

In the next essay, the Cambridge philosopher John McTaggart's views about selfhood, perception, time, love, and so on, are shown to exhibit some parallels with the ideas and techniques of Virginia Woolf, particularly in *To The Lighthouse*. The final essay in the collection investigates the various myths and rituals (Orpheus, Eleusis, the Tarot, etc.) which inform John Fowles's *The Magus*.

The five newly published essays begin with a chapter called "*Wuthering Heights: The Love of a Sylph and a Gnome*" which examines the Gnostic and alchemical background of the novel, to show that its dramatic action is "metaphysical," that it "traces an alchemical transformation of the elements, a creature of earth and one of air transforming themselves so as to realize their union . . ." (p. 45). The next essay investigates how historical myth operates in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, specifically, how Becky Sharpe is "A Napoleon of Heroines." In the study of Trollope's *The Way We Live Now*, the attempt to cast Melmotte as a late development of the Wandering Jew may seem a trifle forced, but the portrait of the great manipulator of the sham signs of his age who approaches tragic proportions is on the whole brilliantly done, and sheds light on the themes and symbols of the entire novel.

The central, longest, and most important essay is "Daniel Charisi," a study which seeks to correct the widely held view that the Gwendolen part of *Daniel Deronda* is the best and most successful half of the work. Professor Fleishman uses some of Arnold's ideas from *Culture and Anarchy* to show that Gwendolen is a Philistine, and that George Eliot believes not in individualism but in "the nation as the ideal object of loyalty" (p. 95), and that the Jewish people are valuable as a unique contribution to the organic unity of the total human community, and that they represent the "potential carriers of that culture" (p. 105) which is the antithesis of the spiritually impoverished culture of the English. It is impossible to do credit to this significant essay in this small space. The fifth essay examines the buried giant image in Hardy's *Return of the Native*, and finds that the main figure embodied in Egdon Heath is the "bound Titan," which represents, "the burden of a mankind forced to submit to an order of things that can only be explained . . . as deriving from an arbitrary, if not a malevolent authority." But there is also the image of the "long-

suffering, dormant but expectant" giant who "looks forward to an ultimate liberation" (p. 122).

The volume is an interesting, coruscatory collection by one of the foremost critics of the novel.

R. F. Kennedy

KURT J. FICKERT

Kafka's Doubles

Berne: Lang, 1979. Pp. 105. SFr. 19.

The doubles of Fickert's title are of various kinds. They include most of Kafka's heroes, for he takes them to represent the author or a basic aspect of his personality. Then, since he asserts that almost all the other characters in Kafka's novels and stories stand for facets of the protagonists, he speaks of them too as doubles of the heroes and of the author. He also comments on those figures that appear in pairs and argues that they either duplicate one part of the hero's personality or embody two contrasted or linked aspects of one person. He considers too, as another dimension of the technique of doubling, those figures or symbols that contain contradictions or paradoxes, e.g. the castle, a symbol of "something yearned for" and "something forbidding" (p. 83). All these doubles or "doublings" he relates to Kafka's sensitivity to dichotomies within himself, in particular to his belief that writing was irreconcilable with normal living. Some of them he ascribes to a homosexual tendency which Kafka himself may not have recognized. Though he does not deny the possible validity of other interpretations, Fickert claims that Kafka's fiction is concerned above all with Kafka's personality and the problems of the writer, and that any religious and social meanings in his works are of secondary importance.

Fickert treats Kafka's three novels, all his best-known stories, and others besides within some 60 pages of text (there is a generous allocation of blank pages between chapters and between text and notes). Patently he does not intend in this short book to indulge in subtle or detailed argument, but to outline his general interpretation. It owes much to other commentators

without revealing an ability to distinguish between the good and the bad in Kafka-criticism. Fickert's logic is suspect, not least when he seeks impressive formulations. Throughout he confuses fiction and reality. Kafka's fiction, we read, is his autobiography (p. 17); by 1907 he had begun to create "a fictitious and, therefore, real world" (p. 28); and Josef K. "is really Kafka" (p. 50). His use of other terms is equally inexact. Kafka, he says, was concerned with "the transliteration of the insubstantial world into the tangibility of a concept, a structure of words" (p. 28)—and Fickert appears unsure whether the insubstantial world is the mind or external reality or both.

Fickert states that the medium of *Das Urteil* is the metaphor, and continues: "Already in *The Metamorphosis*, however . . . the symbol has supplanted the simile as the main factor in the story, for, as Kafka's commitment to writing grew, the epic quality of his work increased" (p. 21). How would Fickert define metaphor, simile, and symbol, and how would Homer fit into his scale of epic quality? We are not likely to consider very seriously the merits of Fickert's division of Kafka's characters into representatives of the ego, super-ego, and id, to accept that the pinup in Gregor Samsa's room is the muse (p. 48), or to ponder on why Fickert talks of "the celibacy of the castle" (p. 70), when we have been informed that Therese's mother (in *Amerika*) commits suicide and that Karl Rossmann is last seen in New York (pp. 41, 44). There never has been an excuse for misrepresenting the few clear facts of Kafka's plots. And, despite all the precedents in Kafka-exegesis, there is in 1979 little excuse for pretending that his meaning is clear when he was deliberately noncommittal—what, if anything, the "junger Galeriebesucher" of *Auf der Galerie*, who "weint, ohne es zu wissen," "acknowledges to himself" (p. 62) is open to speculation but does not call for unequivocal statement. Fickert claims that Kafka was "the complete 'Dichter'" (p. 21)—whatever that means; but he fails in his aim of convincing the reader that Kafka's fiction is relevant to the human condition in general. To do that he would need at least to tell us what Kafka's work shows us of the human condition other than its susceptibility to Freudian analysis, and in what sense his artist figures may be equated with man in general.

J. L. Hibberd

HARRY SIEBER

Language and Society in La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes.

Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978. Pp. xv, 108. \$8.95.

In this excellent little study Harry Sieber establishes himself firmly on the side of those critics who see *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes* as a finished work of art in which every word is relevant. Its author was no unconscious genius for, according to Sieber, the book's very silences are carefully constructed and even the shorter fourth and sixth *tratados* are highly polished and artistically meaningful.

Sieber's investigation is concerned with Lazarillo's attempt to establish his identity not only as a town crier, but also as a writer (*homo literatus*). This movement from dishonorable town crier to honorable author is achieved through Lazarillo's gradual awakening, in the course of his autobiography, to the exact meaning of words which in turn generates an awareness of the powers of language. In writing his own tale, Lazarillo is shown to be both a verbal self-creation and a self-conversion: he becomes a metaphor. Indeed, the symbolic, metaphoric, and figurative meanings of words are carefully analyzed by Sieber throughout his study.

In this fashion the concept of fatherhood, for example, is discussed, and Lazarillo is shown to have had experience of four different fathers (his natural father, the moor called Zaide, the blind man, and God) all of whom contribute something to Lazarillo's life and education. The theme of blindness is shown to recur throughout the novel. It is expressed initially through Lazarillo's apprenticeship to the beggar (first *tratado*) who is literally blind. Lazarillo, on the other hand, is blind to the meaning of words and the beggar, whose other senses have developed with his loss of sight, must teach the boy to see the various levels at which language can function. When Lazarillo is cured of his verbal blindness he is able, in his own fashion, to blind the blind man to the correct meaning of the post, and thus to deceive him.

Any study which attempts to establish the artistic unity of *La vida de Lazarillo de Tormes* must be judged ultimately by