

Hemingway's relationship with Agnes Kurowsky is presented in considerably different terms from those of Carl Baker, Michael Reynolds, or Bernice Kurt. Griffin presents the pair as lovers, and makes a strong case that Ernest was emotionally shattered when Agnes rejected him for what appeared to her to be better marital opportunities. As a result, Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms* does indeed rest in part on Hemingway's memories of Kurowsky. But Catherine is also a projection of Hadley, it becomes clear, as the courtship and marriage of Hadley and Ernest unfolds under Griffin's pen.

The book will not replace Carlos Baker's *Ernest Hemingway: A Life Story* (1969), but it is no doubt a valuable addition. It does have a few slight flaws. In several places, transitions are awkward or nonexistent (pp. 6, 7, 11, 15, 21, 27, 89, 95), and on pp. 116-17 an error in dating does not square with the text. "On April 16 Ernest got a cheerful letter . . . Before he left the room that morning, Ernest began . . . a reply . . . the next day he took up the letter again." The letter as it continues, however, is dated April 27th.

Griffin provides a brief epilogue, although he plans to write two volumes yet, telling the rest of the story. He provides a useful commentary on his sources at the end of the volume as well as endnotes. The notes are not traditional in form, however, and are not easy to use.

The book reads a lot like a novel in that Griffin pays a lot of attention to detail, the kind of detail he may have picked up from chance remarks in the many letters he used, or perhaps from almanacs, or even perhaps from interviews: "It was a warm evening in New York, the sky clear, the moon almost full" (p. 62). "With his tall frame and narrow shoulders and his habit of looking away when he spoke . . ." (p. 81). "Agnes laughed, and said . . ." (p. 83). "On the springlike January afternoon, with a southwest breeze coming in over the harbor . . ." (p. 101). "Ernest smelled the lingering winter cold in the empty room, smoked a cigarette, thought about supper" (p. 121). "On June 15, 1919, Ernest picked up a letter . . . that made him blush and stammer" (p. 122). ". . . and the furtive, dim-witted son, Clyde" (p. 123). Or he may have invented scenes like those to enhance the humanness of the narrative. The style does raise questions about the accuracy of such details, which then makes this reader wonder about other interpretive matters and possible liberties taken elsewhere.

Ernest Hemingway and Hadley Richardson emerge as rather well developed figures, perhaps accurately, but both disappointing in moral behavior as judged by traditional norms. Hadley is almost as flattering and self-abasing before her man as Catherine in *A Farewell to Arms*. And Ernest is a rake and a drunkard. Son John Hemingway is quite aware of how "different" this biography is, and he seems to support the portrait as being quite accurate. Perhaps it is.

Ben Stoltzfus

*ALAIN ROBBE-GRILLET: THE BODY OF THE TEXT*

Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1985.

Pp. 187

Reviewed by Emma Kafalenos

Not a traditional book on the corpus of a single author, *Alain Robbe-Grillet: The Body of the Text* is a collection of essays offering several approaches to a number of the French writer's texts and films. Seemingly adopting (and adapting) Robbe-Grillet's own technique of assembling a novel by selecting from among his own previously published material, Ben Stoltzfus, Professor of French at the University of California, Riverside, has assembled the seven chapters of the present text from articles appearing between 1980 and 1983 in eight journals (Chapter 1 combines several sources). If one can judge from a comparison between a single article, in the journal nearest to hand, and the corresponding chapter in this book, modifications seem largely limited to altering footnotes (for uniformity) and to adding transitions (a paragraph or two at the end of each article/chapter, as an introduction to the next one). Like Robbe-Grillet, whose *Topologie d'une cité fantôme* ends with a five-page "Coda" of previously unpublished material, Stoltzfus adds to his earlier material a new five-page "Conclusion" as a seven-page "Introduction."

