

Larra, his use of parody of Spanish literary criticism, and his special relationship with *Don Quijote de la Mancha*.

In *Juan sin tierra* Goytisolo became increasingly aware of the phenomenon of self-consciousness in literature, an element he incorporated and which resulted in a duplication of the self between an existential entity and a linguistic person. Goytisolo's allusions to language and commentary on the art of writing intensify in *Juan sin tierra*, where he forces the reader to concentrate on the act of literary creation. But Goytisolo also continues commentary on the decadence of Spanish culture and the pathological denial of the body and human sexuality, on language, and the text as he identifies with Octavio Paz's theories and attempts to resolve what Paz believes are irreconcilable tensions in Western culture. Ugarte views Goytisolo's parodies, citations, commentaries, and transcriptions of other texts as manifestations of his attempt to corrupt and contaminate a cultural tradition.

A number of small errors (*Paráiso* instead of *Paradiso*, p. 39, for example) are relatively unimportant. When we come to the bibliography, however, although admittedly an author must limit numbers, we find significant deficiencies and the omission of some important and basic works on Goytisolo which, moreover, bear on Ugarte's thesis. In some cases Ugarte cites an early work by an author and ignores many of the same author's later and more important ones. At times some of Professor Ugarte's commentary seems terribly close to that of others, listed in the bibliography, to whom he does not give full attribution.

Professor Ugarte has attempted to relate the form, aesthetics, and technique in Goytisolo's trilogy and has summarized familiar material quite well. Nonetheless, the basic Goytisolo, whatever the intertextual and formal cosmopolitan creativity, is still chained to his Spanish sources by unbreakable ties from which he keeps trying to escape for psychological and personal and not merely literary reasons. Mother Spain continues all important to Goytisolo—one does not attack something which has no meaning for him—even more clearly seen in *Makbara* (1980) where Goytisolo widens his attack to include Western values. He blends literary allusions, psychological symbols, and linguistic forms with a critique of religious, political, social, and sexual institutions, incorporating once more

his psychological apprehensions, womb fixation, castration fears, homosexuality, bodily secretions, a return to mother, scatological and sadistic imagery, and a plea for sexual freedom. To ignore the importance of this aspect of Goytisolo in his trilogy, whatever his use of intertextuality or his assaults on literary tradition, is to miss a basic component not only of the man but of his work.

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ARNOLD WEINSTEIN

Fictions of the Self: 1550-1800

Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981. Pp. viii + 302. \$9.95 & \$20.00.

Large-scale studies of the early novel in a European framework transcending Ian Watt's valuable and influential but starkly anglo-centric and realism-bound exclusivity, are happily increasing. Weinstein's book is a welcome and exciting addition. In yet another substantial addition likewise published in 1981: *An Exemplary History of the Novel: The Quixotic versus the Picaresque* (Chicago University Press), Walter Reed remarks: "The historical study of the novel in this century has produced a vast array of sequences, selections, and juxtapositions of texts, arrangements which neither harmonize nor conflict with one another, and which leave the object under investigation unclear" (p. 19). This gloomy view does not of course prevent Reed from adding his own "arrangement" delineated in the subtitle. There is indeed occasion for intense wonder and exhilaration rather than gloom. For we are seeing, alongside expanding developments of established notions such as Alexander Blackburn's *The Myth of the Picaro* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 1979) or Peter Uwe Hohendahl's *Der europäische Roman der Empfindsamkeit* ("The European Novel of Sensibility"; Wiesbaden: Athenäum, 1977) other approaches, cutting across boundaries with new perspectives illuminating significant movements and affinities, and thus enlarging our awareness of the dimensions, texture, and richness of the major

genre in the modern period. Besides Reed's book, one could mention, for instance, René Girard's *Mensonge romantique et vérité romanesque* (Paris: Grasset, 1961; trans. as *Deceit, Desire and the Novel*; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1965) and Volker Klotz's *Die erzählte Stadt* ("The Narrated City"; Munich: Hanser, 1969)—and now, Arnold Weinstein's book.

