has deepened the gulf between Iran and the West.

Professor Ghanoonparvar's book *In a Persian Mirror* offers an interesting insight into the Iranian psyche concerning its perception of the West, and it helps one understand that the Iranian attitudes towards the West did not develop overnight, but rather evolved over more than two centuries of Persian-Western contact. Professor Ghanoonparvar examines a wide range of Persian prose, both fiction and travel literature,

focussing on the twentieth century. It is perhaps the material on travelogues as well as on the post-revolutionary period that one finds most valuable. One must note also that while there is no dearth of scholarship in the established field of orientalism, there are very few studies from the opposite side, namely, the impact or images of the West in Eastern literature. *In a Persian Mirror* deserves credit on this basis as well.

The author adopts a historical approach to his subject. He begins with the classical period when the West (*farang*) was seen simply as the hostile Christian Other as opposed to the Islamic Self. This dichotomy between the Self and the West as the Other lingers in the minds of early Iranian travellers to the West in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in particular. With increasing contact between the West and Iran, the prevailing image of the West began to shift from a monolithic, negative Other to something that could be appealing as well. The scientific and material progress of the West makes the modernists propose a total emulation of the West, while the traditionalists focus on safeguarding Persian/Islamic values and culture. The predominant picture in the post-revolutionary period is, however, free from this intellectual conflict as the Iranian writer turns back to a one-dimensional, negative image of a hostile, imperialist West bent on exploiting Iran and the Muslim world.

The historical and political background helps the reader situate the text and understand the subtle details of Iranian attitudes towards the British or the Americans at a given point in history. For instance, much of nineteenth and early twentieth-century Persian literature is characterized by an anglophobia that was a direct result of the British imperialist policies, particularly during the period of Mosaddeq and the oil nationalization movement. Later on, the target of Iranian anger shifts from the British to the Americans, who are blamed for the repression during the Pahlavi regime.

There are, however, some problems. For example, Professor Ghanoonparvar's assertion that the Iranian attitudes towards the West are not clearly defined and that much of Persian fiction treats the dilemma of the encounter with the West in an ambivalent fashion is not borne out by the post-revolutionary material examined in the book. Another weakness of the work is that the literary analysis it offers often lacks depth—it tends to be limited to plot summaries.

SHAMSUL ISLAM

Daniel David Moses and Terry Goldie, eds. *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English*. Toronto: Oxford UP, 1992. pp. 393. \$19.95.

There are two miracles of Canadian history. The first is the survival of French Canada, and the second is the survival of Canada.

F. R. SCOTT, *Essays on the Constitution*