

account of the literary predecessors of the postwar books and plays which caught the fancy of the British public in the late fifties and early sixties. Atherton's initial chapter deals with the mood of the so-called "Angry Decade." Taken together, the two chapters illustrate vividly that, in maintaining solidarity with his class, Sillitoe is in literary terms an "outsider" figure. In intimately portraying the working-class as alien and alienated, he is much less representative of literary currents than other writers of his time. While his Smith and his Arthur Seaton are antiheroes (probably Atherton should have used the term "protagonist" rather than "hero" in many of his discussions of working-class novels), they differ basically from the antiheroes of the Angries. First, Lumley in *Hurry on Down*, and the other figures created in his memorable mould, are cop-outs from their society. Sillitoe's characters keep defiantly to their community, even if it appears to the middle and upper classes to be a cultural wasteland. Second, other contemporary writers who share with him a similar class origin lack the thoroughgoing and convincing character of Sillitoe's working-class orientation and imagination. In the case of such writers (and most are figures quite apart from the Angries), one may frequently find prototypes for their protagonists in the prewar literary tradition of the working-class hero. By contrast, Sillitoe's best characters are arresting and uncompromising in their class affinities, and are a new departure in British fiction for being so.

While the second-last chapter, a survey of recent work, is helpful, it was written before the release of *The Second Chance and Other Stories* and *The Storyteller*, a novel with a protagonist who denounces socialism. These recent works suggest that the third chapter—on Sillitoe's views on writing and his aims as a writer—may need revision before a further critical study of his work is released. In his account of these views, Atherton's range does not extend beyond those expressed before 1975. If the focus in this study is restricted to the earlier fiction, and room is left for another scholar to delineate Sillitoe's development into the 1980s, the satisfying complete nature of the present study is based on the sound conviction that the early work is the base line for the ultimate assessment of this writer. Only when the early achievement has been validated as an original contribution to fiction, and this Dr. Atherton accomplishes, can we have the perspective necessary for assessing Sillitoe's later and his new work.

Kenneth MacKinnon

HERMANN LENZ

Erinnerung an Eduard

Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1981. Pp. 199.

Erinnerung an Eduard ("Remembering Eduard"; 1981) is the latest work by the well-known German author Hermann Lenz. In 1927, at the age of fourteen, Lenz received as a gift the collected works of the German *Biedermeier* poet Eduard Mörike (1804-1875), and discovered in the course of his reading a strong affinity with Mörike's values and outlook on life in general. His preoccupation with the Swabian poet has, in fact, lasted since that initial encounter, and this story is eloquent testimony to a degree of preoccupation and an abiding sense of indebtedness that have lasted a lifetime.

Erinnerung an Eduard comprises the fictitious memoirs of Otto Nestle, the narrator, who in 1879 looks back on his long friendship with Eduard Mörike. The story begins in 1823, when Otto meets Eduard in the city of Ludwigsburg during the holidays. Both are students, but Nestle suffers from the fact that he does not belong to Mörike's intimate circle of friends, although they grew up together. He is the outsider, the quiet observer who sees clearly how much Eduard's encounter with the beautiful and mysterious Maria Meyer changes him. When the relationship threatens to destroy Eduard, he flees to Stuttgart accompanied by his friends. Otto is also fascinated by Maria but resists her. During the following decades, the lives of both friends unfold. Otto finishes his studies and becomes a private tutor to an aristocratic family, living a withdrawn life in a castle in the countryside, where he meets Countess Valerie who falls in love with him. But Otto renounces her and prefers his solitary existence on the fringes of society to marriage and family life. Eduard, on the other hand, lives the conventional life of a professional and family man, but only his literary achievements bring success and happiness. In the end both men conclude that a life of compromise as well as a life of renunciation are necessary and good.

