

Colonel Pargiter's daughters. Delia, for example, emerges as something of a rebel, a talented violinist who longs to go to Germany to study (a futile wish, since it is opposed by her father). Her reaction when she sees a woman pass by with a baby is drastically different from that of the much more maternal sister Milly; for Delia, the sight does *not* arouse any maternal instincts, only a slight uneasiness at not feeling as she is expected to. In *The Years*, however, it is the Colonel we see first. There is *no* description of the girls' feelings as they observe the baby, leaving the impression that they *both* yearn to marry, and there is *no* mention of Delia's talents and aspirations, weakening one of the main themes of the original manuscript: the meager experiences and opportunities available to Victorian women, whose lives are limited and defined by the male-dominated society in which they live.

Even more critical is the revision of the pivotal "1917" chapter, where radical ideas are so carefully balanced with opposing views that their effect is nullified. But the revision did have its positive effects. Over and over we see Woolf transforming what had been lengthy expositions into dramatic interactions between the various conversationalists.

What Radin's study offers is not only "the evolution of a novel," but an insight into Virginia Woolf's methods as an artist. It is a welcome addition to the growing body of scholarly works on Virginia Woolf.

John Jones *DOSTOEVSKY*

Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983. Pp. xii + 365. \$48.75

Reviewed by Victor Terras

Among Dostoevsky's critics there are many writers who are important in their own right—Proust, Gide, D. H. Lawrence, Thomas Mann, Hesse, and more recently Alberto Moravia and Joyce Carol Oates, to name but a few. Some of them have advanced and deepened our understanding of Dostoevsky, others have blocked it by the authority of their particular misunderstanding of his works. John Jones, a poet and writer, is a fine reader of Dostoevsky, that "reader of genius." Jones is superbly equipped for this task. His references to the Russian text are usually apt, and while he carries his erudition lightly (there are few notes and no bibliography), he is obviously well read in Dostoevsky scholarship. Jones's observations, presented in chronological order, from *Poor People* to *The Brothers Karamazov*, but maintaining a constant and alert awareness of Dostoevsky's entire oeuvre, are focussed in the text, but will often and effectively use the writer's notebooks, correspondence, biographic information, and literary parallels to establish the meaning of a given passage or pattern.

Jones's many intelligent and sometimes penetrating observations are unified mostly by the notion that Dostoevsky must be read with a view to "conspiracies between novelist and reader behind the back of the narrator and his narrative" (p. x). Jones has the highest respect for what Robert L. Belknap has called the multiple wisdoms which inform Dostoevsky's works. He perceives a Dostoevskian text as an intricate and multidimensional web of parallels, allusions, symbols, echoes, and ambiguities on every level of meaning, context, and intertext. Altogether then, Jones has all it ought to take to write an excellent book on Dostoevsky, what with his extra asset of witty and often entertaining writing.

Jones's book has one serious shortcoming. It addresses itself to a reader who must be very rare indeed. To begin with, it is a reader who really knows his Dostoevsky by heart, which rather excludes the general reader. But neither will the Dostoevsky expert be a satisfied reader of Jones's book, for it blatantly ignores the requirements of scholarly criticism. Many observations and insights presented in this book are well known to Dostoevsky scholars and Jones ought to have given credit to the authors in question. For example, introducing Bakhtin's concept of the "other voice" (*chuzhoi golos*) would have facilitated the presentation of many of Jones's observations. But Bakhtin is mentioned only once, in a relatively marginal connection.

A reader whom Jones ignores almost entirely is the one who perceives Dostoevsky's mature work as informed by a strong Christian ethos. Refusing to view Dostoevsky's works from that

viewpoint leads Jones to a rejection or incomplete acceptance of some of the writer's major novels, *The Idiot* in particular, which work Jones considers an outright failure. It is precisely in *The Idiot* that a Christian sensibility converts the apparent inconsistencies and shortcomings in the figure of Prince Myshkin into deep truths. "A Christian cannot but fail" (*der Christ muß scheitern*) said Walter Nigg, one of the most perceptive critics of that novel. Jones refuses to see that Dostoevsky's intent to deliver a Christian message molds the entire structure of his novels, causing him to introduce throughout *Crime and Punishment* a wealth of detail pointing toward the Epilogue, or to begin discrediting Ivan Karamazov from the very beginning of the novel, and quite systematically so.

Altogether then, Jones's dialogue with Dostoevsky is somewhat too personal and too idiosyncratic to engage a reader whose frame of mind is different from his. This is a book in which a careful and sympathetic reader may find some gold, but it is not easy to mine.

Kurt J. Fickert

FRANZ KAFKA, LIFE, WORK, AND CRITICISM.

Authoritative Studies in World Literature.

Fredericton, N.B.: York Press, 1984. Pp. 42. \$6.95

Reviewed by Adèle Bloch

This booklet is divided in five main parts: The first one is a short biography of Franz Kafka, the second is a chronological list of his work, and the third offers his main themes and summaries of his writings, the fourth section is an evaluation of his works, the last one is a bibliography followed by seven pages of notes and an index. This cursory study is part of the series *Authoritative Studies in World Literature*. As it states on the cover, it is designed as a research tool for "students of literature and young scholars."

If we bear this purpose in mind, we can accept the necessarily summary aspect of this pamphlet. Professor Fickert presents a succinct, streamlined but interesting introduction to Kafka's personality, life, ideas and a résumé of his works. The biography, which is condensed into five pages, provides a glimpse into the salient episodes of a rather uneventful life. The uninitiated reader is given an insight into conflict between Kafka's artistic vocation and his bourgeois milieu dominated by a stern unappreciative father. The third part, which covers seven pages, provides an overview of Kafka's short stories and novels, and the fourth, which is devoted to a critical insight into Kafka's work, comprises only four pages. It presents the main theories held by noted critics such as Neider and Politzer, who stress the Oedipal fixation, Max Brod who emphasizes the religious elements, and finally Dr. Fickert himself who interprets the Kafkaesque symbols and metaphors as keys to the artist's creative dilemma fraught with autobiographical tones. Professor Fickert throughout this study underlines the symbolism of the proper names and titles which always refer back to Kafka himself. The final annotated bibliography, which covers six pages, contains an assessment of all the listed critical works.

If we read the editor's explanation, we can understand why such a study must by nature be so condensed and laconic. The series is destined to be a "succinct and inexpensive research tool" and to point out to students or libraries the relevance or desirability of certain works, which can be ordered or rejected. Somehow, this reader, while appreciating Dr. Fickert's clarity of presentation and success in weeding out the bare essentials, felt the frustration that scholar must have experienced in compressing such a wealth of material into such few pages. One can admire the results if one considers the restrictions imposed by the format. Perhaps in the case of a writer of Kafka's stature, it might be better for an untutored student to be exposed to some short stories from the *Penal Colony*, for example, and let the author give a taste of his own prose. Dr. Fickert himself repeatedly insists that Kafka's total literary output is hardly voluminous!

If we bear these restrictive features in mind, this outline is a fine guide to literature, especially for undergraduate students. Its digest-like quality also should recommend it to librarians.