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Book Reviews

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[The Editor sincerely regrets that in the production of *SSL*, Vol. 17 (1982), a page of Mr. Matthew P. McDiarmid's review of Dietrich Strauss's *Die erotische Dichtung von Robert Burns* was dropped at the printing stage, rendering the review incomprehensible. He extends his apologies to the author of the book and the review. The complete review follows.]

Dietrich Strauss. *Die erotische Dichtung von Robert Burns*. Frankfurt am Main and Bern. Verlag Peter Lang. 1981. 340 pp. Neue Studien zur Anglistik und Amerikanistik. Band 22.

Students of Burns should be grateful to Dr. Strauss for this comprehensive discussion of a very significant part of the master's work, his "erotic poetry," the term "erotic" here indicating those poems that present sexual experience in the most explicit way. Much of this discussion, by no means the whole, concerns the collection published in 1799 (perhaps by Peter Hill) without author's name, and entitled *The Merry Muses of Caledonia*. About the attribution of the work to Burns there is less and less argumentation though still some editorial reservations of a mainly theoretical kind; thus James Kinsley in his edition feels obliged to accept as Burns's only those poems that also have the authority of manuscript or

early attribution. But such reservations, as Dr. Strauss convincingly argues, are essentially subjective, not much differing from the reason for Kinsley's rejection of "The Bonniest Lass," found in *The Giblet Pye* of 1806, that it lacks the poet's characteristic "energy and concentration"--a response that neither Dr. Strauss nor this reviewer can share. The more decided and consistent position of De Lancey Ferguson seems preferable, that all poems in the *Merry Muses* should be assigned to Burns until otherwise proven. Their inclusion in the canon, as Strauss observes, should surprise no one: unquestioned work can be every bit as frankly sexual as anything in the 1799 collection.

Dr. Strauss's important contribution to Burns criticism, however, is his appreciation of the variety and quality of the poet's writing in this kind, his demonstration of the art, and particularly the scope of significant content, given to these poems, and the intense humanity that they exhibit. It is not sex *per se*, treated in prurient isolation as Shakespeare, for example, treats it in his *Venus and Adonis*, that Burns offers. Evident as is his enjoyment of the sexual act, and his supremacy in its expression--"Corn rigs, an' barley rigs, / An' corn rigs are bonnie," etc.--it is above all the human ambience of sex that he feels and sees. What it means to be human, at the simplest levels of living and feeling, is after all, as the German critic perceives, the central theme of Burns's inspiration. For this reason indeed the description "erotic" can be as misleading and misapplied as the title of the 1799 collection. These stanzas, all from different poems in the so-called *Merry Muses*, should clarify this point and make plain Dr. Strauss's meaning. What they all convey, by metaphor, question or statement, is feeling for an aspect of the human situation as sexually illustrated.

> The Mouse is a merry wee beast,
> The Moudiewart wants the een;
> And O' for a touch o' the thing
> I had in my nieve yestreen.
> ("Brose and Butter")

* * *

> Fu' lightly lap ye o'er the knowe,
> And thro' the wood ye sang, lassie;
> But herryin o' the foggie byke,
> I fear ye've got a stang, lassie.
> ("Ye hae Lien Wrang, Lassie")

* * *

Wap and row, wap and row,
   Wap and row the feetie o't,
I thought I was a maiden fair
   Till I heard the greetie o't.
("The Reel o' Stumpie")

* * *

And why shouldna poor folk mowe, mowe, mowe,
   And why shouldna poor folk mowe:
The great folk hae siller, and houses and lands,
   Poor bodies hae naething but mowe.
("Poor Bodies do Naething but M - w")

* * *

But you that is Called and Free,
   Elekit and chosen a saunt,
Will't break the Eternal Decree
   Whatever ye do wi' your cunt?
("The Case of Conscience")

A girl's desires--Burns, the critic observes, seems to be alone in his time in recognizing female desire in other than a comic spirit--the contrary realities of unwanted pregnancy and a crying "bairn," the wretched poverty that at least finds forgetfulness in sex, the ridicule not only of a Calvinist doctrine (for the most part no longer central to the teachings of the Church) but of any religious position that denies or disprizes the sexual drive, are a few of the directions that Burns's theme takes; others that cannot be illustrated here relate to government, class distinction, war and peace. Dr. Strauss rightly notes that the peculiar bias of these poems has much to do with the social anarchism voiced in "Love and Liberty" ("The Jolly Beggars") and is indeed a base from which the poet advances in his "official" poems to a fuller criticism of the unnatural, and celebration of the healthy, in the more complex relations of social life. Study of the comparatively neglected erotica helps us to understand better the ultimate scope and direction of his genius. It is this sexual base of Burns's criticism of life that allows him to be in Strauss's phrase "one of the great emancipators."

The general trend of such an argument is just and illuminating. It is, as might be expected, the writer's commentary on the Scottish scene that invites criticism. In the lifetime of Burns Scotland was practically and intellectually the most progressive of European societies, so that it will not do to

relate Burns's emergence to the encouragement of a supposed "provincialism." Possibly in this error Dr. Strauss merely follows such Scottish critics as Edwin Muir and Hugh MacDiarmid who romantically oppose "farmer Burns" to the literati of the day. But with differences only of stress and application they shared the same fund of ideas. He says much of the narrowing and depressive influence of the Church, with only slight mention of the dominant New Light faction, which was liberal enough to entertain both Hume and Burns. About the anti-Establishment, and even republican, sentiments in some sections of it he says nothing. He mistakenly, if naturally, supposes Burns, for social reasons and his distance from the capital, to have enjoyed a closer intimacy with the "folk-tradition" in song than did men who belonged to the class of Lord Hailes and Walter Scott. What was known in the peasant's cottage was also known, and often improved in Burnsian fashion, in the laird's house. It is one of Dr. Strauss's criticisms of Scottish society that it took little interest in music, but both Italian and German composers were well known, and in one sphere, of course, Scotland had early set the example for Europe, the collection and study of folk-song. For historical reasons he describes the Scottish language as a "Halbsprache" yet uses the modern political term "British," though the plain fact is that the *colloquial* Scots of all classes had developed quite naturally from its ancient origins, whatever English appearance Scotsmen chose to give their published writings.

A more pertinent point than any of the above-mentioned is Dr. Strauss's notion that the Reformation reduced erotic verse to a sub-culture; but that is what it had always been, even in Dunbar's day, and it survived as such. Protestant Scots did not stop singing a song like "John, cum kiss me now" just because its tune had been appropriated for use in one of the "Gude and Godly Ballatis" (c. 1545-1590), and the following song inserted in a late sixteenth-century or early seventeenth-century MS. of Montgomerie's poems (ed. George Stevenson, Scottish Text Society, 1910) is probably a fair sample of what was then current in this kind.

Glade am I, glade am I,
my mother is gone to henislie,
steiche þe dur & cache me,
lay me doun & streche me,
ding me, & dang me.
ȝe, gif I cry hang me--
ȝe, gif I die of þe same,
Bury me, burie, in goddis name.

Again, the evidence is slight, but I think that he should have assumed that the Crochallan Fencibles for whom Burns apparently compiled the *Merry Muses* had much the same tastes as other club-members in Edinburgh. Dr. Strauss may understandably regret that Edinburgh's social climate could not produce, as Stockholm did, so glitteringly epicurean a poet as Carl Bellmann (1740-1795), but it did welcome and give to the world Burns, whom he does perceive to be a much more significant phenomenon.

All such strictures are, however, of very minor and secondary moment when weighed against the real importance of Dr. Strauss's argument. What counts is that he has set up a signpost that future travellers in the Burns country will have to stop and read, if they are to find their way to the point where they understand the poet's achievement in extending the matter of poetry, and giving sympathetic treatment to the more basic kinds of human experience. It was Shelley who said of Burns that he was not one of those who

> ...touched the hem of Nature's shift,
> Felt faint--and never dared uplift
> The closest, all-concealing tunic.
> ("Peter Bell the Third")

We have to thank Dr. Strauss for making clear the full import of that appreciation.

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F.R. Hart and J.B. Pick. *Neil M. Gunn: a Highland Life*. London: John Murray. 1981. 314 pp.

It is not easy to write a review of a book about someone whom one loved and admired and tussled with in argument. Above all, loved. Bits of his letters to me are quoted, but nothing brings back the sudden jump of the heart when I saw his writing on the envelope. Nor was I the only one on whom Neil Gunn had that effect: in a curiously non-carnal way, he was a great lover. He and I were both deeply committed, to Scotland and in Scotland both Edinburgh and the Highlands, and also to the fury of trying to write the truth about things as we saw them.

Neil Gunn was a story-teller. In simpler times he might

have been happy to sit back and tell his stories, in a boat, by an inn fire, in a great hall--always to enthralled audiences. Today life is too full of complications and over-communication. We cannot stay still and listen. So he had to write novels, as I also had to do. It is hard work, for what one is trying to get across to the reader dies in the writing and Neil had these mental and aesthetic tendrils stretched out to catch the essence of happiness, of timelessness, of good magic (and sometimes of evil) and of the extreme beauty of north-west Scotland.

This comes through in the book written by two young men who loved him and who got him to talk as only he could talk, about his life and landscape. They take him through a boyhood when he hated English Composition, where of course all good Scots words or Gaelic-based grammar were heavily jumped upon by the powers that be. But he could be wildly happy and perceptive. Then came the time of politics; this is a very interesting chapter for those who were even marginally involved in the Nationalist movement. Unlike the more florid and perhaps less truthful Irish, the Scots got little sympathy from America! Other writers come in, Cunninghame Graham, Compton MacKenzie, Eric Linklater, and of course, Hugh MacDiarmid. For this was the beginning of the real Scottish renaissance, the ending at last of the giggly sentimentalism which was once the main product of our country. And of course it meant quarrels, splits--though Neil was a natural peace-maker--seeing months of work undone by a casual word. But also the new generation of Scots writers flourished, and not just for the old London market. Neil's *Silver Darlings* was read by the herring fishermen; my own first edition is worn to bits by readers in the village! But he dived deeper into the motives and hopes and fears of the people he wrote about, with every book. Some are better than others but even the least successful have one or two marvellous moments, probably of some physical event which strained the protagonist out of his or her ordinary human thoughts or emotions.

This book gives all the background: work, marriage--and how deeply important Daisy was to him. He was for many years an excise-man and he thought a lot about whisky, seriously: its power to enhance but also to destroy, and its place in Scotland, where "drugs" in the American sense have only lately been brought in by outsiders. There is an interesting discussion--at least interesting to me, for now I remember how often we wrote to one another--about the making of *The Green Isle of the Great Deep*, with its acute use of symbols, and its deep political overtones, a book which I would class as essential reading for anybody who takes politics (as apart from politi-

cal gamesmanship and filibustering) seriously, especially anything approaching "left-wing" politics.

Neil was someone for whom friendship meant a great deal, as did other of the basic things: food--and how he enjoyed that rare thing, good Scots cooking!--the feel of weather, hill walking, sailing, sometimes alone or with Daisy, sometimes in company. But most, I suppose, he needed what is beyond ordinary experience however vividly appreciated. Sometimes he called it magic. The two young men who wrote this life understood this. Even when Neil was deep in the post-war attempts at finding solutions for the social and economic life of the Highlands, and was taken very seriously as an authority, he always kept this other touch. He died in 1973 but sometimes I wonder if I am not getting a breath of him.

NAOMI MITCHISON

The Age of MacDiarmid: Essays on Hugh MacDiarmid and his Influence on Contemporary Scotland. Ed. P.H. Scott & A.C. Davis. Edinburgh: Mainstream. 1980. 268 pp.

Ann Edwards Boutelle. *Thistle and Rose: A Study of Hugh MacDiarmid's Poetry*. Loanhead: Macdonald. 1980. 259 pp.

I found *The Age of MacDiarmid* disappointing on a first reading, principally because its title seems to promise a wider intellectual and physical span than the book itself achieves: an unfair criticism, perhaps, since both subtitle and the introduction by P.H. Scott make it clear that the editors have deliberately limited their field of enquiry to the nature and effect of MacDiarmid's influence on the life of contemporary Scotland.

Yet when faced with the poet's own intellectual range and his *Scottish Chapbook* commitment to "bring Scottish literature into closer touch with European tendencies in technique and ideation," one feels that the editors of this book have been too timid in their approach to the man and his age. The collecting of evidence from "people who came under his direct influence, from personal contact as well as from his writing," inevitably leads to a tendency to reminisce, although Duncan Glen succeeds in communicating the youthful energy behind the bibliographical hunt which MacDiarmid's work set in motion for him. Too often, however, contributors find little to say which has not already appeared among the many articles on

MacDiarmid's life and work published in the years immediately before his death.

MacDiarmid lived through the artistic, philosophical and political upheavals in European culture in the early twentieth century into the idealistic political commitments of the thirties period, when the peak of modernism had passed and the fear of fascism had arisen. Of the twenties in Scotland and the contemporary revolution in European literature, Neil Gunn has commented:

> One can remember reading the Parisian magazine *Transition* in the Highlands, when James Joyce's Work in Progress was appearing in its pages....But it wasn't even necessary to go abroad, for T.S. Eliot and Ezra Pound were publishing their poetry and criticism in London....I knew no one in Scotland at that time who was more aware of this and more attracted by its innovations than Christopher Grieve.[1]

I would like to have seen *The Age of MacDiarmid* take account of MacDiarmid's relationship to European artistic activity, both in philosophy and in artistic method, and consider also his political poetry of the thirties and the later *In Memoriam James Joyce* (much of which stems from the thirties), with its theme of universality, in relation to the wider political and philosophical influences which were abroad in Europe and Britain from the early 1930s into the post-war period. Owen Dudley Edwards' lively article "Prose and Polemic" is one of the few articles in the book which succeed in communicating this sense of MacDiarmid's having been part of a wider international intellectual and artistic context.

Even in relation to their limited brief of MacDiarmid and Scotland, the editors have been less adventurous than they might have been. It may well be that posterity will see the *Scots language* literary renaissance of the early twentieth century as having been a purely MacDiarmid affair, but there were other artistic and intellectual activities in the first half of this century in Scotland which reflected in their smaller way the international cultural ambience and which, had they been considered in this book, would have added to our understanding of "the age of MacDiarmid" and perhaps given new perspectives on MacDiarmid's work.

There is nothing in the book, for example, on the work of Francis George Scott, the composer, who was deeply involved in the age of MacDiarmid both through his contribution in his song-writing to the attempt to bring Scotland once more into the mainstream of European culture and through his friendship with MacDiarmid and his critical interest in his poetry. Why

did the editors not ask Ronald Stevenson to contribute an article on F.G. Scott and his place in the Scottish Renaissance Movement, a task which as a composer himself, with an interest both in Scott's music and in MacDiarmid's poetry, as a friend of the poet and one who has set some of the poetry to music, he is very well-equipped to undertake? In my view such an article would have provided a more useful scholarly contribution than "MacDiarmid's Muses."

Nor is there any mention of the painter William Johnstone, a friend of MacDiarmid and of Scott, whose paintings at times inspired MacDiarmid's poetry (1933) and who in turn was himself inspired by the poetry.

Similarly in literature and politics. Neil Gunn, Edwin Muir and Lewis Grassic Gibbon were all writers at work during the age of MacDiarmid (and there were others less well-known but significant also) whose paths at times crossed his. Although none of them followed MacDiarmid in his use of Scots, they all made significant contributions to the Scottish literary renaissance in the twentieth century, demonstrating, as MacDiarmid himself did through his use of both Scots and English, that a Scottish literary revival need not depend on the use of the Scots language. Yet only George Bruce's article "The Borderer and the Orcadian" attempts to investigate another writer of the period, both for his own contribution and for his relationship with MacDiarmid. Sorley Maclean tells of MacDiarmid's influence on him in the thirties and forties, but, situated in the opening personal reminiscence section of the book, his contribution suffers from the limited nature of his brief. One would have wished to read more of his own poetry, and from a study of the poetry gauge the nature and extent of MacDiarmid's influence on him.