In his "Introduction" (pp. 3-18), Weinstein stakes out his position. He views each chosen novel as "a unique configuration of the protagonist's life-story" and, endowing "fictional characters with the attributes of a self" he wants to illuminate the "interaction of self and world which is our life" (p. 6). Thus he studies "strategies of self-realization which find in literature their most privileged and atemporal expression" (p. 12). Ultimately, he argues, "these novels tell us about freedom, its whereabouts and its cost" (p. 13). At the same time, Weinstein attaches due importance to the role of language, freely acknowledging as a general inspiration Erich Kahler's "Die Verinnerung des Erzählens" (1957/59; 1970; transl. as *The Inward Turn of Narrative*; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

This interest leads him to a distinction between "two basic kinds of narrative: stories of impasse or conflict where no amount of words will do, and, on the other hand, novels in which verbal threads lead out of material labyrinths." The first kind he calls "mimetic," the second "generative" fiction (p. 4). Kahler—for whom a first great phase of the novel culminates with *Tristram Shandy*—had remarked that "the basic structures of nineteenth- and twentieth-century fiction had their foundations in previous centuries" (*The Inward Turn*, p. 7). Armed with the notions described above, Weinstein goes further (probably too far): "I stop with Rousseau, because the story has essentially been told by then" (p. 9). "Proust, Joyce, et al, add immeasurably to the picture, but the givens of the picture—the rationale of mimetic versus generative fictions, the privileged status of language in fiction, the increasing primacy of speech acts as the only kinds of assertion imaginable, the recourse to writing as ultimate self-enactment—are clearly and profoundly delineated in the early fictions that I study" (p. 10).

Each of the four main chapters is given to a small group of texts. These groups may at first startle because of their heterogeneity; but Weinstein succeeds in show-

ing that through his "lens" (p. 10) they can be read as "fictions of self-realization" and share essential features. "The Marginal Self" (pp. 19-83) discusses *Lazarillo de Tormes*, Quevedo's *El Buscón*, Grimmelshausen's *Simplicissimus*, and Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves*. Here, "at every turn," life is "coercive, and these fictions record the difficulty and the challenge of self-assertion" (p. 20), ending with defeat; we see "a virtual ritual of public pressure and private eclipse: the coarser adapt and the finer succumb, but selfhood is extinguished in every case" (p. 83). The next group is filled up by Defoe, Marivaux, and Fielding, in particular *Moll Flanders*, *La Vie de Marianne*, and *Joseph Andrews*, all "Orphans" (pp. 84-128) whose life-stories, while not without struggles and problems, show "the encounter between self and society" as a "mutually enriching education" (p. 84); and "the self reigns triumphant" (p. 15). After this "idyllic interlude" (p. 15; cf. p. 129) comes "Collusion" (pp. 129-99), exemplified by Prévost's *Manon Lescaut*, Richardson's *Clarissa*, Goethe's *Werther*, and Laclos's *Les Liaisons dangereuses*. In these novels the conflict between the "self-as-authority" (p. 15), in *Les Liaisons* "the self deified" (p. 181), Other, and society leads to an irremediable "tragic impasse"; these "swollen" selves (p. 131) crash. Even more strongly than in *El Buscón*, the generative role of language comes to the fore in *Les Liaisons*. This dominates the last group: Diderot's *Le Neveu de Rameau*, Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, and Rousseau's *Confessions*, treated in the chapter "The Life as Book" (pp. 200-51). These "strange parables of by-pass and over-pass, of the freedom of language and the imagination over and against the poverty of matter and experience" (p. 201) are truly "generative" as opposed to "mimetic" fictions in which "the self prophetically plays out its life as art, and the relational binds of the past are past" (p. 201).