Fiction and fact are artfully interwoven. The theme of withdrawing into a world of dreams and reminiscence is again at the center of this latest work by Hermann Lenz. Otto Nestle, the protagonist of *Erinnerung an Eduard*, shows in many ways autobiographical traits similar to other characters

in Lenz's previous narrative works. (See S. Dickson, "The Novels of Hermann Lenz," *IFR*, 7, No. 1 (1980), 39-42, and S. Dickson, "Hermann Lenz: Tagebuch vom Überleben und Leben," *IFR*, 8, No. 2 (1981), 169).

S. Dickson

KENNETH HUGHES, ED. &
TRANS.

*Franz Kafka: An Anthology of
Marxist Criticism*

Hanover, New Hampshire:
University Press of New England,
1981. Pp. xxviii. + 290.

With this anthology, Professor Hughes aims to encourage an East-West dialogue on Kafka by making Marxist writings on that author more accessible and better known. He hopes, too, to dispel the notion that Marxist criticism is uniform and monolithic. Further, he offers his book as suitable for use in courses on literary criticism. The bulk of the material he presents (he excludes Georg Lukács and Walter Benjamin as too familiar) is indeed little known. Yet of the twenty-five pieces in this volume, only six (from the Russian) were previously inaccessible to those who—contrary to Hughes's expectations of Kafka experts as formulated in his preface—read German and English. But Kafka interests many others who will welcome these translations which can be criticized only insofar as elegance of style is sometimes sacrificed to an anxiety to remain faithful to the original. Almost all the pieces are extracts and some are compiled from two sources by the same hand. The editor does, however, duly indicate his use of scissors and paste. He provides a useful introduction, isolating the main points at issue and explaining some key terms while maintaining a studied neutrality.

The contributions are arranged in three groups. The first consists of pieces published between 1948 and 1962 by the German-American Hannah Arendt, the American Howard Fast, the East Germans Klaus Hermsdorf and Helmut Richter, and the Russian Dimitri Zatonsky. It is not clear why Hannah Arendt's essay, which is not

Marxist, is included. Second come papers read at the 1963 Prague (Liblice) conference on Kafka by Paul Reimann, Eduard Goldstücker, Ernst Fischer, Alexej Kusák, and Roger Garaudy (all taken from *Kafka aus Prager Sicht*, 1965), and an article by Jiří Hájek published in 1967. The third section brings Soviet responses to these papers. They date from 1964 to 1977. Here the title of an essay by Zatonsky is misprinted, though correct on Hughes's contents page, and the source of Avner Zis's piece is not given. The division into three sections highlights the significance of the Prague conference.

Zatonsky, in 1959, acknowledged that Kafka portrayed some part of "the anti-human order of capitalistic relations," but firmly denounced what was, in his view, Kafka's candidly antirealistic method, his negation of progress and debasement of humanity. With unsurprised distaste, Zatonsky observed that Kafka, alongside Joyce, became "supports for the contemporary aggressive bourgeois aesthetic . . . which strives to desecrate the whole world, to spit on everything sacred so that . . . the foulness and depravity of bourgeois conditions does [sic] not stand out so clearly" (p. 17). Kafka was seen to reject the healthy tradition of realism, faith in humanity, and the possibility of progress. He marked a beginning of the decadent modernism which was none other than a ploy to make the evils of capitalism seem inevitable. Howard Fast, in 1950, had expressed himself more succinctly: Kafka sat "very near the top of the cultural dung-heap of reaction" (p. 12). Hermsdorf and Richter provided more detailed interpretation and historical explanation, but neither aimed to challenge the established Marxist verdict. Kafka was not acceptable to communist aesthetics or ideology.

For a variety of reasons, including a determination to challenge the vestiges of Stalinism, patriotism, greater sympathy with modernism, and even admiration for Kafka as a writer, several speakers advanced different views in Prague. They were Czechs and Western Marxists who saw Kafka as a victim of the establishment grip on literary criticism in Eastern Europe or used him to protest against that grip. They stressed that he revealed the wickedness and decay of capitalism; that he sympathized with the suffering proletariat even if he did not recognize it as the class of revolution. Goldstücker argued that Marxist methods needed to be refined to do justice to Kafka, who belonged to the humanist tradition and who