In the political section Stephen Maxwell attempts to analyze MacDiarmid's nationalism, in the course of which he refers to his *Lucky Poet* statement of support for the kind of Scottish Socialist Workers' Republic advocated by John Maclean. But instead of a gathering-together of MacDiarmid's various political positions, which are fairly well-known nowadays, why not a fuller account of the political situation in Scotland in the early decades of the century when his views on politics and nationalism were being formed? MacDiarmid may have stated his belief in John Maclean's ideas in *Lucky Poet* and he wrote a poem on him which was deleted from the first edition of *Stony Limits* in 1934, but there is almost a conspiracy of silence about Maclean as far as published material about him is concerned, and one would have been interested to know what were MacDiarmid's views on what Maclean stood for at the time when Maclean was active in Scottish politics. Perhaps *The Age*

of MacDiarmid should have concentrated more on original research into the artistic and political period to which MacDiarmid contributed so much, and less on the bringing together of known facts through personal reminiscence.

Inevitably the critical essays in this book are the most meaty, their writers having MacDiarmid's poetry to sink their teeth into. David Daiches discusses fully the paradoxical unity amid diversity of MacDiarmid's work and its relationship to a Scottish tradition which is itself varied and at times contradictory. Edwin Morgan's article "MacDiarmid and Scotland" is placed beside the political articles, but one remembers it for its critical insights into the poetry. I was especially interested in the comment that although "MacDiarmid always claimed that he had no patience with back-to-the-landism and that he was on the side of the urban proletariat... from his poems about cities one would hardly ever have that claim confirmed." I have myself always felt uncomfortable with MacDiarmid's poems about Glasgow, about the slums where "every one of the women there, / Irrespective of all questions of intelligence, good looks, fortune's favour / Can give some buck-navvy or sneak-thief the joy beyond compare" (*CP* 564).[2] In such poems there seems to me to be an embarrassed, patronizing--one might say insincere--quality which is foreign to MacDiarmid's work as a whole and which reminds me of Neil Gunn's similar awkwardness when faced with the slums in his city novel *Wild Geese Overhead*.

Iain Crichton Smith has for long made known his worries about MacDiarmid's long poems. In his present contribution he is principally concerned with "On a Raised Beach" and the problems posed by a poem whose content "as a whole is statement and argument." I think he is unfair to MacDiarmid, however, in his charge of a lack of intellectual rigour in this poem. "On a Raised Beach" is a bleak poem, in language and in philosophy for human beings who have for too long seen themselves at the centre of a universe created to serve their needs. "We must reconcile ourselves to the stones, / Not the stones to us" is not, as Iain Crichton Smith suggests, without meaning. Nor is the insight that

> What happens to us
> Is irrelevant to the world's geology
> But what happens to the world's geology
> Is not irrelevant to us (*CP* 428)

merely an "unambiguously correct and undebatable" statement. Both bring to my mind Wordsworth's "with gentle hand / Touch--for there is a spirit in the woods" and both are relevant to

an age where ecology has become a dominant concern.

Two final essays make a contribution to the geology of MacDiarmid studies. David Murison deals with the language problem, investigating the Scottish and non-Scottish sources of his varied vocabulary, while Kenneth Buthlay searches out the sources of ideas and previously unrecognized borrowings in *To Circumjack Cencrastus*. His essay "The Scotched Snake" is a most valuable one for MacDiarmid scholars. One has become used to treading warily in a poem such as *In Memoriam James Joyce* in the knowledge that whatever one has to say about any given passage and its relationship to MacDiarmid's work as a whole may well prove one an ass when the passage in question is found to be by anyone but MacDiarmid! I suppose the great sea-serpent section in "The Unconscious Goal of History" should have warned of similar dangers in *Cencrastus*, but one of the surprising aspects of Mr. Buthlay's discoveries with regard to this poem's borrowings is the extent to which in this early work MacDiarmid has made such borrowings his own. Who would have suspected, for example, that the fine passage "I sing the terrifying discipline / O' the free mind that gars a man / Mak' his joys kills his joys" (*CP* 281)--so typical of MacDiarmid's uncompromising, paradoxical vision of human life and expressed in the sturdy idiom of Scottish/English which characterizes the best of his discursive poetry in *Cencrastus* --owed its life to Paul Valéry's aloof Monsieur Teste? This essay will keep students of *Cencrastus* busy for a long time to come and, like Owen Dudley Edwards' article, it succeeds in catching the breadth and international spirit of MacDiarmid's own preoccupations.

While *The Age of MacDiarmid* has more in it to interest the reader than my initial response suggested, I would still charge its editors with a lack of adventurous imagination in their approach to their project. I would suggest also that their policy with regard to reference notes should have been defined more clearly to the contributors, too many of whom leave the reader to take their factual information and the insights which they offer on trust: an unscholarly procedure which leaves the way open for future misreporting and misunderstanding.

Anne Boutelle's *Thistle and Rose* also arouses expectations in the reader which are not subsequently fulfilled. The dust-jacket advises that "a detailed and knowledgeable guide" to MacDiarmid's work "has been hitherto lacking" and implies that this lack has now been filled by the present book: a claim which Dr. Boutelle herself seems anxious to forward by her comments on the inadequacies of previous MacDiarmid criticism and the importance of her own insights.

Yet for a book published in 1980, *Thistle and Rose* is itself decidedly limited and its author surprisingly unaware of the amount of significant writing on MacDiarmid's work published during the 1970s. Gordon Wright's illustrated biography (1977) is listed in the bibliography, as is Edwin Morgan's British Council booklet on the work (1976) and Philip Pacey's *Akros* essay *Hugh MacDiarmid and David Jones: Celtic Wonder Voyagers* (1977), but there is no discussion of their contents in the book itself. Nor is there any mention in book or bibliography of the significant *Akros* and *Scottish Literary Journal* MacDiarmid issues and of numerous single essays on MacDiarmid's poetry from the middle to late 1970s. This critical activity in the years immediately before the poet's death has altered features of the landscape of MacDiarmid studies, and it is perhaps not surprising that, having taken no account of such work, Dr. Boutelle at times finds herself fighting old battles for now-conquered territory. It is difficult at the present time, for example, to perceive the need for her lengthy analysis of MacDiarmid's "Author's Note" to the first edition of *A Drunk Man Looks at the Thistle*. And much of the ground covered in her discussion of the early lyrics has been mined more deeply by Kenneth Buthlay in his *Scottish Literary Journal* essay of 1975.

Nor is the scope of the book with regard to a detailed study of the *range* of MacDiarmid's poetry any advance upon previous work. Out of a total of 232 pages, 74 are devoted to *A Drunk Man*. The various collections of the thirties, including *Cencrastus*, together receive 36 pages, while *In Memoriam James Joyce* is represented by two quotations and the comment that "much of *In Memoriam James Joyce* is almost unreadable." However one evaluates the relative merits of MacDiarmid's work in Scots and his English-language poetry, such an imbalance in a book which claims to be a significant advance on previous MacDiarmid studies by virtue of its consideration of the "total work," seems to me to be unacceptable.

Dr. Boutelle is on shaky ground also in relation to her biographical approach to the work. In the introductory chapter "The Paradoxical Vision"--and "paradox" and "vision" are severely overworked terms in this book--she tells us that her critical approach will be one of "letting my passions respond to the poetry, but calling frequently on steadying reason to avoid embroilment in issues other than the poetry--my central issue." Yet "steadying reason" is unfortunately absent when she seeks to persuade herself and her readers that unhappiness in childhood and rivalry between him and his brother, a brother supported by an unsympathetic mother, provide "the impetus behind much of MacDiarmid's poetry" and are the sources of his paradoxical vision.

I do not myself have the necessary factual information about the poet's childhood and family life to refute with certainty Dr. Boutelle's suppositions and, without a published biography, I do not think there is such information generally available. There was certainly insecurity in the adult man in relation to his work as poet, as the letters from F.G. Scott to MacDiarmid in the thirties (now available for perusal in the Special Collection of Edinburgh University Library) testify, but there would seem to be little evidence in correspondence or work to suggest childhood trauma as the source of the insecurity or the impulse behind the poetry. Dr. Boutelle would appear to have relied on *Lucky Poet* and the short story "Andy" as evidence for her theory. But *Lucky Poet*, written at a time of adversity and isolation in MacDiarmid's adult life, and thus with the defiant propagandist and self-advertising side of his nature much to the fore, is, however fascinating, not an autobiography to be regarded as holy writ.

Dr. Boutelle seems to me to be reading into MacDiarmid's brief accounts of his childhood in *Lucky Poet* the kind of unhappiness and uncertainty which Edwin Muir experienced in Orkney as a consequence of his father's failures as a farmer and the guilt induced by a Calvinist religion which broke too soon into the innocence of the young child's imagination. There is considerable evidence for Muir's childhood tensions--even before the added psychological shock of emigration to Glasgow--in *The Story and the Fable*, a book roughly contemporaneous with *Lucky Poet* and one which MacDiarmid may have been seeking to rival. There seems to me to be no such *reliable* evidence in MacDiarmid's writing about his childhood.

Other reminders of Muir in Dr. Boutelle's approach to MacDiarmid are her repeated references to MacDiarmid's "need to repossess the Eden of pre-Fall years as a means of reaching future paradise." Yet although MacDiarmid "repossessed" the materials of the past--the Scottish language--in his work and although he looked to the fifteenth century of the Makars as a period when Scotland was both independent politically and alive culturally, I do not think one is justified in applying to his philosophy and work the metaphor of a lost Eden. MacDiarmid did not seek to re-enter the past, whether that of Scotland or of fallen man. His philosophy, in *A Drunk Man* and *To Circumjack Cencrastus* especially, is Nietzschean, with a Scottish Presbyterian twist: "to be yersel's--and to mak' that worth bein'" (*CP* 107). Ann Boutelle's emphasis on the lost Eden metaphor is a distortion and to some extent a diminishing of his philosophical vision.

There are several instances of careless scholarship in the book. For a writer committed to a biographical approach to the work, Dr. Boutelle's biographical details are not always

accurate. She tells us, for example, that the poet refused the offer of the freedom of Langholm, his home-town. On the contrary, Langholm responded, not to its own poet, but to the "Hokum" he couldn't provide in the form of the glamour of a foreign astronaut!

More serious from the point of view of scholarship is the fact that although she refers to the 1978 *Complete Poems of Hugh MacDiarmid* in passing as "of enormous interest to the MacDiarmid scholar," Dr. Boutelle references her quotations from MacDiarmid's work from the 1962 *Collected Poems*: a book now difficult to obtain, partial in its selection of the poetry, at times inaccurate and, in any case, now rendered obsolete--except perhaps to scholars--by the *Complete Poems*. Even more serious is the suspicion that this 1962 collection has provided the source for much of her examination of the poetry. The discussion of *To Circumjack Cencrastus*, for example, deals only with poems from that book printed in *Collected Poems*. It is surprising that a critic who writes interestingly about "A Moment in Eternity" in relation to *Annals of the Five Senses* should not mention the subsequent and awkward incorporation of the poem into *Cencrastus* when she comes to discuss the later work. "A Moment in Eternity" is not, however, included under *Cencrastus* in the 1962 *Collected Poems*. The lyric "My love is to the light of lights" is described as "the vision which concludes *Circumjack*." But although this lyric does make a more satisfactory conclusion to the Cencrastus theme of the poem, it is not the poem which concludes the book, but is an interpolation which breaks into the final poem "The Unconscious Goal of History." Significantly, "The Unconscious Goal of History" does not appear in *Collected Poems* 1962 and the lyric "My love is to the light of lights" is indeed the final *Cencrastus* poem in that book.

In her discussion of *Scots Unbound* and *Stony Limits*, Dr. Boutelle has obviously worked from the 1956 joint edition of the collections, but she again references quotations from *Collected Poems*. This is especially confusing because this 1962 book unfortunately transposed many of the poems in these two collections. Thus while, for example, Dr. Boutelle correctly discusses the well-known "Milk-Wort and Bog-Cotton" in relation to *Scots Unbound*, a reader looking up her page reference in *Collected Poems* will find that the poem is listed there as being in *Stony Limits*. This mix-up should surely have provoked an explanatory reference note.

The Battle Continues is discussed as a late work in accordance with its published date of 1957. Yet internal evidence makes it clear that the bulk of the poem at least was written at the time of the Spanish Civil War: information which may

not improve the quality of the poetry in the book, but does make more understandable the Swiftian violence of the writing. In the brief references to *In Memoriam James Joyce*, Dr. Boutelle comments that the paragraphs on Hölderlin's poetry and silence which appear on either side of the much-admired "streptococcus" image which she quotes, were taken by MacDiarmid from an article in the *Times Literary Supplement* on Hölderlin's poetry. She gives no reference details for the *Times Literary Supplement* source material, which is, in fact, more extensive than the enclosing paragraphs which she mentions, and deals, not with Hölderlin's work--which is itself incorporated for reference purposes--but with the satirical writing of Karl Kraus in *Die Fackel*:[3] a borrowing of much relevance to MacDiarmid's preoccupation with language and communication in this first section of *In Memoriam James Joyce*.

Nor, in a very detailed analysis of *A Drunk Man*, which quotes MacDiarmid's "Sic transit gloria Scotia" and emphasizes the significance of his translation of the proverbial "mundi" to the microcosm of Scotland, "Scotia," does Dr. Boutelle comment on the poet's inability to translate his Latin cases correctly, something which the editors of *Complete Poems* have quietly corrected. A small point, perhaps, but one all too characteristic of a careless approach in much of *Thistle and Rose*.

In the face of so many qualifications, what is there of value in this book? I would say that Dr. Boutelle's long chapter on *A Drunk Man* deserves serious consideration and with it her discovery that P.D. Ouspensky's *Tertium Organum* is another, until now unrecognized source for MacDiarmid's borrowings. The *Drunk Man* analysis is especially detailed and stimulating--despite a somewhat eccentric return to MacDiarmid's "handrails" as a means of structuring poem and discussion--and Dr. Boutelle is very good indeed on the sexual imagery of the poem, as she is later on "Harry Semen." This analysis sent me back to *A Drunk Man* with sharpened responses.

On the other hand, I think that the emphasis placed on the sexual metaphor of the poem and the significance which Dr. Boutelle accords MacDiarmid's personal emotional life in her interpretation of his poetry, tend to obscure the importance of other equally valid aspects of the thistle imagery, in particular the Scottish Waste Land metaphor and the moral dimension of the poem. MacDiarmid has always seemed to me to be, in his literary antecedents, a peculiar amalgam of Dunbar and Henryson, and while it is frequently what Edwin Muir called in relation to Dunbar's poetry in the essay "Robert Henryson" the "exuberance, wildness and eccentricity of the Middle Ages" which immediately strikes the reader in MacDiarmid's work, *A*

Drunk Man is particularly alive also with the fundamental seriousness and moral choices inherent in Henryson's work.

Dr. Boutelle rightly finds the Scottish context of *A Drunk Man* predominant in the first half of the poem, which becomes progressively more philosophical and neutral in context from its mid-point onwards. Her discussion moves quickly through this second, philosophical section until the Drunk Man is finally restored to his wife Jean and finds refuge in silence and sexuality. In this speedy process, both the confrontation with the wheel and the irresolution of the dilemma of the poet's relationship with his country are obscured. Yet as we see from the poetry which followed *A Drunk Man*, the struggle with his nation's soul is an essential part of the Drunk Man's and his poet's dilemma.

Dr. Boutelle continues the biographical/psychological approach to MacDiarmid's work in her discussion of the poetry which comes after *A Drunk Man*. She thus lays stress on his broken marriage and consequent emotional break-down, finding in this a reason for his abandonment of the emotionally-charged Scots language and for a more abstract approach in his later work: "But an emotion chilled is an emotion controlled" (*CP* 426). She finds the *Second Hymn to Lenin* so successful precisely because by the time of its writing MacDiarmid had found in Marxism a new emotional charge to animate his poetry and to replace the sexuality which lay behind the success of the lyrics and *A Drunk Man* and which was injured by the traumatic experience of his broken marriage.

