

bellion and then to revolution, which means almost the entire production in this genre for the decades between the late 1920s and the mid 1970s. The work is divided into five chapters. Chapter I, "Introducción," supplies a welcome panorama of Bolivian social, political, and economical problems as well as a literary background for the short fiction that came vigorously in the late 1920s. There follow four chapters that study the main themes, dissecting the stories motivated by the dreadful Chaco War (1932-1935), the National Revolution (1952), and the post-revolutionary years (to around 1975). Each chapter is in turn subdivided into sections describing characteristics of main protagonists (miners, farmers, labor leaders, students, priests, army men, foreign tycoons, etc.) and plot of the stories according to the setting where action takes place (tin mines, farms, jungle in the Chaco, etc). A most interesting part of this book is Chapter V, in which we are given the almost unique chance of learning what happens after a reformistic (or not entirely reformistic) revolution has taken place. The conclusion of the work brings us the final evaluation by the author. While recognizing that artistic qualities were often absent in many of the stories he surveyed, he maintains that a sincere idealism was the key note for Bolivian short-fiction writers, since with their writing they kept their countrymen informed and restive, and prepared them for the National Revolution (1952) that instituted most of the reforms the same writers had been demanding. In his opinions, the author is not impartial, always siding with the writers whose work he is analyzing. However, he has been objective. In the pages of his book, the modern and contemporary history of Bolivia as seen by its short-fiction writers is frankly and efficiently dissected. The style of the book is direct and straightforward, with interesting quotations and bibliographical notes (although a general bibliography is unfortunately lacking).

Two are in my opinion the major contributions of this book. Bolivia, with its National Revolution, has been a laboratory of political experiments. Politicians, economists, and writers would do well to maintain a close inspection of what a literature like this can teach about a revolution that did achieve a good many of its goals and new problems that may thereafter come to surface. And it can also be said that this book will offer a pattern to critics seeking to study the vigorous short story of other Spanish-American countries. Since at least some 80% of it belongs to the classification of the social

protest and since aspects of Bolivian history find their equivalents in all other nations of the subcontinent, a book of this kind invites imitation.

Evelio Echevarría

PATRICK O'DONNELL

John Hawkes

Boston: Twayne, 1982. Pp. 168.

As John Hawkes's novels have multiplied and his reputation spread, critical attention of his work has gradually increased. In addition to numerous articles and interviews, there are three book-length studies, each illuminating in its way but each limited in its scope and approach. Patrick O'Donnell's study, *John Hawkes*, is the newest and perhaps the best of these works.

Another installment in Twayne's United States Authors Series, O'Donnell's book presents that publisher's familiar format: a brief chronology, an introduction to the author's biography, chapters devoted to individual works, and a selected bibliography of primary and secondary sources. However familiar all of this may sound, the study is markedly different from other Twayne publications in its thesis and approach. While he acknowledges that part of his purpose is one "of introducing Hawkes to an interested academic and general public" (Preface, unnumbered page), O'Donnell puts forward the original thesis that "Hawkes's primary concern and subject is the imaginative process, the way in which the artist creates a world, a fiction, through a highly controlled, clearly 'artificial,' artificelike use of language . . . Hawkes is concerned with the danger and Faustian potency of artistry" (Preface, unnumbered page).

Especially noteworthy is the introductory chapter which not only broadens the dimensions of the thesis but provides the most comprehensive and insightful examination of the nexus between Hawkes's life and art. The chapter's greatest attribute is the wealth of quotations from O'Donnell's own extensive interview with the writer. In tracing the events of Hawkes's life, O'Donnell carefully demonstrates the ways in which particular incidents contributed to the writer's unique vision—the use of menacing or distant land-

scapes, the simultaneity of pain and pleasure, the paradox of victimization and compassion, the motif of travel, and the repeated manipulations of often contradictory material.

Subsequent chapters are arranged in a roughly chronological order of the novels' publications, and, with one exception, draw various works together. Thus the novellas (*Charivari*, *The Owl*, and *The Goose on the Grave*) comprise one section; *The Beetle Leg* and *The Lime Twig* another; and *Second Skin* and *The Passion Artist* a third. Perhaps the most interesting of these gatherings is that devoted to "The Triad" (*The Blood Oranges*, *Death, Sleep & the Traveler*, and *Travesty*) for the ways in which the novels are seen as a "lyric descent" in narrative voice and vision and as "progressive investigation[s] of the imagination's power to find harmony and unity in the face of absurdity and death; often despite the assumptions of traditional humanism or morality" (p. 114).

The last chapter, which attempts to place Hawkes's achievement alongside that of his contemporaries, is likewise perceptive and revealing. Here O'Donnell demonstrates that in spite of his atypicality, Hawkes can be compared with Mailer, Pynchon, and Heller as a "postwar" novelist who employs war and social collapse as a fictional background. As a figure continually concerned with the aesthetic power of language and style, Hawkes shares some common ground with Nabokov, and in his insistence on the element of artifice and the fictionality of fiction, the author frequently resembles Barth and Grass.

The work's selected bibliography is also particularly commendable. Neither thin nor exhaustive, it presents selections that are carefully chosen and whose annotations provide concise and helpful statements about the relative merits of the individual items. Readers not completely familiar with Hawkes's fiction would do well to acquaint themselves with these pieces for the reasons O'Donnell suggests.

In all, *John Hawkes* is a needed and welcome addition to the growing body of scholarship on this most important American novelist. O'Donnell's work offers many perceptive and subtle analyses of individual novels and provides an intelligent, articulate overview of the writer's continually emerging oeuvre.

David W. Madden

MICHAEL BACHEM

Heimito von Doderer

Boston: Twayne, 1981. Pp. 161.

\$14.95.

As Bachem states in the preface to his monograph, the study of Doderer's work is a rewarding experience. It is also no easy task, because, although Doderer became known outside Austria only in the 1950s, his first publication, a slim book of verse, was written in 1923. His early works were subject to expressionist influence, particularly that of Albert Paris von Gütersloh; the major novels show marked traits of realism, and at the end of his life he was moving towards the creation of what he termed the "roman muet," which exhibits certain affinities with the French "nouveau roman." Throughout his life Doderer was an outsider in the literary field. At a time when critics were proclaiming the demise of the novel, he produced two works of truly epic proportions, *Die Strudlhofstiege* (1951) and *Die Dämonen* (1956). His personal life was extremely eventful. He fought, and was a P.O.W., in both World Wars; he was a member of the National Socialist Party in the 1930s, but converted to Catholicism in 1939 and took up an antipolitical stance. Critics consider him, as Bachem points out, as being "fantastically parochial" or "narrator of epics in the time-hallowed sense of the old teller of tales." Such divergence of opinion may be due in part to the fact that the reader of Doderer is either a "Heimitist," that is, completely attuned to the author's every idiosyncrasy, or else he can find nomenclature in Doderer's style of narration or in his Weltanschauung. Bachem clearly belongs to the former group and offers his readers a well-documented introduction to Doderer's oeuvre, summarizing clearly and concisely the contents of the individual works and tracing the development and treatment of Doderer's major concerns ("Menschwerdung," "Apperzeptions-Verweigerung," and "zweite Wirklichkeit").

Bachem has chosen to treat his material in chronological fashion, dividing his study into seven chapters. On the whole, this is a satisfactory means of approach, but there are several discrepancies and serious errors in chronology (as for instance on pp. 21, 97, 114 and 116). Some mistakes might have been avoided had Bachem chosen to treat *Die Posaunen von Jericho*, composed between January and April 1951, before dealing with