

Dr. Gilman's thesis is further weakened by what I consider a number of misinterpretations of specific details. For example: is Doña Perfecta really a human archetype and not a caricature (pp. 72-73)? Surely Galdós suggests the important political representativeness of Isidora in *La desheredada* well before the key penultimate chapter of Part I (p. 101)? Gilman seems to overlook the redeeming features of Rosalía in *La de Bringas* (p. 140) and underplay the relevance of José María's protestations of instructional purpose in *Lo prohibido*. Moreover, is Fortunata always so clear-sighted about Juanito (p. 339)? The high claims made for Galdós's use of language in *Fortunata y Jacinta* (p. 254) are unsupported by studies of the same topic in the other novels. Furthermore, is Gilman's explanation of the process of "double-dialogue" anything more than a snobbish reluctance to descend to the more prosaic level of source-hunting? To his credit, Dr. Gilman does acknowledge from time to time that he is treading on dangerously thin ice with these speculations and hypotheses (p. 214).

In such an attractively produced volume it is sad to have to record a large number of typographical errors (accents proved to be a particularly thorny problem for the typesetters). A bibliography and list of periodical abbreviations would have been valuable additions. The chapter subdivision headings do not appear to be very helpful, and the varied approach to the problem of translating large quotations is extremely perplexing: some are placed below the original, others are omitted or replace the original, without there being any obvious reason for this varied treatment. Occasional compression of footnotes and rambling sentences would have been welcome along with less paternalistic references to students' end-of-term essays or soon-to-be-published books. Some mention should have been made of the studies by Varey and Cardwell on *Doña Perfecta* and Ribbans and Lassaleta on *Fortunata y Jacinta*.

Despite these reservations and criticisms, Professor Gilman's study will remain a major reference book for galdosistas in the years ahead. Admitting to have read *Fortunata y Jacinta* over two dozen times, Professor Gilman clearly demonstrates that he, like Galdós, is an avid and perceptive reader as well as a brilliant writer. In encouraging lesser mortals to follow his example, his achievement will be all the more lasting and significant.

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GRACE RADIN

Virginia Woolf's The Years: The Evolution of a Novel

Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1981. Pp. 188. \$14.50.

The development of few novels is as well documented as the progress of Virginia Woolf's *The Years*. We know the exact moment of initial inspiration: In her diary entry of January 20, 1931, Woolf wrote, "I have this moment, while having my bath, conceived an entire new book—a sequel to *A Room of One's Own*—about the sexual life of women: to be called *Professions for Women* perhaps—Lord how exciting! This sprang out of my paper to be read on Wednesday to Pippa's society."

The difficulties of *The Years*, thus, seem to have arisen in the moment of its first inspiration. Virginia Woolf had prepared a speech to be given before the London/National Society for Women's Service (a shortened version of this speech is found in *The Death of the Moth and Other Essays*; a transcription of the first typescript of the speech is found in Michael Leaska's *Virginia Woolf: The Pargiters*). Whether a feminist speech was a fruitful inspiration for a novel by Woolf I suppose we cannot ultimately decide. That Woolf had great difficulties in finding the proper form and style for *The Years* is well documented. Between that moment of inspiration in the bathtub and the publication of the novel in 1937, the work underwent many changes, and Woolf was dissatisfied with the result. Leonard Woolf, when he finally read the work in galleys, was relieved to find it less bad than he had feared; he was able to express encouragement honestly if not wholeheartedly, an encouragement he felt essential to his wife's health at the time.

To document the development of the novel we have seven and a third bound notebooks in Woolf's handwriting, what is apparently the first draft of the novel. There are eight sheets of undated typescript (Radin guesses they date from 1934). A nearly complete set of galley proofs from March 1936 survive. (There were, apparently, two sets of page proofs.) In addition, of course, we have periodic and important reports on the progress of the work in the diaries.