I think Ann Boutelle is right to realize that Marxism was, for MacDiarmid, not a political philosophy but an imaginative conception--perhaps comparable to the Gaelic Idea of *Cencrastus* or to Dostoyevsky's Russian Idea to which MacDiarmid refers in that book--and to recognize the quality of so much of the poetry in the *Second Hymn* collection. I think it is mistaken and does injustice to the strength of MacDiarmid's second marriage--a strength to which Valda Trevlyn's warm, supportive poem "Haud Forrit" in *The Age of MacDiarmid* testifies --to see in MacDiarmid's romantic Marxism a substitute for his earlier sexual impulse. Emotional crisis there certainly is in the poetry of the early thirties, but a study of the progress of his poetry from *A Drunk Man* to *In Memoriam James Joyce* and of his involvement in Scottish politics suggests to me that his peculiar brand of Marxism provided a substitute for the emotional involvement with country which, no less than philosophical and sexual inspiration, provided the impetus for his work in Scots, and which he was forced in the end to admit could sustain him as artist neither linguistically nor materially.

Thistle and Rose is a flawed book, redeemed to some extent by its stimulating chapter on *A Drunk Man* and by its source information concerning Ouspensky. We still await the work which will measure "the heights and depths of the man's achievement." Meanwhile, it seems to me that the existing book-length studies of MacDiarmid's work, although small in size, offer a more reliable guide to his achievement.

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NOTES

[1]Neil M. Gunn, "Hugh MacDiarmid," National Library of Scotland, Deposit 209, Box 8, No. 74. Corrected proof of copy of article dated 5.7.62. No provenance given.

[2]Quotations from MacDiarmid's poems are taken from *The Complete Poems of Hugh MacDiarmid* (London, 1978).

[3]See unsigned article on the work of Karl Kraus in *Times Literary Supplement* of 8 May 1953, p. 295.

Douglas Gray. *Robert Henryson*. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 1979. 283 + vii pp.

Douglas Gray has written a gentle and humane book about a gentle and humane poet. Attempting to provide a "detailed critical evaluation" of Henryson's work, Gray has devoted sections to Henryson's biography, *The Morall Fabillis*, *The Testament of Cresseid*, *Orpheus*, and the shorter poems.

The book has several strengths, not least among them Gray's own sympathy for and understanding of Henryson's tolerant *caritas*. For instance, in discussing the *moralitates* of the fables, Gray notes that "the humble tentativeness of these phrases strongly suggests that we are not dealing with an inflexible moralist" (p. 130). In discussing *The Testament of Cresseid*, he comments that despite Cresseid's unhappy death "we feel that human love and human values are not utterly crushed" (p. 207). Gray clearly has valuable insights into the poet's ethical values.

Gray's style makes his book eminently readable. The tone is personal, at times even conversational, and Gray is generally able to sustain his scholarship without pedantry. He

draws on a wide background of materials from many sources and is able to include much of the most current scholarship on folklore. The book reads well and clearly.

The best of Gray's scholarly work is illustrated in his chapter on *The Testament of Cresseid*. He offers a reading of the poem and indicates some of the major differences among critical points of view, "without trying the reader's tolerance by a continual series of skirmishes with other critics" (p. 164). Gray does an outstanding job of treating *The Testament* as a medieval tragedy in the Senecan mode. Throughout the chapter he provides excellent treatment of the esthetics of Henryson's poetry, especially the planet portraits and "The Complaint of Cresseid." He also highlights some of the major critical issues including the role of Henryson's narrator, Henryson's debt to Chaucer, Cresseid's sense of guilt, and the nature of the planetary gods. He further attempts to resolve Henryson's relative commitment to philosophies of free will and determinism, finding a "middle road" as the most likely possibility. His citation of authorities is usually judicious, and he has emphasized important points.

Unfortunately Gray's analysis of the fables does not measure up to his chapter on *The Testament*. Gray treats the fables in three chapters, one containing a rather lengthy overview of the tradition of the beast fable and a second analyzing the balance of pleasure and instruction in the tales. In discussing the critical positions regarding the connection of fable and *moralitas*, Gray considers the extremes and concludes "both positions are inadequate..." (p. 119). Nonetheless, even though he does not provide a conclusive answer to questions about tale-*moralitas* relationships, the very act of separating his discussion of the two suggests tacit agreement with those who argue that tale and *moralitas* can and perhaps should be separated. Gray's critical analysis implies that he agrees with the critics who are concerned that, in jointly considering tale and *moralitas*, "readers are left with the impression that there is nothing much else in the fables apart from teaching, the *moralitates* being nothing but a triumphant Q.E.D...." (pp. 118-9). However, Gray contradicts the premises of his own analysis when he states "The *moralitates*, therefore, are more than a simple statement *fabula docet*. Their relationship with the fables has something of the intimate bond of soul and body; to complement and illuminate each other" (p. 135). If he really believes that the two are that intimately bound together, it is hard to understand why his discussions are so neatly separated. Such separation also leads Gray to repeat elements of plot and characterization in Chapter 4 that he has already introduced in chapters 2 or 3.

While the repetition is not burdensome because of his charming prose style, it is nonetheless occasionally obstrusive.

Another unfortunate result of Gray's multipart treatment is a lack of concentrated discussion of the allegorical nature of the fables. Gray comments that the fables present truth, and when they do so, "they normally do so under a veil" (p. 57). One might well ask for instances, excluding the direct statements in *moralitates*, when the fables do not present truth under a veil. Nonetheless he presents a very limited discussion of medieval approaches to allegory, and the allegorical background that he does provide is scattered throughout all three chapters on the fables. The beginning student of Henryson especially would likely need more concentrated and extended discussion.

This bifurcation in his analysis may be due in part to Gray's desire to treat Henryson's fables as folktales in extended detail. On the one hand he has provided a valuable analysis of the poems in the framework of modern scholarly methods. But there is some question about the value for either the introductory reader or the Henryson scholar in the lengthy analytic history of the folktale on pages 33-54. Such information is doubtless essential for the Henryson scholar, but he should already have much of it before approaching Gray's book. It is also doubtful whether any but the most sophisticated student beginning the study of Henryson will profit from the discussion.

Perhaps one of the most frustrating characteristics of the book is the lack of clarification regarding many major critical issues. Gray begins his analysis of the shorter poems by observing that they are not as well known as they ought to be and states that they "belong to well-established genres" (p. 241). Yet he neglects or treats only very briefly such traditional forms as the allegorical debate and the *memento mori* poems which so heavily influence Henryson's art in these works. His discussion of sources and manuscript traditions is in all cases extremely brief (especially for the fables). While it is true that both issues contain arguments built on quicksand, that does not obviate the need for more extensive treatment in a volume such as Gray's. Moreover, attempting to deal with such issues would provide him a general framework for trying to establish the development of Henryson's art. Without chronology, Gray can make only generalizations about Henryson's artistic growth. A typical example is in his analysis of the *moralitas* of *Orpheus and Euridyce* when he states that Henryson "is deliberately constructing one of those startling 'dark' moralities which we have seen in some of the *Fables*" (p. 238). Gray's uncertainties extend to the matter of social and polit-

ical satire in Henryson. On the fables his attitude is summarized by the statement that "supposed historical allusions in one or two of the fables are far from certain" (p. 32). Even on "The Tale of the Lion and the Mouse" Gray briefly reviews the evidence and concludes, "the matter is not easily decided" (p. 143). In these tales, as in the prologue to *Orpheus and Euridyce*, Gray tends to side more with Jamieson and Lyall in relying on general traditions as the source of Henryson's art. Nonetheless, the brevity of his review of the issues involved neither gives the reader essential facts nor provides any firm basis for Gray's own opinion.

My objections are not meant to deny the book's general value. As I have already noted, it is a well-written, empathetic approach to Henryson's art and aesthetics. However, the reader who seeks detailed background on Henryson's social and political background, humanistic learning, use of source materials, or problemmatic texts, will still be required to consult Stearns, MacQueen, or other sources.

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David Brown. *Walter Scott and the Historical Imagination*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1979. x + 239 pp.

James Anderson. *Sir Walter Scott and History*. Edinburgh: The Edina Press. 1981. viii + 200 pp.

Sir Walter Scott. *Waverley; or 'Tis Sixty Years Since*. Ed. Claire Lamont. Oxford: Clarendon Press. 1981. xlii + 470 pp.

These three books, very different in their intentions and content, are substantial contributions to Scott studies. The first is predominantly evaluative, its chief function to stimulate discussion; the second contributes a good deal of very useful learning about historical sources and backgrounds; the third, for many readers the most useful of all, provides what has been needed for more than a century, a definitive, well-annotated text, a model for editions of Scott's other novels.

David Brown, in *Walter Scott and the Historical Imagination*, develops and modifies Georg Lukacs' seminal thesis (in *The Historical Novel*, 1937) that Scott's great achievement was

that he showed individual human beings interacting with the social and economic forces of their own times. He surveys the extensive scholarship since Lukacs' work, and marshalls it to augment and often correct this thesis, mainly in respect to eight novels (*Waverley*, *Guy Mannering*, *The Antiquary*, *Rob Roy*, *Old Mortality*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and *Redgauntlet*). He attempts to evaluate Scott's outlook on history and to explain his failure to depict contemporary society. He demonstrates that Scott shows a remarkable grasp of the realities of eighteenth-century Scottish history, but claims that neither his imagination nor his knowledge was equal to dealing with earlier history or the contemporary scene.

Though he adds little to previous analyses of these eight novels, Brown argues a development in Scott's insight and technique from *Waverley* to *The Bride of Lammermoor*. He terms the latter "Scott's dark masterpiece." He agrees with Jeffrey's criticism of the early chapters of *Waverley*, but on the strange grounds that the rather specific and detailed account of Waverley Honour is vague in place and time (p. 28). *Guy Mannering* effectively presents social and economic change as the "new" bourgeois like Gilbert Glosson wrest power and wealth from the "old" gentry like the Bertrams. But he proceeds to decry "the unreal restoration of the Bertrams to their estate" (p. 44) in the conclusion, claiming that this is a "reversal of the tide of history." Yet, as every social historian knows, this is quite in accordance with what actually happens. It is the standard story of "old" impoverished aristocracy marrying "new" wealth. Harry Bertram, the missing heir, could not recover his ancestors' position without Colonel Mannering's money and Councillor Pleydell's legal knowledge and detective skill. Similarly, Lucy Bertram marries young Charles Hazelwood, whose father, the egregious Sir Robert, is a parvenu Nova Scotia baronet--in other words, one of the new bourgeois nobility.

Unfortunately this and other misreadings seriously weaken one of the main theses of the work: that Scott succeeded as a "realist" in Scottish novels set in the eighteenth century but failed in those set in the remoter past (because of his inadequate knowledge) and in the contemporary world (because of his ignorance of the urban working classes and his tory prejudices).

Thus *The Bride of Lammermoor* is presented as Scott's greatest essay in historical realism because of its "unequalled coherence and consistency...[and] the depth of insight with which Scott treats the oppressed social classes in the novel" (p. 149) and because it shows so clearly and unequivocally the

supercession of one ruling class by another. In other words the plot is closer to a Marxist schema of social change than to the process as it actually occurred in Scottish history. Yet Edgar Ravenswood does not come to disaster because he is locked into a moribund ruling class. He comes very near to overcoming all the odds against him. His identification with the older aristocracy (still a political force) as well as his personal abilities, make him an eligible suitor for Lucy's hand in the eyes of the parvenu Sir William Ashton. Lady Ashton, clinging to her feudal pride as a Douglas, is Edgar's enemy on *traditional* grounds. Further, Brown objects to the final section of *The Heart of Midlothian*, not on the usual structural grounds, but because Jeanie is no longer presented in "social and historical perspective." Yet it was not unusual in eighteenth-century Scotland and England for wealthy aristocrats to improve their agricultural lands and to use their ecclesiastical patronage to help people they liked or admired.

An interesting attempt is made to distinguish between legitimate and improper distortions of history. The principle stated is that the distortion should not violate, but rather corroborate the essence of the historic situation. This is illustrated from *Old Mortality*. Here the unhistorical presence of General Dalzell at the battle of Bothwell Bridge is praised as useful in promoting a "deeper verisimilitude" (p. 182) because he represents the extreme Royalist attitude, but the description of Cuddie and Jenny Headrigg's farm (in chapter 37) is "a travesty of factual verisimilitude." Brown argues that Scott, by describing the Headrigg farm favorably, is trying to vindicate the Revolution of 1688 as a triumph of the moderate cause. Since immediately following the Revolution harvests were poor and the whole country in distress, he feels that it is a serious distortion to describe any farm favorably. Incidentally, the novel's conclusion is early summer in 1689, before "King William's ill years" could have been identified as such. And since Brown apparently feels that the moderate cause was never victorious or successful, he regards the happy ending, with Morton restored to the paternal property and the faithful Edith, as crudely contradicting the whole movement of the novel. Yet the conclusion in all respects other than these is certainly a muted one. Scott quite realistically shows us an exhausted country in which the extremists kill each other off and the moderates succeed by default.

This criticism thus seems to strain at gnats in *Old Mortality*. Yet in the discussion of *Waverley* there is no mention of the most striking of Scott's distortions. That is his exclu-

sion of *all* the Scottish Jacobite leaders from the action in favor of fictitious ones, who are carefully portrayed so as not to resemble any of the real historical characters. But this species of distortion is not even mentioned.

In later chapters Brown makes a good deal of what he calls Scott's "failure to depict contemporary society." An implied premise here is that Scott had some sort of obligation to analyze the social and economic conditions of his own time--to build on Fielding perhaps, or to anticipate Dickens--a sin of omission to which Scott would surely plead guilty. The account of *The Antiquary* and *St. Ronan's Well* defines them as satirical novels in which the values of the past and the present are contrasted. *The Antiquary* is a failure because it does not adequately "suggest that the supremacy of the middle classes...is itself subject to historical change;" *St. Ronan's Well* because it is "intended primarily to show how lamentably the products of modern society show up against the remnants of the old, and how peasant virtues are more attractive than bourgeois mores." As Kenneth Sroka has so well demonstrated (in "Wealth and Illth in *St. Ronan's Well*," *SLJ*, Ruff Memorial Issue, May 1980), *St. Ronan's Well* does indeed present a sick society--but one in which the partisans of the past are as sick as, and less effective than their modern antagonists; but the world of the Well is certainly not intended to be a microcosm of the real world of 1820.

A few unfortunate lapses in detail may also be noted. Edward Waverley is engaged in the battle of Falkirk (p. 21) instead of Prestonpans. Meg Murdockson kills Effie Deans' baby (p. 126) instead of letting him survive as The Whistler. Edgar Ravenswood's father is "hounded literally to the grave" (p. 130) instead of figuratively.

Brown is of course quite right in asserting that Scott is "not quite the revolutionary" figure that Lukacs makes him out to be, and right in observing he had little understanding of the new industrial workers and their nascent conflicts with the middle class. But the last of his personae, Chrystal Croftangry, the reformed rake and spendthrift, who would like to recapture the good old times, does learn that oppression of one class by another is permanent in human society. The bitter Christie Steele tells him:

> ...ye maun ken little of the warld, sir, if ye dinna ken that the health of the poor man's body, as weel as his youth and strength, are all at the command of the rich man's purse. There never was a trade so unhealthy yet, but men would fight to get wark at it for twa pennies a day aboon the common wage.
>
> (*Chronicles of the Canongate*, chapter 4)

The old gentry, including the Croftangrys, were even less caring of the children of the poor than the factory owners who succeeded them.

This is of course a conservative position. It was strongly reinforced by Scott's study of the French Revolution and the career of Napoleon for his *Life of Napoleon Buonaparte*. Mass revolution as he saw it could lead only to destructive anarchy which would in turn be supplanted by tyranny.

Brown does indeed "show some of the ways in which Scott skilfully dramatizes the social relations of the historical period...." With somewhat less certainty he shows some development in the outlook and expression of Scott's art. But the term "historical realism" proves a slippery one. The third purpose, the definition of "theoretical criteria for Scott's varying successes and failures" is least satisfactory because the criteria appear to be too rigidly political and not applicable to Scott's artistic and heuristic intentions.

