

contemporary Indian scene. Significantly, again the traditional figure is put to flight. One realizes that the exodus of grandmothers, mothers, and aunts is an established motif—they are routed by the militant unorthodoxy of the young. Narayan's own inept handling of the two "modern" young Indians of the novel, makes this one of the slightest of his works, though Professor Walsh's comments remain consistently kind.

The tone of the whole study is very much one of appreciation. When a rare critical comment is made, Professor Walsh sounds almost apologetic: "The clue to the failure, or if that is too strong, to the lack of success in this novel . . ." (p. 70). Even in those novels when Narayan seems to make too simple a retreat into purely Indian philosophical panaceas to solve the dilemmas of his characters (*The English Teacher* or *The Sweet Vendor*), the problems are barely indicated. Walsh is occasionally betrayed into some inconsistencies as when he refers to the "wambling Tagore-like mysticism" (p. 58) or "the eccentric activity" of spiritualism in his discussion of *The English Teacher*, yet finds it all "corrected by the gusto and the Dickensian flavour" (p. 60) of isolated passages of writing.

For so appreciative a critic of Narayan's work, Professor Walsh seems curiously neglectful of one aspect of the strength of these novels—their uninsistent but pervasive symbolism. To provide a rather mechanical listing: rivers are associated with spiritual rebirth; shrines (even ruined ones) with redemptive grace; trees, gardens, and flowers are associated with harmony and peace; peasants and villages stand for traditional values; old women are the guardians of family sanctities. To ignore the recurrence of these motifs is to miss one element in their evocative power, for the strength of these symbols derive from their deeply Indian and yet universal quality. Another omission is the neglect throughout to give the page references to the numerous quotations from Narayan's works. The references to the works of Katherine Mansfield and Patrick White do not seem particularly apposite.

The book could be a useful acquisition to those who might wish to have all Walsh's commentaries on Narayan under the one title. To those already familiar with these, it is doubtful whether this book adds very much more to his earlier contribution.

Barbara Hardy

PARTICULARITIES: READINGS IN GEORGE ELIOT

London: Peter Owen, 1982. Pp. 204. £10.50

Reviewed by: Daniel P. Deneau

After writing several outstanding articles on George Eliot, in 1959 Professor Barbara Hardy published *The Novels of George Eliot*, the first major study, and a belated one, of the formal aspects or artistry of George Eliot's fiction. Since 1959 Hardy has published several books on nineteenth-century novelists and, of course, has continued to write and lecture on George Eliot. The present book, appropriately entitled *Particularities* and called "a miscellany" by its author (p. 9), is a collection of ten essays (five on *Middlemarch* exclusively) previously published or delivered as lectures (or delivered and then published) by Hardy between 1964 and 1980. Possibly there was a personal as well as professional reason for the publication of the book: *Particularities* is dedicated to the memory of Ernest Dawson Hardy (1918-1977); and, given Barbara Hardy's career, perhaps only a hardcover book on George Eliot would have been a suitable memorial. If reviewers and readers ignore the dedication and notice that only three chapters have not appeared in print before, they may argue that Hardy should have published or republished the material only in the simplest paperback form. But indeed there is no deception: the book contains "Acknowledgments" and an "Introduction," and each essay is carefully dated.

In her "Introduction" Hardy endeavors to explain her changing approach to George Eliot. Beginning as a formalist, she has not adopted the stance of a militant feminist willing to distort George Eliot's life and fiction, nor has she started to anchor her criticism with footnotes

referring to Derrida, Foucault, Barthes, and other fashionable theorists. She explains that she has become concerned with "the affective pressure" of George Eliot's "form, language, and imagination"; she emphasizes her "growing recognition" of George Eliot's "powers of feeling and of thinking" (p. 10). Perhaps the ten essays do show a widening of interests, but readers should be thankful that through the years Hardy's criticism has remained consistently clear, sensitive, and sensible—and, therefore, a pleasure to read.

Some distinctions are inevitable. I cannot express much enthusiasm for Hardy's analyses of particular chapters of *Middlemarch*: the third essay in *Particularities* deals with Ch. 30 of the novel ("It is with local form as well as with small detail that I am here concerned," p. 39) and should remind readers of overly specific New Criticism in which the critic tries to do the work which belongs to the fairly perceptive reader. Ch. 9 of *Particularities* is a commentary on Ch. 85 of *Middlemarch*—a commentary which originally appeared in *NCF* along with analyses of the same chapter by J. Hillis Miller and Richard Poirier. Divorced from its original context, Hardy's reprinted essay loses some of its point. Although "Rituals and Feeling," "Middlemarch and the Passions" ("the two essays most evidently concerned with affectivity," p. 10), "The Reticent Narrator," and "Objects and Environments" probably all made very good lectures, I believe that four other chapters qualify more readily for a place among Hardy's best printed work. In Ch. 1 she deals very skillfully with a major problem in *Middlemarch*, "the unhappy consequences" of George Eliot's "restricted treatment of sex" (p. 27) in the Ladislaw-Dorothea rather than Casaubon-Dorothea relationship; and in Ch. 3 she deals equally well with another central problem, the much-discussed ending of *The Mill on the Floss*. "Middlemarch: Public and Private Worlds" is a clear and persuasive treatment of George Eliot's sense of history, "the Carlylean continuity in which yesterday continues history into today" (p. 108); and the final essay, originally delivered at the George Eliot (Centennial) Conference at Rutgers, 1980, is a fine treatment of "George Eliot's imagining of imagination" (p. 192). This final essay proves that after approximately twenty-five years Professor Hardy is still a careful and wise reader of George Eliot and is still capable of making familiar texts seem in need of immediate rereading.

Robert Brody and Charles Rossman, eds.

CARLOS FUENTES: A CRITICAL VIEW

Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1982. Pp. 221. \$19.95

Reviewed by: John M. Kirk

For the last fifteen years, since the publication in 1958 of his novel *La región más transparente* (translated in English as *Where the Air is Clear*), Carlos Fuentes has dominated the Mexican literary scene, and has been one of the major half-dozen writers of Latin America who have guided the *nueva novela* to its present position as one of the world's most dynamic literary currents. Fuentes has certainly published more than enough material to warrant a series of critical essays such as this selection by renowned Fuentes specialists: ten novels (among which *La muerte de Artemio Cruz*—*The Death of Artemio Cruz*, *Cambio de Piel*—*A Change of Skin*, and *Terra Nostra* stand out), three collections of short stories, two theatre pieces, four anthologies of essays, and an extremely intuitive study of the contemporary Spanish-American novel.

This critical anthology is a useful collection of articles by leading Latin Americanists, who seek to examine various facets of Fuentes's work. The strong and weak points of the editors' selection revolve around the nature of topics on which the contributors focus. On a positive note there are superb insightful analyses by Richard M. Reeve ("The making of *La región más transparente*: 1949-1974") and Lanin A. Gyurko ("*La muerte de Artemio Cruz* and *Citizen Kane*: A Comparative Analysis"), while at the other end of the scale are rather bizarre and pedantic pieces by Margaret Sayers Pedan ("Forking Paths, Infinite Novels, Ultimate Narrators") and George Gordon Wing ("Some Remarks on the Literary Criticism of Carlos Fuentes"). On the whole, though, the level of analysis of the contributors is quite high—largely because they examine aspects of Fuentes's work which are not normally studied (such as Manuel Durán's evaluation of Fuentes as an art critic, or Merlin Forster's perceptive study of Fuentes's two dramas, or Gloria Durán's article dealing with the use of dolls and puppets in his work).