The foregoing synopsis needed to stress what brackets each group together. Weinstein's procedure is, within the respective groups, much more sophisticated and also elaborates important differentiations. His arguments are supported by numerous quotations. While apparently trusting the reader with skill in foreign tongues to tackle hefty passages in footnotes, Weinstein gives all those quoted in his main text in English; he frequently finds it necessary to interpolate improvements where he uses existing translations—it might have seemed less cumbersome to retranslate the lot. The original passages are appended at the end,

with rather too many printing errors. Otherwise the book is carefully produced (a single instance of a sentence left in disarray occurs on p. 256). The book is also well written and, a few topical flutters (like "eco-system" or "enabling") apart, in a very straightforward and engaging manner. If it is, as George Watsons surmises, "always a temptation for critics to write with the object of impressing other critics" (*The Story of the Novel*; London: Macmillan, 1979; p. XI), Weinstein has not succumbed to it.

In the case of a study of such range and sweep, objections should not bother with previous criticism about insufficient consideration of this or that author, but should concern principles. One is Weinstein's insistence on "contemporary meanings" (p. 12): ". . . rather than to a criticism that discerns 'appropriate' meanings, I am committed to what today's reader can see in them." One doubts whether such an absolute rift really exists, and if it does, whether it would not be critically more constructive to attempt bridging—or at least explaining—it. Moreover: the "historical critic" may well be, as Weinstein seems to suggest, a fiction; but so is, surely, "today's reader." Doubts are raised by Weinstein's strategy in dealing with several of the texts. Somewhere e.g. in his discussion of Marivaux consideration might have been expected of the facts that *La Vie de Marianne* resembles a Chinese box, that it is progressively less centred on Marianne, and that it is unfinished. The interpretation of *Simplicissimus* most drastically different from Weinstein's is perhaps that of Alexander Parker in *Literature and the Delinquent* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1967; pp. 78-94), for whom *Simplicissimus*, far from having his selfhood extinguished, allegorically exemplifies the "delinquency of mankind" and is at the end retrieved, converted and liberated in God. Today's reader, whoever he is, may not wish to be bothered with this interpretation or might, if he were, still decide in favor of Weinstein's. However, he can read for himself repeatedly that *Simplicissimus* feels an abject sinner. One could perhaps argue that he misapprehends the issue (like Huckleberry Finn in his qualms about Jim) or find some other explanation; but one can hardly just skid over this aspect. Nowhere does Weinstein manifest an awareness that his reading of *Madame de Lafayette's* novel is, at least prima facie, sharply at variance with the narrator's attitude, especially towards the end which culminates in the famous remark that the Princess' life, though short, "left behind

inimitable instances of virtue" (cf. Weinstein, p. 83). To support Weinstein's—persuasive—interpretation, one might argue that the final sentence is charged with abysmal irony, or, alternatively, that the author herself did not realize the implications of her work. Somehow, at any rate, this rift ought to have been accounted for.

The distinction between "mimetic" and "generative" fictions is highly useful. Looking across e.g. at David Grossvogel's *Limits of the Novel* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968) one can immediately see that with this critical tool at his disposal, Grossvogel would have had to struggle less in his introductory chapter before reaching a promising platform. Weinstein's scheme has accidental but all the more fascinating affinities to Richard Lanham's distinction between "serious and purposive" versus "dramatic and playful" motives, theories of knowledge, of style, and ways of constructing reality (cf. *The Motives of Eloquence*; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976). Such bipolar models work best as regulative concepts expressing two impulses in continuous interaction; and any developments traced in applying such concepts may most adequately be characterized as linked to successive shifts in emphasis. In his "Conclusion" (pp. 252-62) much more than in the "Introduction," Weinstein sustains (like Lanham) the openness and the continuity his model entails, casting the "mimetic" and the "generative" in the image of the "line" and the "circle" (pp. 253, 254). Yet, earlier motions like "The novel is born and, in some sense, dies during the space of fictions I assess" (p. 8), pointing to a definite and closed view of development, do not altogether disappear (cf. e.g. p. 257 as against 256). A similar flux of positions obtains with regard to the material Weinstein discusses. While casting quick and interesting glances at other works contemporary with or later than his period, he concentrates on fourteen texts. They have of course been selected for detailed treatment because they—as opposed e.g. to *Don Quixote* which he dismisses (p. 9)—are apt examples for the demonstration of the pattern he perceives. At times Weinstein indicates that he remains conscious of this premise, while at others his texts somehow come to stand for "the novel." Although they are major works (more consistently so than e.g. Reed's), even key works, they do not open up the full range of fiction between 1550 and 1800. Weinstein may reasonably claim that the "parameters" of *these* novels are