James Anderson in *Sir Walter Scott and History* indicates that his purpose is to inquire into Scott's ideas and practice in the writing of history and historical fiction from an historian's point of view. Acknowledging and demonstrating remarkably fully Scott's enormous range of reading in history from the classics of Greece and Rome to contemporary Scottish historians, Anderson links Scott's views and values to those of David Hume and William Robertson, faults him for the inaccuracy of his detail and documentation, but praises him for his keen interest in popular tradition and his fair-minded appreciation of the virtues of past stages of culture. He rightly absolves him of glorifying the past at the expense of the present, as so many of his "romantic" contemporaries and successors did.

The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte and the *History of Scotland* for Lardner's *Encyclopedia*, Scott's most obvious excursions into formal history, are for Anderson his chief failures. The *Napoleon* is too long and detailed for a popular history, yet not a serious study because of the inevitable lack of source material at the time of writing and the obvious hostility to Napoleon himself, though Anderson concedes that Scott refuted the most atrocious charges against Napoleon. The short *History of Scotland* is "an anecdotal work written from memory" and "counts for nothing." But *Tales of a Grandfather* and the wealth of historical comment in his reviews and prefaces are praised highly for their "buoyant profusion of biographical and traditional narrative, full of zest and compassion."

Anderson gives a well-documented and sound account of Scott's views on historical fiction and the relationship of the fiction--its imagined characters and incidents--to the

ascertainable historical facts. This part is especially useful in bringing together a range of diverse observations which throw light on Scott's intentions and methods.

Anderson goes on to examine Scott's handling of history in eight of the "Scotch Novels," *Waverley*, *The Antiquary*, *Old Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, *The Heart of Midlothian*, *A Legend of Montrose*, *The Bride of Lammermoor*, and *Redgauntlet*, providing a wealth of detail on Scott's sources and his treatment of them. The interest here is not so much that several well-known truths about Scott are demonstrated, as that so many different modes of handling episodes, bits of dialogue and facets of character are singled out. Most notable are the transpositions of details from one historical or biographical setting to another, with no incongruity that could be noticed by any reader unaware of the source. The critics who represent Scott as "blundering" through ignorance of historical fact are demonstrably in error. There are indeed many anachronisms and distortions which Scott committed deliberately, but justified as necessary to the artistic effect, demanded by the prejudices of the reading public, or actually "capable of a subtle historical justification as well."

An impressive list of Scott's allusions to historians and historical material occupies some 33 pages of appendix. It is a little surprising that Sallust is omitted from the ancient historians, though he is quoted prominently in *Redgauntlet*, chapter 13. And the amusing citation of Livy in *Marmion*, Introduction to Canto Sixth, is also missing.

This work, so well-documented from the whole range of Scott's writings, testifies to the depth as well as the scope of the historical knowledge behind the novels and prose writings, and shows clearly that the various distortions and alleged errors are purposeful. The detail, too, makes it a helpful work for other scholars concerned with sources and allusions. The seven short essays which fill out the volume are slighter material, recording the author's views of the merits of the novels, the well-worn topic of realism and romance, Scott's debt to other novelists, the construction of the novels, Scott's financial crisis, and the views of Scott and Lockhart on Burns. In contrast to the solid documentation of the main work they offer summary judgments of little value to the serious reader.

Claire Lamont's new edition of *Waverley* is probably the most important to be published in the present century. Since the Dryburgh edition of 1892-4 few of Scott's novels have been issued in editions of any critical importance, but this handsome volume breaks new ground. Basing her text on the first edition, Lamont draws on the original MS and the second and

third editions as well as the "Magnum" of 1829. All significant alterations are recorded in the editor's notes, so that every reading of authority is preserved. Scott's prefaces--to the third edition, and those of the Magnum--with the appendices and notes from the Magnum and the few notes added in the Centenary and Dryburgh editions, are also included following the text.

The editor has also provided an admirably concise and factual introduction with briefly expressed but helpful critical observations, and a critical history of the text. In the "Editor's Notes," a separate category from the "Author's Notes," she has covered the main textual alterations already mentioned and annotated very thoroughly, not just the text but introductions and appendices, translating Scots, Gaelic, Latin, and French phrases, identifying legal, historical, and literary allusions, and sources of various anecdotes appropriated by Scott. It seems unfortunate that these useful notes are not indicated in the text itself; though Scott's notes are. The reader can easily miss this mine of information and enlightenment. Apart from this omission the volume may serve as a model for other editors of Scott's novels.

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Graham McMaster. *Scott and Society*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [1981]. 253 pp.

A prospective reader of this book, if his disposition be reasonably generous, will hope to find it pleasing and instructive. It is issued with the imprimatur of a university press; its author is, according to the notes on the dust-cover, a "Dr.", a learned and disciplined scholar. Earnest commitment, thought, and labor must have been devoted to the production of such a study; and its subject matter is attractive and important. Walter Scott was a thoroughly likable person, and a versatile and prolific writer. His published works have for over a century and a half continued to bring pleasure and profit to a wide variety of readers. And he was eminently sociable.

Throughout his life Scott was deeply concerned with manners --that is, the patterns of behavior of men in specific groups. He lived and moved in the distinctive society of the Scottish Lowlands, urban and rural, of the beginning of the nineteenth

century. As a professional writer, businessman, lawyer, government official, landowner, and family head, he was deeply involved in a multitude of the activities of that society.

But when our prospective reader makes his way through Dr. McMaster's pages, he may begin to suspect that his hopes were overly rosy. If the reader's interest is primarily in literature as an art, he has been forewarned by the title that he must expect to encounter at least as much concern with the social sciences as with the humanities. And as he proceeds, he may find himself somewhat baffled by the pattern on which the author has presented his arguments. After an introduction stating the principal theses to be advanced, there comes, first, an extended contrast between the earliest novel, *Waverley*, and another, *Redgauntlet*, written more than halfway through the period and the production of Scott's career as novelist. Next, we retrogress for a century to the teachings of the Scottish "Enlightenment" of the eighteenth century, on which, it is argued, Scott's attitudes were based. Then comes a summary of political topics rife in the last two decades of the novelist's career, followed by an outline of the changes in Scottish society during the whole course of Scott's life. Emphasis is restored to specific novels, *Woodstock* and *Peveril*,[1] brought forward to support one of Dr. McMaster's theses; finally we reach a sketch of the development of Scott's attitude toward society as reflected in certain novels picked out from five groups arranged chronologically in accordance with the theses advanced throughout the study. An Appendix reprints a letter of uncertain authorship attributed to Scott, and the book ends with "Notes" to the preceding text and a very sketchy Index--but no bibliography.

It would be unfair to steal Dr. McMaster's thunder by attempting to summarize the contents of each of these sections, but it is necessary to point out the main features of his argument and at times to comment on some of the methods employed in their support. His primary thesis is that the real subject matter of Scott's novels is to be found in his response to the disturbed social, political, and economic conditions of his own day; the secondary thesis is that after *Waverley* the novelist turned away from straightforward narrative writing about the past and instead resorted to imagery, fantasy, and symbol to project his personal uneasiness: he was "driven to the creation of myths...from an imperfectly or unwillingly grasped vision of the present."

Now, this is a large order, and at the outset the author modestly asserts that he is not engaged in a complete rejection of earlier and more generally accepted views, and that he is attempting no more than a partial appraisal of Scott's

achievements. (At this point it is advisable to remind ourselves of the earlier and more generally accepted views. Students of Scott have tended to agree that he was deeply interested in the manners of earlier periods, and in adventurous actions and outstanding personalities of the past. These interests, the availability of records of them in his memory and elsewhere, and the tastes of the book-buying public were influential in dictating his choice of subjects for his novels.)

Dr. McMaster pays tribute to two short accounts which were influential in restoring a sense of the seriousness of Scott's novels: "David Daiches' *Scott's Achievement as a Novelist*, and a chapter by Lukacs in *The Historical Novel*." (Unfortunately the citation of Daiches is in a misleading form, indicating a book rather than what it actually is, an article included in a volume of miscellaneous essays. Also unfortunately, the Lukacs book exploits social doctrine so frankly that it is not a promising source of disinterested literary criticism.)

The treatment of *Waverley* in Part I is not particularly helpful, perhaps because that novel does not support the theses based on its successors, but is found to be a "highly ordered work" with a strong "moral intention" related to the social problem inherent in the transition from a feudal clan society to a more viable sheep and agriculture economy. The hero's first view of Tully Veolan is functional in this connection as it provides a "depressing" example of the early "unimproved" situation. (It is cheering to meet here with a new justification for such a passage of extended description as used to be the bane of schoolboy readers.) *Redgauntlet*, by contrast, is presented as "a difficult and obscure novel." (It is also constructed on a narrative method as unusual and, it is to be hoped, more serviceable than the expository pattern of the book under review.) It deals with important concepts which are developed by such images as "the maze or labyrinth," balanced by "the pilot," and by paired contrasted characters such as Darsie and Alan. "There is then in *Redgauntlet* an interest in symbol and patterning that is missing in *Waverley*. At the same time, there is no longer any great interest in time and history."

Part II, which is to deal with Scott's world and his response to it, begins by resuming the *Waverley-Redgauntlet* contrast, insisting that "in the later novel, the past/present confrontation is not really very important. Instead, Scott's subject is one that has a far greater relevance to us; the societal basis of personal identity." (Reference is here made to the assignment of the individual novels to five groups, the make-up of which is not explained till one hundred pages later;

this delay puts a slight strain upon the reader unless he happens to have at the tip of his memory the twenty-nine titles and their dates. A readily accessible table, perhaps in the end-papers, would be helpful.) Dr. McMaster at length turns to a summary of some of the doctrines of Scottish eighteenth-century historians, philosophers, and economists; and quotes reflections of them in Scott's own writings, none of them, however, in verse or prose fiction, except for passages from *Waverley*. But, since we already know so well what Scott's attitudes in fact were, if we can believe what his words and acts constantly and consistently indicate, is it necessary to dig into their historical antecedents in order to support Dr. McMaster's theses?

"Some Political Topics" include "Scott's *Toryism*," English Law Reform, The Corn Laws, Scottish Law Reform, financial reforms, and Peterloo (the Manchester Massacre, 1819). Dr. McMaster attempts to link the letter in his Appendix to the "writing of group iv novels: *Ivanhoe*, *Monastery* and *Abbot*" by the initials L.T., the date, and another "shred of evidence: ...the men of Darnick had been particularly keen on Scott's sharpshooters; out of gratitude, Lockhart informs us." What Lockhart in fact informs us in his chapter xlvii is that Scott hankered after the old Peelhouse of Darnick "as a sort of symbol of seigniory there."

The discussion of "Scottish Society 1770-1832" is highly relevant to Dr. McMaster's subject and makes some helpful observations. By the time of Scott's birth (1771) the legal and political measures introduced to put the seal on the Jacobite defeat (1746) had already begun to transform society, weakening the feudal authority and personal affectionate responsibility between landlords and tenants, and substituting a practical and profitable relationship. "The leading aims of the 'new' in the countryside may be defined as 'productivity' and 'freedom of the individual from the direct control of others.'" One justification for the former clansmen, however, was "their *martial* spirit, for here was one area in which they were inarguably *useful*....'If the hour of need should come--and it may not perhaps be far distant--the pibroch will remain unanswered' [Scott]. Undoubtedly a public relations exercise whose unwitting clients were the clansmen was just as much the *raison d'être* of the martial scenes in some of the Waverley novels as Scott's predilection for military fun and games." ("Undoubtedly"? Is this another "shred of evidence"?)

At the beginning of "5. Queen Caroline and King Charles" an admission is made so significant that it must be quoted in full:

> The argument has been implicit in previous chapters that the Waverley novels have as their subject matter more the world of post-war Britain than the historical periods they are set in, or any themes extracted from those epochs, such as the value of chivalry or the merging of polarities. However, since the connection between the historical epoch and the contemporary world is only visible in metaphors developed within the novel, metaphors that do not arise inevitably from the contexts of either world and are indeed transferrable from one epoch to another, then my conclusions rest heavily on interpretation and assertion. It would be convenient if a place could be found where the relationship is more like that found in parable or allegory, where more authorial signposts could be read. If even one such novel can be found, then the general principle that the novels *may* refer primarily to Scott's own age is established.

To satisfy this need, two candidates are offered. "One is *Woodstock*." (The other turns out to be *Peveril*.) It seems now that we are getting down to the nitty-gritty of Dr. McMaster's thesis: that Scott's novels are the expression, in poetic, symbolic terms, of a well-integrated personality's concern with contemporary social conditions. The brief passage dealing with *Woodstock* mentions parallels between the figures of Cromwell and Napoleon (whose *Life* Scott was writing at the time), Louis XVI and Charles, and between the two Restorations; and half a parallel between the three commissioners of the novel and the triumvirate of the Revolution. Scott, then, has incorporated in his novel details resembling those existing in his contemporary world. Slightly more to the purpose, Dr. McMaster finds "Republicanism and democracy ...condemned" (as they are in Shakespeare, though it is not clear why *Richard II* is cited; the only reference to Woodstock apparent in that play is the name of a person, not a place. Admittedly, however, republicanism and democracy were social phenomena in 1826). A specific social incident of Scott's boyhood times is adduced in the comparison of Charles II's attempt to seduce Alice to the future George IV's secret marriage to Mrs. Fitzherbert (1785--as if an account of the Merry Monarch's lechery requires confirmation by the example of the Prince of Wales over a century later!).

"The same sort of linking can be found in a slightly earlier novel, but more precisely and emphatically." *Peveril*, however inferior as narrative fiction, does in fact appear to support Dr. McMaster's thesis better than any of the novels previously considered. A social phenomenon with which it is seriously concerned, mob violence incited by fanaticism, had

always troubled Scott. By his own testimony, his choice of the subject for this novel was due to an "accidental circumstance," the coming into his hands of records of the Isle of Man collected by his brother. He recognized the fact that "the fate of Christian, and the contrast of his character with that of the high-minded but vindictive Countess of Derby... contained the essence of an interesting tale."[2] But in addition to this original subject Scott made extensive use of the Popish Plot, even to the point of violating history by making the Countess a Roman Catholic (she was in fact a French Protestant) to enhance the (novel's) plot. The Popish Plot, an occasion for mob violence, as Dr. McMaster points out, was linked in Scott's mind not only with such other inflammatory circumstances as the trial of Sacheverel (1709-10), the Lord George Gordon riots (1780) and the popular agitation over the proceedings against Queen Caroline (1820) culminating in her exclusion from George IV's coronation and her death in 1821, less than a year before the composition of *Peveril* was begun. In an extensive and baffling treatment of that novel, the book which is being reviewed offers a welter of detail to support the claim that Scott is here basically concerned with expressing his own hatred and fear of the political radicalism rife in his own day, and the disorder which results from it. Numerous passages of questionable relevance to the story as Scott first envisaged it, along with the prevalence of images such as the bull, fever, toad, spider, cage, buttress the proposition that Scott's "sense of social dislocation" is paramount in this novel. Referring once again to *Redgauntlet*, Dr. McMaster invokes "a critical intuition: where the novel seemed to be most alive, it was there that the meaning had to be and nowhere else." A reader who does not intuit so opportunely as the author of *Scott and Society* may have difficulties at this point, particularly if he has his own ideas as to where the novel seemed to be most alive--as had several other critics who are cited in a very sporting concession. (And is it not too much to ask of the reader that he find in echoes of *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* hints that the hero is guilty of "unconscious and suppressed desires" to "kill the king-father," a supreme act of insubordination?)

The propositions presented in Dr. McMaster's opening pages are re-affirmed in Part III, "Development," and we learn that the distinctions among the five groups previously referred to coincide chronologically with the changes in social and economic climate from "strenuous economic progress" to "depression," and with the change in Scott's mood from optimism to complete disillusionment. Surprisingly enough, "the more completely disillusionment took over,...the better novels he

wrote." ("Better"--for what?)