In his Introduction, Stoltzfus defines "New Novel" (in terms of Robbe-Grillet) as referring to the works of the 1950s, and categorizes everything from *La Maison de rendez-vous* (1965) to the present as "New New Novel," coining the term "New (New) Novel" to apply to both periods. Originally serving to emphasize the differences between Robbe-Grillet's novels of the 1950s, and the two from 1965 and 1970 (*La Maison* and *Projet pour une révolution à New York*), the term *nouveau nouveau roman* has been less often used (and seems less useful) since the publication of Robbe-Grillet's assemblage novels of the 1970s and the mixed genres (grammar as fiction, fictive [auto]biography) of the 1980s. The works to which Stoltzfus devotes most attention in this book, in fact, are the original two New New Novels, particularly *Projet*, the assemblage novels (*Topologie* [1976] and *Souvenirs du triangle d'or* [1978]), and the films of the same period: *L'Immortelle* (1963), *Trans-Europ-Express* (1966), *L'Homme qui ment* (1968), *L'Eden et après* (1971), and *Glissements progressifs du plaisir* (1974).

It is also in his Introduction that Stoltzfus returns to the question of the two ways of reading Robbe-Grillet, citing Bruce Morrissette as "perhaps the best known of the so-called 'recuperative' critics," and Jean Ricardou as "an eloquent and prolific spokesman for a linguistic, nonmimetic interplay of verbal signs" (p. 13). Opting for a reconciliation of the two views, he recognizes that Robbe-Grillet's writing defines "a new narrative discourse whose form, in addition to speaking of itself, also tries to subvert establishment ideology." It is this "duality within Robbe-Grillet, as well as the duality in the critical methodologies applied to his work" that the subtitle of the present book, "*The Body of the Text*," is intended to reflect (p. 14). The two aspects of the subtitle are perhaps clearer in another context, where the reader's attention is drawn to "the body of the text and the nude bodies within the text on which Robbe-Grillet performs his serial experiments" (p. 81).

In broad outline Stoltzfus' study follows the program he announces here—combining sensitive tracings of, for example, nonmimetic modes of generating text, with carefully chosen quotations that at least prove Robbe-Grillet's revolutionary intent (during the period with which Stoltzfus is concerned) to free his readers from the manipulations of language and cultural myths. And yet at times, in his chronological summaries of the events of individual films, in his comments on the "meaning" of a word in a title (p. 129), in his descriptions of objects as "signifying" (for example) an emotion (p. 106), and even in his adoption of the "objective correlative" (pp. 107, 108), a term brought into Robbe-Grillet criticism by Bruce Morrissette, Stoltzfus seems to want to "recuperate" Robbe-Grillet's texts at least as much as Morrissette ever did. Nor is Stoltzfus the only critic not to have noticed that Morrissette (whose "recuperative" chronological summaries in the late 1950s and early 1960s were the sole American response at the time to Robbe-Grillet) altered his critical approach to incorporate greater indeterminacy in response to the changes in Robbe-Grillet's own work after *La Maison* (1965).

This is not the only book to read on Robbe-Grillet, either for the initiate or for the novice. When read as a collection of articles, however, it offers a depth of discussion on several topics worth anyone's attention. In addition to the careful tracing throughout of similar techniques in films and in novels, there are the occasional *aperçus*: for example, that it is not just Cubism's multiple and discontinuous viewpoints, but also the resultant "ambiguity in time" that we find reflected in the New (New) Novel (p. 89). A chapter on the *mise en abyme* or interior duplication extends the technique to "intertextuality . . . twins, double names, and dual identities" (p. 100). Particularly fascinating for this reader is a chapter on the labyrinth that traces the mythic aspect of the image as "tomb and temple" (p. 117), and delineates the time of myth as equally "reversible, nonlinear, and nonsequential" (p. 130) as the texts and films of Robbe-Grillet. These are articles that anyone seriously studying the works of Robbe-Grillet will want to read, and we can only be grateful for their availability within a single cover.

Paule Marshall

*PRAISESONG FOR THE WIDOW*

New York: E. P. Dutton, 1984. Pp. 285

Reviewed by Ann Armstrong Scarboro

The breadth of this most recent of Paule Marshall's novels is admirable and exciting. In addition to witnessing the spiritual rebirth of a middle-aged black widow, the reader participates in an intense experience with the protagonist's unconscious mind so that his perceptions of his own reality are enriched as well. Avey Johnson is the epitome of the middle-class woman