"dictated by" the "coherence and the economy of the life-story" (p. 9); to generalize this, overstretches the material basis as well as the perspective brought to bear and the method employed. It also results in a new kind of exclusivity, a new impoverishment of the genre.

Despite such doubts and objections, the book remains not just a very stimulating but a very substantial contribution. Girard (p. 3) argues that "The value of critical thought depends not on how cleverly it manages to disguise its own systematic nature or on how many fundamental issues it manages to shirk or to dissolve but on how much literary substance it really embraces, comprehends, and makes articulate." By this, as by any other criterion, Weinstein's study is valuable.

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SANFORD PINSKER, ED.

Critical Essays on Philip Roth
Bosten: G. K. Hall, 1982. Pp.
278.

The assumption behind any critical anthology is that its subject is worth such concentrated attention, but there are moments when, reading these pages, one wonders why anyone would devote so much time and energy and close reading to so apparently disagreeable a writer as Philip Roth. There is much here to discourage those of us who have enjoyed Roth's fiction, and perhaps the most discouraging thing of all is that Sanford Pinsker really has put together an interesting and representative collection of essays. It is sad that Roth has been the target of so much antagonism, but it is even sadder that his work has been so poorly served even by critics who profess to admire it.

Granted, there were moments when I thought I was back reading student themes—the essays "The Great American Novel," by Walter Blair and Hamlin Hill, and Robert Forrey's "Oedipal Politics in *Portnoy's Complaint*" are particularly ill-composed and insipid—but in such a collection a certain amount of academic piffle

is, one supposes, unavoidable. For the most part, however, Mr. Pinsker has made good choices. You may, now and then, find yourself choking with rage at, for instance, Irving Howe's brilliant and unfair (translation: at odds with my own opinions) "Philip Roth Reconsidered," but you will only very rarely be bored. Even when the criteria of selection stray a little, as with Stephen J. Whitfield's "Laughter in the Dark: Notes on American-Jewish Humor," which makes only passing reference to Roth, perplexity yields to gratitude. Whatever made Mr. Pinsker include this gem, I, who had never seen it before, am delighted that he did.

But what is a little disturbing is the degree to which, with all this application of wit and intelligence, Roth's critics, both *pro* and *con*, have never really gotten past manning the barricades. Everyone has an axe to grind, it seems, which can lead to some highly selective readings—it is difficult to believe sometimes that people can be talking about the same novel. The reasons for this are fairly obvious: Roth's critics have tended to identify his artistic merit with his attitudes towards his material. Is he anti-Semitic? Is he misogynous? For the moment (and it has been a long moment, extending the entire length of his career), these are the questions that seem to absorb professional comment on his work. Eventually, assuming that Roth isn't slated for oblivion, the partisan wrangling will subside—after all, if the Irish can swallow Joyce, the Jews can be trusted to come to terms with *Goodbye, Columbus*—but right now there seems to be little enough cold-eyed, purely literary inquiry.

And what passes for formal analysis is, more often than not, that treacly stuff that goes under the name of "psychological criticism"—forget about management of plot and style; let's get down to the author's sexual failures. To some degree Roth has this coming—writers who make such extensive use of the psychoanalytical format are playing with fire—but one might have hoped that everyone wouldn't have risen quite so easily to the bait. However, this too will pass.

In any case, buy Mr. Pinsker's anthology. There is a great deal in these essays which is worthwhile, and together they perform the highest service that can be asked of such a collection—they make you want to go back and reread the fiction.

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