A preoccupation of Scott during the period of group iii was with

> the great doctrine, that cruel and sanguinary laws usually overshoot their own purpose, drive to desperation these [*sic*] against whom they are levelled;... that it is the duty of society to look after...all of its own, and...that...repression, or oppression, will lead to the fragmentation of society and the exclusion of individuals from its processes.

This theme of exclusion is to become of great importance in later pages.

Group iii deals mostly with *Bride*, touches upon *Dwarf*, *Mortality*, and *Midlothian*, and (except for a footnote comparison) ignores *Rob Roy* and *Montrose*. The image employed in *Bride* is "the wedding-death or bridal-burial" previously used in *Dwarf*. "Edgar is...a redrawing of Elshender." "*Dwarf* initiates a series of novels that deal with ways in which a society fails its members." The images used, such as imprisonment and exile "contrast the life of a community...to that of an isolated and excluded individual." *Mortality* introduces a new device, the use of historical background to provide a context for the imagery. Thus the fundamental point about the Covenanters was that "the government...drove them altogether from human society. In danger, want and necessity...expelled from civil intercourse." Thus we are returned to the theme of exclusion, as seen in Edgar's "desperate" situation, for "in Scott's definition, a desperate man is one who has nothing to bind him to the normal community," and the blame for his dilemma is laid on his family and on "a society that offers neither sufficiency nor joy to its members," such a society in fact as that which, according to Dr. McMaster, Scott apprehended during the period in which these novels were written.

Group iv, although it includes such a popular title as *Ivanhoe*, is given scant treatment, perhaps because of its "inferiority...to almost anything else in the oeuvre"; also, perhaps, because "the mode of the novels retreats to pseudo-realism; fantasy and allegory are abandoned; social change and civil violence are examined in a largely discursive mode" (and thus not supportive of the basic theses of the book before us).

Group v returns to a more searching analysis of some of the seventeen last novels and novelettes (1821-32). The first and most extended treatment is given to *Pirate*, a novel presenting a society which, as Scott himself admitted in his Introduc-

tion, is "an imaginary construct based on the best features of Scottish society past and present, with the darker sides that Scott knew of and drew frequently, omitted," except as reflected in the titular hero Cleveland, "desperate and impenitent," excluded "from intercourse with mankind"--but who is eventually redeemed by the love of Minna.

Dr. McMaster's choice of novels for discussion seems to be dictated in part by his persistent discomfort with *Redgauntlet*, "of all the novels...the most elusive." In his quandary he turns to *Geierstein* and *Fair Maid*, in which he finds "common themes and character types." The image of "stopping someone falling over a cliff," occurring in *Redgauntlet*, "is blown up into a full-scale episode" in *Geierstein*. Despite Scott's explicit likening of Swiss to Scottish background, Dr. McMaster finds the setting of *Geierstein* ambiguous (like Zetland), and says so in ambiguous terms: "Switzerland is...a symbol of a state that is on the one hand primitive and natural, but on the other unreal and illusory." Similarly Scott "makes a more complete Arcadia in the Kingdom of Provence, in which the King plays lover and shepherds and shepherdesses sing of love to each other. This is highly free and natural, and artificial and unreal." In conclusion, Dr. McMaster has "deliberately refrained from advancing a coherent scheme of meanings for the novel," but the reader has earlier been invited to draw the conclusion that a pervading theme of *Geierstein* is the powerlessness "of the individual to control his own behavior in spite of any external circumstances."

With the analysis of *Fair Maid* we arrive on firmer and clearer ground. The entire action, the plot, in this novel is to a large extent imaginary and not subject to strict historical constraints; hence Scott's creation of men and events is guided by his own personal interests and purposes. Dr. McMaster, however, does not seem to press this particular point. Here is no idealized society; the ironic tone is appropriate to the author's mood: "dismissive and suggestive of disillusionment with all social arrangements." A thoroughly realistic conception of human motivation supports the theme "that a man must find his identity within that station of life which nature, birth, education and convention have called him to." Quite properly, thus, status, the individual's position in society, is the thing first defined.

The choice of *Robert* and *St. Ronan* to complete the analysis, and the treatment of them, reveal a development of the basic theme of rejection of contemporary society. What at first appears to be a new theme, the conflict between unnatural, mechanical art and primitive nature, is repeatedly expressed in images such as the pseudo-natural artifacts, in characters

like the Emperor and Hereward, in episodes like the strangling of the philosopher by the orang-outang. All of these are introduced by the labyrinthine plot, woven out of fantastic, contrived incidents and underscored by authorial comment, "*probably*" indicating "the presence in the author's mind of some pressing intellectual considerations, *presumably* related to art, artifice, and taste" (my italics).

It is in the discussion of *St. Ronan* that we are shown the relevance of this apparently new preoccupation of the novelist to the general tenor of group v as first outlined. Here again we are faced with a complex and sensational plot, one that is --unusual in Scott--determinedly tragic. And here again, "unreal 'romances'": Clara's sexual adventures, and the ambiguity of her lovers, "are related to a wider theme in the novel: the separation of art and nature." Here again, the setting, the spa, is that of an artificial society; "the guests at the well are introduced to us as...examples of artifice...for the universal art of St. Ronan's is play-acting."

What of the conflict with nature? Here an important, and a nice, distinction is made. "Nature stands as a background to *St. Ronan's*...but it is not man's home. Man's home is society, the natural life is an illusion." To be sure,

> Primitivism of a sort there is: but the primitivism of one social organization as against another, not of unsocial, as against social, beings....One society was more advanced than another, but it was not more social....It is the lack of society, or inadequate society, that makes Clara unable to support her identity....Scott was faced with a vision of a society that was growing progressively more uncomfortable for him. And yet for its discontents he had no remedy of which he was thoroughly confident.... Scott resorted to concepts that had already become outmoded,...in the uncorrupted goodness of the heart of primitive peoples....But he did not really believe that primitive peoples lived in a state of nature: they lived in society.

Dr. McMaster's "Summing-up" briefly recapitulates the theories for which he has already contended (amply if not always convincingly). But (and here we are suddenly confronted with a brand-new corollary) Scott "was not fully aware, though he was partially, of what he was doing...in the very large number of myths and symbols that have [and here it comes!] a sexual origin." Evidence is offered from the ubiquitous *Redgauntlet*: the scene of Lilias's kidnapping from--"we cannot miss the hint given by the 'walled garden,'...the womb." Again, "There

is the evasive incest motif"; and again, "with 'Father Buonaventura'...the double meaning of 'Father.' By now, sexual misconduct has become Scott's automatic symbol for 'Charles Stuart's' betrayal of his subjects....The Jacobites...are a socio-political version of the child expelled from the garden of mother love by the demon father."

This reviewer's own conclusion is that Dr. McMaster has not been completely successful in defending his theses. Their implications are at variance with what we know of Scott's personality and his methods of work; the supposedly gloomy tone of some novels can be amply explained by the personal misfortunes that beset his later years: ill health, the deaths of those dear to him, his financial collapse. The evidence presented is drawn from a limited selection of novels, good or bad, admired or unpopular, that appear to support Dr. McMaster's platform. The arguments in its defense are unconvincing for a variety of reasons: they are in some instances laughably farfetched; the frequent use of such qualifying terms as "probably," "undoubtedly," calculated to lead us safely across thin ice have the opposite effect of warning us to keep off; and there are occasional errors of fact picayune in themselves but indicative of careless readings of the texts: "Waverley's reflection" took place not "by the side of Windermere" but at least eight and a half miles away at Ullswater, where as Scott explicitly states, the young man has taken refuge in "undisturbed retirement"; again, in the latter part of *Bride*, Edgar is not by any means "poised to...marry a foreign heiress." The narrator explains clearly that this was "a report...without any real basis." It appears that Lady Ashton's machinations beguiled other victims than their intended target.

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NOTES

[1]For the sake of convenience throughout this review use will be made of easily identifiable catch-titles.

[2]Scott's 1831 "Introduction" to *Peveril*.

Ernest Campbell Mossner. *The Life of David Hume*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1980.

In 1954, Ernest Campbell Mossner's *Life of David Hume* first appeared; in 1970, Oxford University Press reprinted the edition originally published by Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd., Edinburgh, and simultaneously in the U.S. by the University of Texas Press; in 1980, a revised second edition has been published by Oxford. The moving page of dedications reflects not only the chronology but also the depth of Mossner's personal response to David Hume: "1954 To a young David in the hope that he, too, will never lose faith in the dignity of human nature[;] 1970 In memory of a young David who died in combat in the faith of the dignity of man[;] 1979 To my wife." For it is the strength of Mossner's work on Hume that it is written with more than just information on the subject, though there is a massive and commanding amount of that; it is written with love for the subject and a commitment to prove the greatness of the man.

Some have objected to this quality of Mossner's work, referring to it even as adulation. Probably Mossner does occasionally go a bit too far in his worship of St. David, but it is better that a biographer err on the side of affection for his subject than dislike. And it would be all too possible to dislike Hume, for he can seem a man somewhat too self-possessed and tepid in his personal involvement--at times too much of a philosopher, lacking those human weaknesses which we sometimes like to discover in our heroes, proving their kinship with ourselves. That is why Hume's contemporary English rival for fame, none other than Dr. Johnson, continues to attract such a following. Witness the continuing number of biographies of Johnson. The recent one by Walter Jackson Bate bears a comparison with Mossner's. Both are monumental; both reveal their subjects within their milieus and fully integrate their subjects' lives with their works; both establish the greatness of their subjects. But Bate's Johnson is great because he struggled, he suffered, he wrote out of personal anguish for mankind. It is obvious that such a man would be, on the surface, more attractive than David Hume, a being who seems remarkable because he is almost immune to human weakness and seeks to redeem us from the human condition. Hume was not always so superior, as any reader of his correspondence will find. He will discover Hume's banter and good humor, playfulness and tenderness, wisdom and insight, but also some pettiness, small-minded vanity, resentment: Hume was human, after all. Some might complaint that this latter, unattractive side of Hume is not sufficiently presented in Mossner's account,

but overall Mossner deserves praise for revealing so much of Hume the man, a figure almost as noble, and likable, as Mossner sees him. This, then, is Mossner's Hume. If some think of Hume only as a great philosopher, Mossner is intent on showing a fuller kind of greatness. Mossner's epigraph is apposite; in Hume's words of advice from the first *Enquiry*: "Be a philosopher; but amidst all your philosophy, be still a man."

The magnitude of Mossner's achievement in this biography has been apparent to students of Hume for well over twenty years. The second edition will not alter this assessment. What is new in the second edition? I have heard it remarked that the second edition is nothing more than a reprinting of the original pages with a textual supplement at the end recording revisions and additions. That is not entirely true. While the two editions are substantially identical, there are differences which will prevent scholars from using the second only for the Textual Supplements at the end or for the updated bibliography. Mossner and his copy-editor have managed to insert rewritten passages in the text itself while retaining the bulk of the original type-setting. These changes are conveniently, if not esthetically, signaled by slightly fainter printing, but in some instances the textual alterations make the pagination of the two editions different. For example, interpolations finally cause pages 106-50 in the second edition to be exactly one page-number ahead of the first edition. An extra blank page between Parts I and II in the first allows the compositor to reconcile the two by page 153, but similar interpolations cause the pagination soon to be off again. An omission in the second edition of three paragraphs on pages 246-47 makes the first run a page ahead until a blank page inserted in the second brings them together on page 257. It is thus possible for one to look on page 150 and find a blank in the first and a printed page in the second; or on page 256 and find a blank in the second but a printed page in the first.

For the most part, though, Mossner's terming the second edition "revised and enlarged" is an overstatement. Most of the changes in the text are for style or compression; additional material is indeed supplementary, as the new nineteen-page section called "Textual Supplements" would indicate. There are several changes of more note, although nothing major. In the first edition Mossner laments that a short work by Hume, *A Letter from a Gentleman to his friend at Edinburgh* (1745), "...has never been located. It may well constitute an important document in the further interpretation of some aspects of the *Treatise*" (p. 160). Lo and behold, in 1966 this pamphlet turned up, was reprinted in 1967 by Mossner and John V. Price, and now becomes part of Hume's biography. It turns out not to

offer much in the way of reinterpreting the *Treatise* but does contribute to a revised account of Hume's unsuccessful bid for a professorship at Edinburgh University (see chapter twelve, the most revised chapter in the book). Another discovery, though in this case less gratifying to the biographer, was that "the signed, dated, and place-named covers ostensibly in Hume's hand of a series of historical notes were pronounced forgeries," apparently the work of the notorious Alexander Howland ("Antique") Smith (see pp. viii-ix). In the first edition Mossner had used this manuscript to support his contention that the *History of England* was begun while Hume was tutor to the Marquess of Annandale, despite Hume's own statement to the contrary in *My own Life*. Whether still convinced that his "surmise" is correct or whether unwilling to alter his text any more than necessary, Mossner refuses to back down. He does, however, tone down his claim while still insisting rather lamely, "It is my speculation without factual evidence, that Hume's first trials in the writing of history were made during the unhappy Annandale period" (p. 175). It is possible also that Mossner's revisions have introduced some errors. In the previous edition he had observed that Hume's essay "The Sceptic" might well be sub-titled "The Thinker of Scientific Method in the Realm of Human Nature" (p. 141, 1st ed.). Making some alterations in the second edition, Mossner now says that the essay "Of the Dignity of Human Nature" might well have this sub-title. Though I am not exactly sure what Mossner has in mind by the sub-title, it would seem to fit "The Sceptic" better than the other essay.

One other matter concerning the first and second editions deserves comment. We are all familiar with "the hard economic facts of present-day publication" (p. viii). Thus the decision not to re-set the type any more than mandatory may be the only one possible. Nonetheless, one sees with dismay a marked degeneration in the quality of the books themselves from the original, to the Oxford reprint, to this second edition. Indeed, the original is a handsome book in its printing and binding, containing as well the two Allan Ramsay portraits in color and eighteen illustrations in black and white. The 1970 and 1980 imprints contain only the first Ramsay portrait as a monochrome frontispiece. It is well that Mossner describes the portrait (p. 280) in such detail, for the reader will have to see it with the mind's eye if he has the second edition, whose frontispiece is fainter than the 1970 reprint. Yet the second edition, showing all too clearly the marks of cutting-and-pasting revision and with slightly smaller pages than its predecessors, is an expensive book (£20/$53). Ideally, the serious student of Hume would want to own both versions, the

original for its pictorial richness--which is, after all, a part of biography--and the second for its minor but noteworthy changes.

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Peter Zenzinger. *My Muse is British: Allan Ramsay und die Neubelebung der schottischen Dichtkunst im 18. Jahrhundert. [Allan Ramsay and the Revival of Scottish Poetry in the 18th Century.]* Beiträge zur Anglistik Vol. I. Grossen-Linden, Federal Republic of Germany. Hoffmann Verlag. 1977. ix + 419 pp.

"My Muse is British" (*Works*, III, 123, *l.* 20)--to raise into consciousness this confession of Ramsay's will possibly irritate a greater part of those patriotic Scots who have an otherwise good knowledge of the literary history of their country; it will probably shock many of those whose knowledge of this literature is of a more accidental nature; and it may meet with straightforward non-comprehension of not a few non-Scottish friends of Scottish literature.

Irritation, shock, or non-comprehension--there are obvious reasons for these reactions. They are to be found in one dominating trend of 20th century literary criticism devoted to Scottish literature, a trend one of whose characteristics it is to stress--and overevaluate--the Scottishness of everything written in Scots by those eminent Scottish poets of the 18th century who used Scots as a poetic medium, and, consequently, to underrate all their poetic productions in English, a trend propagated by Hugh MacDiarmid, his fellow makars, and a cultural agitation accompanying their poetry, a trend that became, at any rate, highly persuasive for everyone more or less intensely engaged in the study of eighteenth-century Scottish poetry. To have shrewdly elucidated the contributions to this interpretative trend by such critics as G.G. Smith, J. Speirs, K. Wittig, also, if from different starting points, by D. Craig, D. Daiches and A. Kinghorn, and to have demonstrated that these contributions of critics who otherwise so greatly enriched our understanding of the literary history of Scotland, marred the full comprehension of the complex totality of Ramsay's work, is one of the merits of Dr. Zenzinger's study.