Initially, Woolf conceived of the work as a Novel-Essay, interlarding chapters of fiction with essays. That form did not work. (Leaska's book cited above transcribes the first handwritten notebook and half of the second; the alternation of fiction with essays resulted in a loss of style in both forms.) The essays were dropped, although they provide the inspiration for *Three Guineas*. Radin reminds us that Woolf thought of *The Years* and *Three Guineas* as one book (diary entry for 3 June 1938). Finally, the initial writing of the novel, which went relatively rapidly, resulted in a manuscript far too long: "900 pages," she wrote in her diary, "[Leonard] says 200,000 words." The cutting and revisions were extensive, and it is the nature of the changes and omissions and the resulting effect on the work of fiction which Radin studies.

Essentially, she finds changes of two kinds—a softening of tone with reference to political, anti-war, and sexual matters and the elimination of long scenes with the resultant problem of making certain characters and actions ambiguous and the focus of the novel unclear.

The softening of language began even in the speech which inspired the novel. Woolf had originally written that Dame Ethel Smyth was "of the race of pioneers she is one of the ice breakers, the gun runners, the window smashers. The armoured tanks who climbed the rough ground, drew the enemies fire, and left behind her a pathway . . ." In the speech itself Woolf said only, "She is of the race of pioneers, of pathmakers. She has gone before and felled trees and blasted rocks and built bridges and thus made a way for those who come after her."

It was no doubt natural in any event for Woolf to dash off in her handwritten versions the strength of her feelings and to modify them for public consumption. Leonard, we are told in the diaries, had earlier told Virginia that "Politics ought to be separate from art." Radin points out that in general the galley proofs retained more of the anti-war commentary from the holograph version than can be found in the published novel, and she suggests that Leonard, who first read the novel in galley form, may have influenced Woolf to soften the anti-war sentiments. In addition, between the beginning of the novel in 1931 and its final form in 1936, Hitler

had risen to power, and it was not as easy to be anti-war as it had been five years earlier.

The impact of such softening is detailed by Radin. For example: "In the holograph we learned that Nicholas thought Elvira unfair to North because the boy had been raised to be patriotic and could not help responding as he did. As this explanation does not appear in *The Years*, the reader can easily assume, with Eleanor, that Nicholas admires North for enlisting when in fact he agrees with Elvira-Sara that war is absurd. And without Nicholas' comments or his explanation of why Elvira-Sara and Maggie feel no loyalty to their country, Sara's ridicule of North appears capricious and pointless. The deletion of expository passages like these changes the tenor of the novel. Where in the holograph one finds straightforward presentation of many radical and unorthodox ideas, in *The Years* the same ideas, if presented at all, are treated as rather absurd notions. It is almost as though Woolf wished to hold them up to ridicule herself, before her critics could do it for her" (pp. 76-77).

With respect to the announced intention of writing about "the sexual life of women," Radin comments, "Clearly, Woolf intended to show that life as lived in the private house and the streets around it was inseparable from the quality of civilization as a whole, and that the emotional and sexual alienation of the sexes from one another had caused a schism in the society. It was Woolf's deepest belief that the only solution to political and social problems lay in an open acknowledgement of all the impulses within ourselves. Yet, sadly, the differences between her first draft and the novel and essay she published reveal that there had come a moment when her courage failed" (p. 35).

With respect to deletions, there were many minor revisions and cuttings and the elimination of what Radin calls "two enormous chunks." Both of the very long scenes eliminated deal with Eleanor Pargiter—the first was the opening part of the "1917" chapter and the second a chapter intended to be "1921." Radin analyzes the effect of these deletions: "Yet these cuts do have their effect, for they cause a shift at the center of the novel, throwing its balance askew. If one projects the deleted scenes back into the text, their presence changes the meaning of the work as a whole, for both scenes describe experiences that are

grim and even terrifying, and their rein-
sertion further deepens the tone of the
work that is already regarded as Virginia
Woolf's darkest novel" (p. 81).

