

its approach to the dual problems of the fourth and sixth *tratados*. Sieber's analysis of the short fourth *tratado* is based on the symbolic meaning which he attaches to the new shoes with which the *fraile* provides Lazarillo. These are shown to be symbolic of Lazarillo's sexual initiation, and the *fraile's* "trotacillas" are linked to Trotaconventos and her activities as a procurress. Those who interpret Lazarillo's story as an incomplete, fragmented narrative may question this aspect of Sieber's study, although the homosexual interpretation of "otras cosillas que no digo" has already been expounded by such an eminent critic as Marcel Bataillon. Sieber's interpretation of the sixth *tratado* is based on the reasoning that if clothes make the man, then a parody of clothes makes the parody of the man! However, Lazarillo does not call himself an *hombre de bien* as a result of the "hábito" that he is able to buy, as Sieber suggests (p. 74), but rather he states that he is dressed like one: "Desque me vi en hábito de hombre de bien" (my emphasis). Lazarillo realizes, then, that he is not really an *hombre de bien* although he would like to be considered one.

In spite of the very minor reservations that I have expressed with regard to the difficult fourth and sixth *tratados*, Sieber's interpretation of *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes* as a unified, integrated work convinces. His lively and original reading makes this a valuable study of the precursor of the Spanish picaresque novel.

Roger Moore

FELIX J. OINAS, ED.

Heroic Epic and Saga: An Introduction to the World's Great Folk Epics

Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978. Pp. 373.

DAVID E. BYNUM

The Daemon in the Wood: A Study of Oral Narrative Patterns

Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978. Pp. 454.

ERIC S. RABKIN, ED.

Fantastic Worlds: Myths, Tales, and Stories

New York: Oxford University Press, 1979. Pp. 478.

GEORGE deFOREST LORD

Heroic Mockery: Variations on Epic Themes from Homer to Joyce

Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1977. Pp. 162.

JOSEPH A. KESTNER

The Spatiality of the Novel

Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1978. Pp. 204.

A mixed bag of studies on fiction, all of which however bring different kinds of light to bear on the subject which concerns readers of this journal. Professor Oinas has got together a group of experts to discuss heroic epics around the world, from Ireland to West Africa, and from Homer to Serbocroatian songs. Most of this—like David Bynum's specialized study of tree tales in the Milman Parry Collection's publications series—will be of more interest to the folklorist or ethnographer than to the theorist of fiction, but such works do shed light on our genre, especially its oral origins. Folk or fairy tales are the link, since they arose among peasant communities and were not written down until relatively recently. As such, they are of considerable fascination to Professor Rabkin, who discusses them at some length in the introduction to his anthology of fantastic tales and stories. Again, the spread is international and takes us, in time, from the Old Testament to Amos

Tutuola. The fantastic is given a catholic definition by Eric Rabkin: that which offers an alternative to the real world. Certainly his selections "rejuvenate the familiar by transplanting it to the wonderful soil of fantastic worlds" (p. xi); and his book will make an excellent class text as well as offering stirring bedtime reading to the general reader of fiction.

These three books are, as I say, either collections or specialist studies. Of more direct interest to students of the novel are the books by Professor Lord and Professor Kestner. The first links up to some extent with Professor Oinas's symposium, in that it is concerned, in part at least, with the *Odyssey*. Professor Lord concentrates his attention, however, less on the heroic than on "literature that criticizes and modifies the heroic tradition or appeals from it to other standards"—"standards that," Dr Lord specifies, "while often appearing to be unheroic, attain in the long run a greater validity than those they replace" (p. 13). The scope is once more admirably wide, sometimes almost perversely so; I was not myself convinced by the detailed comparison and contrast between the spurious games at Llanabba School in *Decline and Fall* by Evelyn Waugh and the epic Homeric and Virgilian games. Nor, to be candid, did I feel that the topic merited book-length treatment; Professor Lord clearly took a lot of trouble over it ("Rarely has a book so small incurred such a heavy load of indebtedness," p. 9), but the discussion lacks rigor and the conclusion ("the most serious things are too serious to be treated seriously," p. 135), while admirable in itself, does not—for this reader at least—emerge with compelling inevitability from the demonstration and the examples. Perhaps the weakness of the book is that it arose out of seminar teaching at Yale. We have all, I am sure, experienced disappointment at rereading notes made after a particularly stimulating class with bright undergraduates: somehow the dazzlement we felt at the time evaporates—like a heady perfume from an uncorked bottle—surprisingly rapidly.

If some readers will feel that Professor Lord is almost too urbane, others may find Professor Kestner's remorseless seriousness disconcerting in a different way. He uses diagrams, employs technical language ("genidentic," for example) and peppers nearly every page with titles of novels in italics, rarely doing more than allude to a book he assumes all his readers

will be familiar with. Perhaps Dr Lord is right, and the most serious matters—such as the role of space in the novel—are too serious to be treated seriously. There is no doubt about the importance, even the centrality of the topic; but there must remain some doubt about Professor Kestner's success in handling it. My confidence was a little shaken, for instance, by finding what is for me the most astounding, and the most puzzling, instance of pictorial illusion in fiction—the sighting of Chad and Madame de Vionnet by Strether, "framed" (as it were) in a Lambinet—despatched in a typically brisk aside: "In *The Ambassadors* (1903), Strether sees his quarry and its lure indelibly framed on the river Seine" (pp. 77-78). Is that all, I wondered, that one can say about such an extraordinary passage, such a controlled and sustained "pictorialization" of a fictional episode? So for me, this was a disappointing book; but it will remain an important one, if only for the admirable summary of previous theories of spatiality in narrative given in the first chapter, and the frequently challenging readings of passages that one thought one knew well, such as the famous "Il voyagea" ("He traveled") which opens the penultimate chapter of Flaubert's *L'Education sentimentale*, and which Professor Kestner discusses—albeit, it must be said, with tantalizing curtness once again—in his penultimate chapter.

John Fletcher

DORIS Y. KADISH

Practices of the New Novel in Claude Simon's L'Herbe and La Route des Flandres

Fredericton, N.B.: York Press, 1979. Pp. 105.

Kadish treats *L'Herbe* and *La Route des Flandres* as paradigmatic new novels. She makes, moreover, a pertinent distinction between the new novel and the new-new novel (of Simon's later period) in which virtually all traditional elements are excluded. In *L'Herbe* and *La Route*, she studies four elements: plot, character, description and point of view; plot and character are minimized to a great extent through the means of blurring or the lack of details,