Zenzinger takes up interpretative impulses set forth by M.P. McDiarmid in "A Study of the Poetry of Robert Fergusson,"

The Poems of Robert Fergusson, STS edn. (Edinburgh, 1954), by J. MacQueen in some of his publications and by R.D.S. Jack in *The Italian Influence on Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh, 1972), three critics that have paved ways of understanding Scottish literature in wider British and European contexts.

Zenzinger's study evidently benefits from its author's being a non-Scot--which cannot, by the way, be said of Wittig's investigation that was, as it were, undertaken from a Scottish point of view, which, of course, also yielded desirable interpretative advantages, if of a different nature. Apparent non-Scottish influences on Ramsay's creativity not only arouse Zenzinger's scholarly interest, they moreover do not prevent him from duly stressing their importance in places where for preceding critics Scottishness was, at least subconsciously, the weightiest criterion.

Zenzinger comprehends Ramsay's poetry as a coherent entirety, rejecting the methodical approach of splitting it up into two separate fields, the Scots and the English. Such possible splitting up, Zenzinger argues, is not justified by the literary facts, since Ramsay envisaged and made use of the aesthetic possibilities of a complementary application of the two tongues.

Zenzinger's critical interest is especially directed to aesthetic, social and nationalist tendencies of the time and their influence on the poet, consequently Ramsay's poems are primarily analyzed as artistic productions of their time, only to a lesser degree as emanations of preceding literary developments. Nevertheless Zenzinger investigates the use Ramsay made of those possibilities to continue the Scottish literary tradition which were offered by the complex socio-cultural situation in which Scotland found herself after the Union of Parliaments. In this context the reception of English Augustan poetry in Scotland and its relevance for the literary productions of the North is discussed, just as impulses set by Ramsay and his school that affected the southern regions of literary productivity in the United Kingdom. Problems of the interdependence of poetological standards within Britain and the differing degrees of their obligatory natures are considered.

According to Zenzinger many of the miscomprehensions and contradictions showing up in most endeavours to evaluate adequately Ramsay's poetry originate from non-satisfying explanations of the change of Ramsay's poetological ideas and techniques. In the poet's creativity three phases, more or less coinciding with the second, third, and fourth decades of the 18th century ought to be discerned. In the first phase Ramsay cultivated the continuation of two different literary traditions, the Scottish and the English, trying to poetically pre-

serve and hand on untinged the characteristics of each. During the second phase, his main phase, the borderlines between these two traditions became less and less important. Ramsay's new poetological compass became British. He offered bourgeois standards to a British bourgois and aristocratic public and modified those standards according to the prevailing views of the latter. The last phase reveals a decline of Ramsay's poetic creativity. No new artistic concepts were developed, questions of poetic aesthetics and poetic diction lost their importance.

So much as to the general direction of Zenzinger's investigations. Now to be more specific on Zenzinger's findings.

Whereas, Zenzinger points out, in Ramsay's "Easy Club" time the poetic propagation of a mere "confederation" of the two kingdoms dominates, the poet converts in his main phase more and more to advocating a close connection of the two countries and to celebrating the greatness of the British nation. (Significantly enough certain poems of Jacobite tendencies remain either unpublished or are at least not included in the subscribers' editions of 1721 and 1728.) Peaceful emulation with England--in spite of partial sentiment against the South --becomes the determining concept. Consequently Ramsay wants, during his main phase, by no means only to further poetry in Scots but strives to embed it into Standard English contexts thus to heighten its importance as a poetic medium. Of course that calls, so Zenzinger demonstrates, for an adjustment of Scottish traditional poetic patterns to the Augustan aesthetic decorum of the age in order to make these patterns acceptable to an all-British public that is likely to resent components of unpolished rusticity and formal eccentricity. Any cultivation of cultural authenticity becomes for Ramsay less important than the endeavour to display Scotland as a civilized nation and, therefore, as an equal partner to prejudiced England. One way of bridging the gulf between the seeming "unpolishedness" of the Makars and the refined style of the Augustans is the taking up of primitivistic ideas of the age, especially the Noble Savage concept, and their reshaping according to Ramsay's poetic objectives.

The component of primitivistic elements acquires principal momentum in his main phase also because it helps to overcome the poetic distance between bourgeois realism and aristocratic symbolism. Artistically Ramsay has become obligated to both--to the first mainly because of his own origin, to the second because of his new ambitions, striving, among other things, to add a Scottish contribution to the classical *beatus ille* tradition, to the gentlemanly ideal of "retreat."

Thus Scots and English are now envisaged by Ramsay as

stylistic variants of a North-British poetic language, Scots becoming its pastoral idiom--which virtually meant the reduction of the latter to a poetic medium of the low classes. Different from what was significant of his early phase--and what was, later, to be characteristic of Fergusson's and Burns's poetry--it is not the distance between Scots and English but their poetic synthesis that becomes a principal feature of Ramsay's poetry in his main phase, a feature that is to be conceived in connection both with the then important aesthetic category of the Golden Mean and with Ramsay's ambition to render his poetry a device of securing peace between the two nations. Scots is no longer an instrument of venting nationalist sentiments, it is now applied as an aesthetic means.

All this, Zenzinger stresses, must by a modern assessment of Ramsay's achievement be conceived against a certain economic background. In the poet's time the institution of aristocratic Maecenatism is about to disappear and is--by way of the intermediate stage of "collective patronage"--going to be replaced by the open literary market. Consequently the new type of bourgeois poet must endeavour to appeal to as large a sector of the public as possible notwithstanding the fact that he will especially try to flatter the nobility. So with Ramsay the "retreat" ideal becomes an embodiment of bourgeois virtue while retaining its character of detached aristocratic elegance. Here Ramsay's oscillation between conservative and progressive attitudes has, so Zenzinger argues, one of its principal reasons.

Ramsay's intention to create a balance among several contrasting tendencies has undoubtedly produced positive and negative effects in his poetry. Hitherto predominantly the negative results of Ramsay's endeavours in this syncretic direction have been discussed by literary research. Zenzinger's study reveals, however, that Ramsay's most representative works are not those in which the Northern tradition is continued unaltered, but those in which, in congruence with Scotland's main aristocratic and bourgeois cultural trends in the first half of the 18th century, indigenous and alien elements meet, causing a synthesis which includes the sphere of linguistic realization. Obviously, so Zenzinger maintains, in those poetic creations of Ramsay's which are of literary eminence the dialect tradition is strongly enriched by elements of English or Continental literature, thus demonstrably gaining in essence.

Ramsay's third phase, Zenzinger holds, is more interesting for the biographer than for the literary critic, the poet's productions, among other things, showing (still partly in touch with the literary development of the time) a sentimental

siding with the innocently exploited, and some interest in exotic topics.

Zenzinger underlines deliberations of such critics as M.P. McDiarmid and R.D.S. Jack who have suggested an essential difference between Ramsay's poetry on the one hand and Fergusson's and Burns's on the other, not least with reference to their respective use of Scots and its poetic functions. In their findings, Zenzinger stresses, they contradict Speir's notion, who saw the Scots poetry written in the 18th century as a retrospective phenomenon, little capable of any further development. It would however, Zenzinger continues, not do to explain the contrasts between Ramsay's poetry and that of Fergusson and Burns only with reference to Augustan and pre-romantic aesthetic norms, the unique cultural, economic, political and social circumstances in which Scotland found herself in the first half of the 18th century must necessarily be taken into consideration as causative factors as well, if the complexity of Scottish poetry of that age is to be adequately comprehended. To have done this as far as printing space allowed is no small merit of Zenzinger's study.

After his analysis Zenzinger expresses the opinion that Ramsay's position within the sphere of British literature of the 18th century cannot yet be defined to a sufficiently satisfactory degree, as studies on his influence on others are still a scholarly desideratum. There is, at any rate, for Zenzinger little doubt that in his poetic art Ramsay is more akin to Pope, Prior and Gay than to the Romantics. As answers to questions for verifiable literary effects on Ramsay's posterity emanating from his poetic creativity Zenzinger suggests: (1) After Ramsay Scotland becomes the first choice stage for British pastoral poetry. (2) The strong primitivistic component in Ramsay's work paves the way for Ossianic poetry. (3) Ramsay's formal realism by which he paints his images of low life, eventually leads--though some distance has to be bridged--to the sterner poems of Burns and Crabbe. (4) Ramsay's pastoral poetry, his lyrics and his narrative verse become of some influence on the Continent, not least in Germany. (5) Certainly most important for British literature, Ramsay opens the world of Scottish poetic traditions for an elegant British public, a pioneering achievement from which Fergusson and Burns could work on.

Comparatively little is to be said by way of fault finding.

Zenzinger's endeavours to dispose of the notion of "schizophrenia" both in relation to Scotland's cultural and political situation in the 18th century and to Ramsay's cultural and political position are not satisfactory, they are not even necessary. If one thinks of the unique development during

which Scotland maneuvered herself, half-voluntarily giving up her independence, into the hands of a neighbour of infinitely greater economic and political power, without retaining any constitutional means of subsequent correction of this situation, a development without parallel in the Europe of that time, if one thinks of the complex consequences that arose from this development, often defying any rational explanation because of their contradictory and paradoxical nature, one feels compelled to conceive the cultural and political schizophrenia that turned up both in the country as a whole and in individuals as something whose absence would indeed be inexplicable, the Jacobite poems of Ramsay's which he excluded from the press being ample witness of the correctness of this proposition. Which does, of course, not necessarily mean that cultural and political schizophrenia was to become the prevailing attitude in 18th century Scotland.

Zenzinger's argument for devoting Ramsay's third phase comparatively limited space is understandable: in that period Ramsay apparently did not produce much that is of interest for Zenzinger's investigations. Still, this phase, one feels, is dealt with a little too sweepingly. As Ramsay kept interested in matters of principal weight, a somewhat more detailed occupation with this period might yet have yielded results relevant for Zenzinger's study.

Zenzinger's translation of the important term "literati" by the German word "Literaten" is inadequate if not misleading.

That Zenzinger now and then makes, as it were, too much use of the theorems and interpretative methods of the "Frankfort School" may be irritating for scholars of the English-speaking world. In that, however, he follows a trend that has been prevalent with many West German scholars for quite some time now.

Zenzinger's study is at once thorough and comprehensive, it does not get lost in details, although it pays adequate attention to them. It displays a remarkable instinct for what is essential. It presents the result of scholarly work that is, with regard to its object, detached and engaged at the same time, thus yielding important insights into the socio-cultural structure of an important period of Scottish literary history that have elsewhere not yet been made possible.

Poetry has always been and will ever remain, to a great extent, a phenomenon that rouses emotions--emotions which often transgress the boundaries of aesthetic appreciation, not unfrequently straying into fields of national prestige. Perhaps the results of Zenzinger's competent study that neither elevates Ramsay to the rank of a poet of the first order nor confirms the commonplace that he was an author who only produced

acceptable poetry when writing in Scots but elucidates the intricate ways in which he extensively added to interweaving the structures of indigenous Scottish and the wider area of British literary culture of the 18th century and in which he acted as a promoter of the further literary development in Scotland, will prove no slight reason for meditated Scottish pride in a specific and significant facette of Scotland's cultural achievements in her Golden Age.

The inaccessibility of Zenzinger's study to those readers who do not understand German has prompted and, it is hoped, justifies the somewhat greater length of this review.

Zenzinger's study needs translation into English.

DIETRICH STRAUSS
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Ian Simpson Ross. *William Dunbar*. Medieval and Renaissance Authors. Leiden. E.J. Brill. 1981. xiv + 284 pp.

Tom Scott's *Dunbar* begins, "Very little is known about the facts of William Dunbar's life. This is of small importance, for the poems tell us more about him than any list of events and dates would" (p. 1). Although Professor Ross would undoubtedly agree with Scott's first sentence, he would, as his study of Dunbar attests, most emphatically disagree with the second. In *William Dunbar* Ian Simpson Ross consistently attempts to describe the fifteenth-century context, intellectual, political, and artistic, within which Dunbar's poetry is to be understood. That this attempt is not entirely successful is less ignificant than is the fact of its having been made in the first place. As an eminently public figure in an ostentatiously public court, Dunbar is a poet much of whose work is best understood (in some cases, only understood) against the backdrop of fifteenth-century Scottish life. It is here that Professor Ross's book makes its most important contribution.

In part because of the series in which *William Dunbar* appears, more than one-third of the book deals with Dunbar's life (Chapter 1) and milieu (Chapters 2-4). Professor Ross painstakingly recreates the kind of education Dunbar was likely to have received, the books he was likely to have read, and the people he was likely to have met. Although much of this section of the book is speculative--the most basic facts concerning Dunbar's life, including the time and place of his birth and death, are unknown--Professor Ross succeeds in providing us with a useful picture of what the life of an educat-

ed man, and a court poet, might have been like. It is in the second part of the book, when Professor Ross discusses the poems themselves, that several problems arise.

Discussions of the poems are ordered in accordance with Bannatyne's scheme, an arrangement that has the twofold advantage of being familiar to the reader and almost contemporary with the poetry. However, Dunbar is an extremely various poet, and Bannatyne's five categories are unequal to the task of encompassing the canon adequately; the political pieces in particular must be parcelled out, depending on whether they are viewed as serious or comic, to categories that do not adequately accommodate them. If Dunbar's virtuosity makes taxonomy difficult, it makes comprehensive criticism next to impossible. Rare is the critic who has something original, or even reasonably intelligent, to say about each and every one of Dunbar's poems. One of the greatest virtues of Tom Scott's study is that the critic is also a poet; even when he is dismissive or patently obtuse, Scott invariably notices some technical, local felicity which enables us to see a line or stanza as though for the first time and through a poet's eye. Professor Ross, however, is no poet, and his obligatory remarks on the majority of poems in the canon tend to be both uninspired and tedious. Professor Ross has done his homework thoroughly and his analyses--these are often little more than quotation, summary, and paraphrase--contain references to pertinent scholarship (with the notable exception of Scott who is almost totally and deliberately ignored), but he rarely has anything significant of his own to add. Even the generally admirable tendency to discuss Dunbar's poems within a specifically fifteenth-century context creates problems. The numerous references to art, for example, are difficult, if not impossible, to follow without plates, and Professor Ross's verbal descriptions are poor substitutes for the absent pictures. Discussions of different poems are strung together with at best tenuous transitions ("Turning now to survey the poems addressed to, or associated with, the Queen..." [p. 205]), and the discussions themselves, as in the case of "Harry, harry hobbilschowe" (pp. 177-9), often simply follow the structure of the poem with long passages quoted to no apparent purpose.

This is not to suggest that Professor Ross's critical comments are uniformly unenlightening. He has some interesting remarks to make on the religious poems, the allegories, and the "Fenȝeit Freir of Tungland" (pp. 200-03), but what is lacking throughout are a clearly defined focus and a sense of audience. Much of the time *William Dunbar* reads like an introduction to the poet's life and works and as such is not without merit, yet Professor Ross quotes Villon without pro-

viding a translation (p. 31) and much of his discussion of fifteenth-century art is well beyond what a fairly sophisticated reader might reasonably be expected to know. Professor Ross has simply attempted to do too much, and the result is an extremely uneven performance.

WALTER SCHEPS
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Ian Campbell. *Kailyard*. Edinburgh. Ramsay Head Press. [1981]. 142 pp.

Jenni Calder (ed.). *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland*. Edinburgh. Edinburgh University Press. [1981]. 141 pp.

These two well written and reasonably priced books add valuably to critical work on Scottish fiction of the nineteenth century. Moreover, they are in a sense complementary, for, in their own terms, Stevenson was the obverse of all that was inhibited and over-cautious in the so-called 'kailyard' fiction of the Victorian period in Scotland. Whereas Ian Maclaren and his fellow practitioners of the tear-jerking heathery yarn wanted to preserve an outdated image of Scotland, and failed to face the realities of social change, change was the very thing Stevenson welcomed.