There are, of course, revisions which
aided the novel, and Radin is especially
helpful in revealing how Woolf, as she
worked and pared, inserted "patterns of
repetition," echoes and reechoes of words,
phrases, and incidents in an effort to give
the sprawling manuscript a resonance and
focus. But her conclusion is that the pub-
lished novel is flawed, the severe revisions
having left motivations unexplained and
characters ambiguous. "But when she was
writing *The Years*, the sense of 'impending
shape' that had sustained her in the past
was never completely secure" (p. 151). Ra-
din suggests that only by having discarded
the initial holograph version completely
could Woolf have brought a focus to the
novel.

This is an intelligent and illuminating
study and, with Leaska's cited above, gives
a thorough picture of a great artist strug-
gling with intractable material and her own
uncertainties.

There is an unfortunate typographical
error in the book. In a work dependent
upon dating, it is unfortunate that, on
page 113, the date 17 July 1933 is given
as the day when the first retyping was
completed. It is correctly given elsewhere
as 17 July 1935.

Dean Doner

IAN WATT

Conrad in the Nineteenth Century
Berkeley: University of
California Press, 1979
(pb. edition, 1981). Pp. 375.

"The nature and originality of Conrad's
narrative methods" and the "basic philo-
sophical assumptions" that these express
are what the distinguished critic Ian Watt
seeks to clarify in this study (Preface, pp.
ix-x). Biography and nineteenth-century
history, literary and intellectual, are the
appropriate means of coming to an un-
derstanding of Conrad's special place be-

tween the earlier age and our own. "The
Early Life: 1857-1894" introduces a close
scrutiny of four works only, *Almayer's Folly*,
The Nigger of the NARCISSUS, *Heart of
Darkness*, and *Lord Jim*, each of which re-
ceives a chapter.

The account of Conrad's early life fol-
lows the path marked out by previous
biographers. The summary is elegant and
urbane, proceeding with the generosity and
assurance that come of experience and
common sense. "No doubt" and "surely"
are repeated often. Professor Watt, here
as elsewhere in the volume, does not hesi-
tate to speak the truth of life: "Surely not
many people, especially when young, have
got into a spectacular mess and then told
the whole truth about it to anyone" (p.
12); "Very few sensitive people can have
struggled to adulthood without fantasies
of ceasing to battle with the peremptory
denials of reality" (p. 14). Such sayings
unexceptionable, of course. The governing
idea in the biography is provided by An-
drzej Busza's "Conrad's Polish Literary
Background" (*Antemurale*, 10 [Rome and
London, 1966]): there is in Conrad a con-
flict between two strains, the Bobrowski/
practical and the Korzeniowski/metaphys-
ical. For Professor Watt, the Bobrowski
"practical or Positivist set of values" be-
comes "the Conradian ethic" of solidarity
and fidelity (pp. 28-29). That ethic, as in
Jocelyn Baines's *Joseph Conrad: A Critical
Biography* (1960) and Jacques Berthoud's
Joseph Conrad: The Major Phase (1978), is
conflated with British empiricism (p. 30),
the values of which are reflected in Pro-
fessor Watt's own disinterested and gently
ironic observation, for example, that "the
English may not exactly be xenophobes,
but they do not take quickly and warmly
to foreigners" (p. 23). The following char-
acterizes the experimental science of *Con-
rad in the Nineteenth Century*: "There are
other, and more tangible, residues of his
early circumstances both in Conrad's life
and in his work. . . . Conrad's fiction is
virtually devoid of sons with moth-
ers . . . On the other hand, no doubt
because his father lived longer than his
mother, so that Conrad knew him better,
Conrad's fiction is very rich in father-son
relationships" (pp. 26-27). There is balance
here and experience. But what of logic?
As well, even some of the facts of life in
this chapter are ambiguous. When, for ex-
ample, Professor Watt remarks that suicide
in Conrad "often has a strong element of
heroic self-sacrifice for the good of others,
as with Captain Whalley in *The End of the*