Ian Campbell offers a fresh and stimulating account of a frequently misunderstood phenomenon. The rural idyll of kailyard novels and short stories had tremendous appeal a hundred years ago; and as Dr. Campbell brings out, television today draws on the same broad stereotypes. Part of the strength of his analysis lies in his deft and controlled demonstration that there were fore-runners before the kailyard proper. He writes well about Henry Mackenzie's emotionalism in *The Man Of Feeling*, and places John Wilson/Christopher North very accurately as the first writer to exploit knowingly the Scottish taste for heroics in the glen.

Another sterling quality about *Kailyard* is the clarity of Dr. Campbell's series of comparisons and contrasts between kailyard stories and the altogether more energetic fiction of Scott, Galt, and Hogg. It is by means of these comparisons that the book establishes its principal argument. Change was something the kailyard authors did not want to know about; whereas major novelists made it their central subject for exploration. One symbolic indication of the kailyard's fear of

change is especially well observed in this book. The physical location of kailyard stories is nearly always a small village or town lying beyond the reach of the main transport system of the day, and this despite (or because of) the presence of the railway age and all its insistent connections. Stevenson's upbringing in polite Edinburgh, and his ill-health, might have been expected to produce a fear of life and of movement. Yet paradoxically, Stevenson became bold where his kailyard contemporaries were timid, and interested in cultural difference where they sought to promote a false idea of an unchanging, wholly rural Scotland. Jenni Calder and her fellow contributors to a conference in 1980 on Stevenson and Victorian Scotland were acutely aware of this paradox. The book which has resulted from their discussions is lively, wide-ranging, and balanced. There are essays by David Daiches ("Stevenson and Scotland"), Michael Balfour ("The First Biography"), Trevor Royle ("The Literary Background to Stevenson's Edinburgh"), Douglas Gifford ("Stevenson and Scottish Fiction: The Importance of *The Master of Ballantrae*"), W.W. Robson ("On *Kidnapped*"), Christopher Harvie ("The Politics of Stevenson"), and J.C. Furnas ("Stevenson and Exile"). In addition, Jenni Calder as editor supplies a provocative introduction, "Stevenson in Perspective." It is quite clear that any serious student of Stevenson seeking to understand his Scottish dimension will need to turn to this collection of essays.

One particularly attractive feature of the planning of *Stevenson and Victorian Scotland* is that the last word is given to J.C. Furnas, author of *Voyage to Windward*. Taking fully into account Stevenson's debt to his native land and also the nostalgia which led him at the end of his life to launch out on *Weir of Hermiston*, Furnas nevertheless gently but insistently points to the significance of non-Scotland in Stevenson's experience. "He owed to the hybrid vigor of exile things that he might otherwise never have achieved." Both as man and artist Stevenson had exceptional courage--very clearly seen when he is placed beside some of his Scottish contemporaries. In the end, his courage brought unlooked for rewards.

DONALD LOW
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The Poems of Robert Henryson. Ed. Denton Fox. Oxford. The Clarendon Press. 1981. 596 pp.

When G. Gregory Smith published his edition of Henryson's poems in 1906-14, he lamented that Henryson was "perhaps a forgotten poet." Seventy-five years later, Fox's edition appears amid a marked Henryson revival alongside of major critical reassessments of the poet by Robert Kindrick and Douglas Gray. The labor of more than twenty years, Fox's edition provides the first complete text of Henryson in half a century and is likely to be the definitive edition for quite some time to come. Fox's work differs from that of his important twentieth-century predecessors, Smith and Wood, in two significant ways: in terms of his editorial strategy and in the ambitious nature of his critical apparatus and gloss. Rejecting the idea of producing a reconstructed or composite text, Smith and Wood both choose to reproduce existing witnesses; Smith prints all of the early texts known to him while Wood selects a single copy text for each of Henryson's poems. Fox departs from the methods of these editors to undertake the task of creating a composite critical edition of Henryson's work with a full apparatus of variants. His effort, as he points out, has certain inherent difficulties: the witnesses for Henryson's poetry are less reliable than those for Chaucer, Douglas, or Lindsay, often dating from at least 75 years after his death and, in many cases, the surviving manuscripts are copies of earlier prints. After 1560, all of the witnesses show signs of Protestantizing emendations or revisions. Although he warns the reader not to "place too much trust in the text printed here," Fox nevertheless produces a sensible, accurate, and intelligent text.

In his introduction, Fox provides a clear account of his editorial practices, patiently establishing the genealogy of the various witnesses and their relative accuracy. His arguments are detailed and convincing, particularly with reference to the numerous manuscripts and prints of the *Fables*. The text Fox produces, for the most part, is a series of judicious readings. Often, he resolves cruxes in the earlier editions, deciphering difficult lines to provide sensible wording. Only occasionally do his emendations invite further scrutiny, for example, when he insists on the more difficult or less modern reading even though other evidence mitigates against it. Thus, in a few instances in editing the *Testament*, he chooses Thynne's edition when the Charteris print and the Anderson print agree against it without sufficiently justifying his choice (e.g.: *ll*.205, 286). The result of Fox's editing is to give us texts which are somewhat different from the ones we

are familiar with. Although, like Wood and Elliott, he selects the Bassandyne print, unknown to Smith, for his copy text of the *Fables* and the Charteris print for the *Testament*, he incorporates many more variants in his edition than these editors do, creating in many lines a new text.

Fox's notes and gloss are much more ambitious than those found in the earlier editions of Henryson. The notes contain general analyses of the sources and revisions of the tales and detailed commentaries on individual lines, while the gloss attempts to list every form in the text. With their wealth of information, textual, critical, and general, the notes encourage the reader to puzzle over the text and reevaluate it with a thoroughness that is not always prompted by the existing editions. Two other considerable strengths of the notes are their frequent documentation of Henryson's allusions to earlier poets and the inclusion, in their original form, of the texts of some of Henryson's major sources. Fox's references indicate that Henryson's borrowings, often ironic or witty, are more extensive and significant than we have recognized, particularly in the cases of Chaucer and Lydgate, and that a new investigation of these relations is warranted. By printing many of the fables of Gualterus Anglicus and the entire text of Nicholas Trivet's *Commentary on Boethius*, available only in an abbreviated version in Smith, Fox likewise makes accessible to the reader the materials for further study of Henryson's methods. The benefits of Fox's scholarship are so considerable that we tend to overlook his occasionally superfluous or excessive annotation, such as his speculation about the medieval mousetrap (p. 205).

In contrast to his excellent notes, gloss, and text, Fox's introduction is more limited than we would expect for an edition of this importance. His descriptions of the various witnesses, the history of the text, and Henryson's life are informative, but his critical commentary sheds little new light on the poems. Although he cites recent criticism, he overlooks many articles that would add to his analyses of the texts, for example, the studies of Hanna, McNamara, Sklute, and Ramson among others. In his discussions, he often skirts controversies that are central to the poems--the relation of the fables to the *moralitates*, the role of the planet gods in the *Testament* and the significance of the ending. Similarly, he argues that Henryson's *Orpheus and Eurydice* is an underestimated poem, but does little to establish its importance. Repeatedly, Fox hedges about Henryson's originality, hinting that certain passages are original, but then retreating from this position almost immediately (e.g.: pp. 300, 315, 325). The result is to diminish Henryson's innovations even where some certainty

exists about the relation of his text to his sources, for example, in the "Tale of the Cock and the Fox." Finally, Fox tends to discount political allusions in the poems too hastily without giving just due to the evidence of Kindrick, MacQueen, Nicholson, Rowlands, and other scholars who view Henryson as a more serious political poet (e.g.: *Fables*, *ll*.1512, 1614).

But these are secondary objections. Fox's volume is an impressive piece of work which provides us with a considerably more accurate and authoritative text than we have had and consummates the efforts of previous editors.

LOIS EBIN
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Boswell: The Applause of the Jury, 1781-1785. Ed. Irma S. Lustig and Frederick A. Pottle. The Yale Editions of the Private Papers of James Boswell. New York, Toronto, London. McGraw-Hill Book Co. 1981. 419 pp.

"The great difficulty is to distinguish between noble ambition and foolish, restless, conceited aspiring": thus Boswell in a flash of self-awareness on 23 March 1783 (p. 83). He was commenting on a conversation with Johnson, in which the great man was playing the moral bully, checking "every ambitious wish" of Boswell's and beating him down to "dull content" with his lot as a Scottish lawyer and laird thirled to a wife and five children. Boswell, for his part, was looking for support for his airy schemes of improving his family estate and removing to London, where he intended to be called to the Bar or sit in Parliament.

The conversation and comment represent the emotional and moral crux of this twelfth volume of Boswell's journals, which takes us from the long-awaited assumption of responsibility for Auchinleck, following his father's death on 30 August 1783, until 28 September 1785, the eve almost of the publication of the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, Boswell's "restless" aspiration to be in legal practice in England had not been fulfilled, nor was he an M.P. despite efforts to win a seat through patronage and political pamphleteering in the form of the first (1783-84) and second (1785) publications entitled *Letter to the People of Scotland*, with their peculiar mixture of defense of property rights, "ancient constitutionalism," and Scottish nationalism. The "noble ambition" to be Johnson's biographer on a new plan, however, had been in part gratified

with the printing of the Hebrides journal and the applause accorded it on 22 September 1785 by the "jury" consisting of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Johnson's physician Dr. Brocklesby, the M.P. George Dempster, Bennet Langton, and Edmond Malone, who was Boswell's good angel in the whole enterprise.

Considerable difficulties had to be faced in producing this volume of the Boswellian autobiographical record, because no complete journal exists for the period covered. Boswell left off journalizing completely for whole stretches of time or made only erratic entries. Most of what he did record, of course, has been printed before, in volumes 15 and 16 of the *Private Papers of Boswell from Malahide Castle*, edited by Geoffrey Scott and F.A. Pottle (1932). Fifty years on, Professor Pottle and Dr. Lustig, backed by the resources of the Yale Boswell Office and its allies, have gone over the text and have marshalled notes of greater amplitude and range. In addition, they have pieced out the journal record of Boswell's thoughts and activities with his notes, engagement lists, letters, newspaper articles, interviews, anecdotes, first-draft MS passages for the *Life of Johnson* and, occasionally, a report from another writer, for example, that of Mary Hamilton, who was not too distracted by Boswell's attentions during a performance of Handel's *Messiah* in Westminster Abbey on 4 June 1784 to form impressions of the performance (pp. 228-9).

The new material printed for the first time from MSS at Yale contains choice items of great interest to Boswell scholars (and, presumably, to Johnsonians). For example, there is the complete record for 20 April 1783, including a paper entitled "Extraordinary Johnsoniana--*Tacenda*" (i.e., anecdotes to be passed over in silence). These are handled as adeptly as anything in the Boswellian reports. The scene is Bolt Court and Johnson is off stage, taking a nap after dinner. Boswell's fellow-guest is the "inferior painter" Maritius Lowe, whose work "The Deluge," considered "execrable beyond belief," was hung alone in an empty room, at a Royal Academy exhibition, after Johnson interceded with Reynolds. Boswell and Lowe set about grilling Mrs. Desmoulins, a member of Johnson's household, concerning her benefactor's sexual potency. They draw from her the story of Garrick peeping through a keyhold to see an aroused Johnson running round his wife's bed after she had lain down (*Life of Johnson*, *sub* 1736). Mrs. Desmoulins also admits that she could not have resisted Johnson had he pushed matters to extremities. Boswell offers the opinion that no woman would have an inclination for Johnson--"There is something in his figure so terribly disgusting"--but his communicant meets this challenge by noting the powerful attraction of Johnson as thinker: "Yet, Sir, one cannot tell. His mind is

such" (pp. 110-12). We also get a fuller account of the visit to Oxford with Johnson in June 1784, and from this as the editors point out, it is possible to see "how little Boswell felt himself tied down by the exact words of his first records when he came to give them literary finish" in the *Life of Johnson* (p. 242, *n.*2). Sometimes transcription itself into the *Life* MS effected a change. Thus, Johnson's comment on his behavior as a student at Pembroke College ran, "I was rude and violent," not the more startling, "I was mad and violent," of the *Life*, for which Boswell misread his own writing (p. 243).

Additional new material supplements the journal entries already in print dealing with the last days of Lord Kames. Ever fascinated with death and ever hopeful that his own fears would be allayed by the words of the dying, Boswell was a frequent visitor to Kames's Edinburgh home in November-December 1782. A common thread was Boswell seeking to draw Kames out on his views concerning the afterlife: "He never attempted to think on that subject, knowing it to be vain. And he applied his mind to things which he could know. 'But,' said I, 'we may conjecture about it.' Said he with that spring of thought, that kind of sally for which he was ever remarkable, 'You'll not go to hell for conjecturing'" (p. 36). Boswell, in general, got very little comfort from the luminaries of the Scottish Enlightenment, though on the night of 10 January 1784 he had "a very agreeable dream" in which he read Hume's diary "from which it appeared that though his vanity made him publish treatises of scepticism and infidelity, he was in reality a Christian and a very pious man" (p. 176). Hume's agnosticism and scepticism had been deeply troubling to Boswell, and he even feared that the dreadful contagion of infidelity had spread to his former teacher and friend, Adam Smith. Evidence of this was to be found in Smith's *Letter to William Straham* (1776) which had praised Hume for approaching "as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man, as perhaps the nature of human frailty will permit." This turn of phrase made believers squirm. On 20 April 1783, Boswell made a note to himself to ask Johnson "if you should associate with Adam Smith as formerly friendly to you" (p. 108). Another of the Edinburgh literari, kindly, well-intentioned Dr. Hugh Blair, put himself beyond the pale in July 1784, by accosting Boswell "with a vile tone, '*Hoo did you leave Sawmuel*'" (p. 262).

In truth, Boswell for the most part was ill at ease in his native country, "pressed with the load of life" there (p. 64), and at times "disturbed by the vile metaphysical perplexity" arising from the conflicting claims of fate and free will. Even the deep love of a very understanding wife--for such is the personality of Margaret Boswell that emerges from the let-

ters presented in this volume--could not provide him with the anchor that his volatile character required. He found this in London, to some extent, as is well known, in Johnson, and after his death in fellow-members of The Club: Reynolds, Malone, and Thomas Barnard. How sprightly Boswell is, feeling his freedom from care in London: "Time was borne up on a thousand wings," he writes there on 23 March 1783. To be sure, our editors do not conceal from us the fact that Boswell was not always the charming companion, and did show signs of personality deterioration at this time. Here is the Rev. William Temple, chafing at being kept in London by his friend in May 1783:

> "Boswell irregular in his conduct and manners, selfish, indelicate, thoughtless, no sensibility or feeling for others who have not his coarse and rustic strength and spirits. Sorry I came to town to meet him. Detaining me here to no purpose. Seems often absurd and almost mad, I think. No composure or rational view of things. Years do not improve him. Why should I mortify myself to stay for him?" In the evening Boswell came to Temple and Hawkins "in his usual ranting way and stayed till twelve, drinking wine and water glass after glass."
> (*Diaries*, p. 41--quoted at p. 149)

All in all, the solid editorial labors of this volume are devoted to a remarkable subject: the life of Boswell, astonishly varied in itself and made all richer by what he called his "never-failing wish to know distinguished men" (p. 65). What a gallery we have in this volume! The dying intellectual gladiator Johnson naturally commands our attention much of the time, but we also meet such figures as "Captain Inglefield, a tall, genteel man between thirty and forty, and...Mr. Rainy, a steady-looking, stout Aberdeenshire man, I suppose about forty" who, together with a midshipman and nine ordinary seamen, sailed in sixteen days in a pinnace from off the Newfoundland Banks to Fayal in the Azores after their ship, the *Centaur*, sank in a hurricane--this miraculous voyage being accomplished without benefit of compass or quadrant, and with no sail save a blanket (p. 130, *n*.1). Characteristically, Boswell did his best to see that the blanket got to the British Museum. This volume is a noble addition to the series of the Private Papers of Boswell, and Professor Pottle and Dr. Lustig are much to be congratulated on its appearance.

IAN ROSS
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James Thomson. *The Seasons*. Ed. James Sambrook. Oxford. The Clarendon Press. 1981. xcv + 405 pp.

James Thomson, as James Sambrook has aptly characterized him, was an "inveterate tinkerer."[1] Thomson delighted in revising his *Seasons* minutely and repeatedly, to his printers' exasperation. Never mind the poor printers. Attempting a full collation of the many texts of *The Seasons* is a task which has driven more than one of Thomson's editors to near-despair. The Rev. James Bell, Thomson's nephew, tried it in the late eighteenth century, but never completed an edition. Peter Cunningham, in 1862, called such a collation "'an intention which no one can carry out. Wordsworth tried it--Mr. Dyce tried it--I have tried it.'"[2] Edmund Gosse described it as "a task often promised but never fulfilled."[3] J. Logie Robertson, who in 1908 came close to succeeding, admitted that "it would demand a Hercules to accomplish it."[4] At last, that "Hercules" has appeared on the scene: James Sambrook has achieved for Oxford (1981) a fresh collation of Thomson's *Seasons* in all its varied beauty.

Students of James Thomson will applaud Sambrook's feat. There has long been a need for a comprehensive re-editing of Thomson's poetry (Sambrook is currently at work on a volume of the remaining non-dramatic works). Thomson biographical and critical scholarship has advanced considerably since the last major editions in 1908, but textual scholarship has not thus far kept up the pace. Even though all the revisions had never before been collated, critics, beginning with Dr. Johnson, have always been keenly aware of the importance of Thomson's numerous revisions of *The Seasons*. As Johnson was the first to point out, the revisions both revealed the poet himself as critic, and demonstrated his relentless empirical method, illuminating the "poetical process" itself, "as the author supposed his judgement to grow more exact, and as books or conversation extended his knowledge and opened his prospects."[5] Ralph Cohen thus comments on the critical significance of "process" in studying Thomson:

> As a critical tool, 'process' describes the kind of innovation the poem develops; it describes the relation of the poem 'in creation' to the ideas of the poet's friends and their current critical assumptions; it displays the willingness or unwillingness of the poet to accept particular critical positions; it reveals the materials of the poet (his readings) and the command of this material in the finished product; it can be, as it is in Thomson, an attitude to language and unity which is itself experimental

and tentative...[6]

Thomson's "process" of successive revisions did not necessarily improve *The Seasons*, as astute critics have recognized. Dr. Johnson perceived that Thomson's poems "are, I think, improved in general; yet I know not whether they have not lost part of what Temple calls their *race*, a word which, applied to wines, in its primitive sense, means the flavour of the soil."[7] Editor J. Logie Robertson (1908) echoed Johnson's reservations; he further implied that the "race" Dr. Johnson lamented was in an important sense associated with native Scottish "flavour," as Thomson continued to remove Scotticisms and northern expressions from his *Seasons*. This "loss of race" was one unfortunate side-effect of Thomson's complex revision process, but one which can now more readily be traced, and which critics should certainly take into account.

Cohen himself has contributed much to the critical understanding of *The Seasons* as creative "process," in his *Art of Discrimination* and *The Unfolding of 'The Seasons.'* Now, with Sambrook's edition, every Thomson scholar will have at hand this finely-crafted tool which will make such "process-analysis" possible--indeed, pleasurable. For here, the reader comes as close as can be to meeting the many minds of Thomson himself, as "Th' informing Author in his Works appears" ("Spring," line 860).

Sambrook's *Seasons* edition replaces J. Logie Robertson's (1908; rpt. 1971) Oxford Standard Authors edition of Thomson's *Poetical Works* as the definitive text of the poem. Robertson took the last edition published in the poet's lifetime (London: Andrew Millar, 1746) as his copy-text. He had earlier (1891) edited *The Seasons and The Castle of Indolence* for Oxford; this edition, while not a collation of the various texts, is particularly valuable for its annotation, rich (if occasionally eccentric) in Scottish sources and analogues for Thomson. Otto Zippel (also 1908, *Palaestra* LXVI) attempted a full collation, but worked from the first editions of each *Season*, and rather than constructing cumbersome footnotes to these, printed parallel texts of several of the later versions. Zippel also usefully discovered some of Thomson's Scottish literary sources (notably David Mallet, John Armstrong and The Rev. Robert Riccaltoun).

Yet neither Robertson nor Zippel collated every edition or state of *The Seasons*, or recorded every substantive variant. Further, both editors modernized Thomson's spelling, punctuation and capitalization. This is a more serious fault than has previously been thought, implies Sambrook, for Thomson was involved not only in making substantial verbal emendations,

but also (like Pope, to an unusually great extent) in personally supervising the accidentals of his poems. Those editors who cavalierly modernized such textual details betrayed authorial intention in a fundamental way.

Sambrook makes no such mistake in judgment. He explains why Greg's copy-text theory is inadequate for a poem of *The Seasons*' textual nature: Thomson's accidentals simply cannot be disregarded, for they mattered so much to the poet himself. Sambrook's noble aim is therefore to record Thomson's (evolving) intentions in every particular. He takes for his copy-text the 1746 *Seasons* (as have most editors since Bolton Corney in 1841), and keeps Thomson's own spelling, punctuation, italics, and system of capitalization. He reproduces not only Thomson's words, but also the very subtle nuances of tone, pace and emphasis which the poet himself so painstakingly planned. Read aloud, if you will, this passage from Robertson's edition of "Winter" (*ll.* 195-201):

> Huge uproar lords it wide. The clouds, commixed
> With stars swift-gliding, sweep along the sky.
> All Nature reels: till Nature's King, who oft
> Amid tempestuous darkness dwells alone,
> And on the wings of the careering wind
> Walks dreadfully serene, commands a calm;
> Then straight air, sea, and earth are hushed at once.

Now compare it with the same passage from Sambrook's 1746 version:

> Huge Uproar lords it wide. The Clouds commix'd
> With Stars swift-gliding sweep along the Sky.
> All Nature reels. Till Nature's KING, who oft
> Amid tempestuous Darkness dwells alone,
> And on the Wings of the careering Wind
> Walks dreadfully serene, commands a Calm;
> Then straight Air Sea and Earth are hush'd at once.

Note how Thomson has emphasized his effective alliteration ("Stars...Sky," "Wings...Wind") with initial capitals. Note how he has made clear his vision of universal hierarchy ("Nature" is important, "Nature's KING" obviously moreso, contradicting critics of the poet's so-called "Pantheism"). Undeniably, Thomson's own stage-directions work to enhance the natural "drama" of the winter scene.

Sambrook's entire *Seasons* volume is a marvel of clarity and compactness. It is, no less, a comprehensive handbook to almost every aspect of the poem and its creator. The lucidly-

written "Introduction" provides an overall view of the eclectic poem, conveniently treated by genre: "Devotional," "Scientific," "Georgic," "Geographical, historical and narrative," "Descriptive" and "Subjective." Sambrook has distilled here the best of current Thomson scholarship, and brought it together with the most enlightened early information. Most notably, he has drawn extensively upon the invaluable work of Alan Dugald McKillop, and has made McKillop's insights available to the general reader. This is a fine general summary of the poet's thought. Next, Sambrook traces in unprecedented detail the poem's "Composition and Publication" history, and provides bibliographical descriptions of each edition. Sambrook's grasp of the material, his textual scholarship is prodigious.

The 1746 text itself follows (neatly and concisely annotated, with separate entries for substantive and accidental variants). Sambrook collates not only all printed texts and states of the poem, but also the important interleaved 1738 edition with notes by Thomson and George Lyttelton (MSLytt) and, where possible, Thomson manuscripts themselves. That the editor has managed to devise an apparatus which can incorporate such a complicated collation--moreover clearly--seems nothing short of miraculous.

The text is followed by several Appendices, all well worth having. Among them are the complete texts of the first editions of "Winter" (1726 folio) and "Summer" (1727), the two most extensively altered *Seasons*. Sambrook includes these so that the reader might compare them with the final versions, and better appreciate the "significant differences of arrangement and of scale" between them.[8] Appendix B consists of various prefatory material to early editions (here is the poet's own apology for poetry, his important "Preface" to the second edition of "Winter"). The section on "Revisions by Lyttelton and Murdoch" (Appendix C) is especially valuable, and demonstrates the extent of the unconscionable (however well-intentioned) changes made to Thomson's poem after his death by his friends George Lyttelton and Patrick Murdoch (1750-62). Lyttelton, particularly, emended the work with a liberal (and heavy) hand ("conformably to the intention and will of the Author," he confidently claimed). Murdoch restored much of Thomson's own work, but even he kept a number of Lyttelton's alterations for the Memorial edition of 1762. Ever since, Thomson editors, whether merely misguided or unscrupulous, have "tinkered" with Thomson's poetry almost as much as he himself had. Editor Sambrook has at long last proved Thomson's "best friend," honoring the author's own, last wishes in restoring *The Seasons* in every detail to the

1746 authoritative text.

Sambrook's 72-page "Commentary" expands and improves on his own annotation to his little paperback edition of *The Seasons and The Castle of Indolence* (Oxford, 1972). Here again, he draws upon the finest modern scholarship, yet does not hesitate also to invoke the earliest authorities where appropriate. In glossing Thomson's language, for instance, he frequently cites Johnson's *Dictionary* (admittedly, this is not always quite fair, as Johnson himself met with some of these usages for the first time in Thomson). Still, Johnson's acute observations are welcome. Sambrook is careful to take into account changes of meaning since Thomson's day; the reader gains an eighteenth-century "feel" for the language of *The Seasons*. Sambrook also occasionally ventures to apply his own New Critical interpretation to a word or phrase (usually convincingly). He is, if anything, a bit over-cautious in his definitions, solemnly explaining well-known terms (such as the signs of the zodiac) at great length, and giving meanings which, to anyone reading Thomson anyway, would seem obvious (for example, most readers familiar with eighteenth-century poetry would know that the periphrastic "finny swarms" ["Spring," line 1174] means "fish"). There are a number of such self-evident notes. But on the whole, Sambrook has succeeded in selecting for his reader the most helpful and interesting information, from a vast quantity of material on Thomson and his age.

Only one dimension is lacking here: Sambrook tends to overlook the *Scottish* aspects of Thomson's work--literary and linguistic, cultural and environmental. He is certainly not alone in this; no major Thomson scholar has yet fully studied this vital element of Thomson's life and art. Sambrook might have done well to follow up on some of J. Logie Robertson's leads in this direction from the 1891 *Seasons* edition, as well as Zippel's source-notes. Sambrook does make one or two new Scottish points: an example is his note to "Spring," lines 840-45, where Thomson describes sheep gamboling beside the "massy Mound / That runs around the Hill; the Rampart once / Of iron War, in ancient barbarous Times, / When disunited BRITAIN ever bled, / Lost in eternal Broil: ere yet she grew / To this deep-laid indissoluble State..." Sambrook observes that this scene, with its reference to the Union of 1707, portrays the Early Iron Age fort on Southdean Law above the Border village where the poet grew up.[9] Yet several more similar opportunities for specifically-Scottish comment are lost.

Likewise, in treating Thomson's language, Sambrook neglects to notice the poet's Scotticisms or northern usages (which Robertson, himself a Scottish nationalistic poet who wrote

under the pseudonym "Hugh Haliburton," particularly highlighted). Just one example might be the adjective "chapt" ("Autumn," line 404, "the Stubble chapt"), a Scots variation of English "chopped" (*Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*), which Sambrook passes without comment. Such usages add that "race" which Dr. Johnson admired, and ought to be noted.

This missing "Scottish" focus is not a major flaw, however, given the awesome scale of the editor's job as a whole. Sambrook's notes are, for the most part, thorough, apt and not without a spark of wit. They introduce the reader to the people and places in Thomson's life, make handy cross-references to his other works and to his correspondence, document important influences (Sambrook is especially strong on classical and scientific sources), and guide the reader gently through the sometimes-idiosyncratic yet original language of *The Seasons*.

In all, James Sambrook has made the poet James Thomson himself and his masterpiece *The Seasons* more accessible than ever before to the twentieth-century reader. It is to be hoped that this beautifully-produced volume will rekindle interest in that worthy and wonderful poem. What Sambrook offers us here is what Thomson himself would have delighted to see--*The Seasons* not merely in final product but also "in process," continually transforming and changing like the poet's subject of Nature herself:

> Mysterious Round! what Skill, what Force divine,
> Deep-felt, in These appear! a simple Train,
> Yet so delightful mix'd, with such kind Art,
> Such Beauty and Beneficence combin'd;
> Shade, unperceiv'd, so softening into Shade;
> And all so forming an harmonious Whole;
> That, as they still succeed, they ravish still.
> ("Hymn," lines 21-27)

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NOTES

[1]James Sambrook, ed., *The Seasons* (Oxford, 1981), p. xciv.

[2]Peter Cunningham, ed., *Poetical Works of James Thomson* (London, 1862), I, p. liii *n*, quoted by Ralph Cohen, *The Art of Discrimination* (London, 1964), p. 60.

[3]Edmund Gosse, *Eighteenth Century Literature* (London, 1891), p. 222.

[4]J. Logie Robertson, ed., *The Seasons and The Castle of Indolence* (Oxford, 1891), p. 25.

[5]Samuel Johnson, "James Thomson," *Lives of the Poets*, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (New York, 1967), III, 300.

[6]Cohen, *Art*, p. 22.

[7]Johnson, "Thomson," *Lives*, III, 300-01.

[8]Sambrook, ed., *Seasons* (1981), p. lxxxiii.

[9]*Ibid.*, p. 335.

Philip J. Ford with W.S. Watt. *George Buchanan: Prince of Poets*. Aberdeen. Aberdeen University Press. 1982. ix + 213 pp.

This little book was appropriately published in the quatercentenary year of Buchanan's death. It provides a brief (128 pp.), but scholarly overview of Buchanan's career as a poet. This survey is supplemented with an edition (text, translation, and commentary) of the *Miscellaneorum Liber* by Ford and W.S. Watt.

The focus is technical and stylistic, considering metrics, figurative language, imagery, and literary imitation. Following a brief introduction, Ford describes the "theoretical background" of Neo-Latin poetry. The section on poetics itself is limited mainly to questions of literary imitation and never really gets into the great issues of sixteenth-century critical theory. Chapter 2 puts Buchanan's poetic practice into the context of the theory reviewed in the previous chapter. The next two chapters treat Buchanan's poetic career more or less chronologically, with 1547 the point of division. These are followed by a very brief chapter on the productions of Buchanan's "final years" and an even briefer conclusion.

Ford importantly shows that "the rules of Neo-Latin versification are really distinct from those of classical Latin" (p. 22). He then properly evaluates Buchanan according to these later canons. Ford has consequently provided us with a useful preface to Renaissance Latin versification and to

Buchanan as a Renaissance Latin versifier. Some of the conclusions, however, probably because of the brevity of the survey and the narrowness of the approach, are oversimplified and possibly misleading. The worst example is at the end of the discussion of Buchanan's plays, where Ford asserts that they "helped to establish the diction and style appropriate to tragedy" (p. 75). Although this concluding paragraph does note in passing that there are faults in Buchanan's plays, no mention is made of subsequent Renaissance criticism of their diction and style. The last few pages of Heinsius' *De Tragoediae Constitutione*, for example, contain stinging and pointedly specific criticism of Buchanan's two plays in these very areas.

The translation of the *Miscellaneorum Liber* is felicitous, and the notes useful. The format, with facing Latin and English, is excellent. Occasionally Ford and Watt will translate through an image to the tenor of its meaning, but in those cases they explain in the Commentary what the Latin actually says.

I have only one quibble with Ford. That is his indication at the beginning that Latin is now a dead language (p. 1). It certainly is not, although it is very much less used now than in sixteenth-century Europe. All in all this is a very nice introduction to Neo-Latin poetry and to one of the greatest Neo-Latin poets.

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