

Raymond S. Nelson

ERNEST HEMINGWAY: LIFE, WORK, AND CRITICISM

(Authoritative Studies in World Literature) Fredericton,
N. B.: York Press, 1984. Pp. 43. \$6.95

Reviewed by Donald R. Wineke

This is a book that does very well what it sets out to do: provide the younger scholar, particularly the college undergraduate, with a useful introduction to the life, work, and criticism of a writer whom its author believes will eventually be recognized as one of the "top five" writers of the twentieth century. While a reader might argue with Professor Nelson's prediction—considering the heavy competition that such figures as Conrad, Faulkner, James, Joyce, Lawrence, Mann, and Proust present—there is no question that, given the constrictions of the Authoritative Studies in World Literature format, he has given us a readable, solid overview of Hemingway's career. As the author of a previous book on Hemingway's debt to impressionist painting, Professor Nelson is particularly at home with Hemingway's style, which he discusses in exceptionally sharp detail.

The format is not perfectly congenial to Professor Nelson's purposes, however. The book contains five sections: a biographical sketch, a chronological list of Hemingway's works, a summary of the major works, an overview of Hemingway's themes and stylistic innovations, and an annotated bibliography. One wishes that the biographical sketch and the overview had been put in sequence. The first few paragraphs of the overview are devoted to the Hemingway personality and the way it is manifest in the themes he chose; this segment would thus have made a natural bridge between the biography and the works, giving Professor Nelson's treatment a unity that has been disrupted by the intervening sections.

In both the summary and overview, Hemingway's short fiction gets short shrift, which is regrettable because, in this reader's opinion, the best of his short fiction surpasses everything in the Hemingway canon except *The Sun Also Rises* and, perhaps, *The Old Man and the Sea*. One suspects that the problem here was logistical; the format evidently did not permit summary and evaluation of a large number of separately published stories. The summary is confined to major volumes, only a few of which (the two cited above, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*) Professor Nelson fully admires. Given the neglect of the short fiction and the negative judgments Professor Nelson makes on such works as *Death in the Afternoon* and *Across the River and into the Trees*, his estimation of Hemingway's stature at the beginning of the overview comes as a bit of a surprise.

Students will find the annotated bibliography very useful, though it is restricted to book-length works. Missing among the biographical entries is Hotchner's biography, which caused a stir in the literary community when it was published in 1966. Its exclusion no doubt reflects its ill repute among Hemingway scholars. Still, a number of personal reminiscences by people who knew Hemingway are listed, so the omission of Hotchner's book is curious.

Like all books of this type, *Ernest Hemingway* is neither deep nor exhaustive; it does not pretend to be. At the same time, Professor Nelson does not grind any axes; his annotations to the critical works are consistently evenhanded; and he discusses the major issues in Hemingway criticism with a high degree of neutrality. Throughout the book he maintains the posture of a guide rather than a critic, and he carries it off in excellent fashion.

Herman Lenz

EIN FREMDLING

Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1983. Pp. 484

Reviewed by S. Dickson

Hermann Lenz's *Ein Fremdling* ("A Misfit"; 1983) is the latest addition to a number of autobiographical works which deal with his life before, during, and after the Third Reich, such as *Verlassene Zimmer* (1966, "Deserted Rooms"), *Andere Tage* (1968, "Other Days"), *Neue Zeit* (1975, "New Time"), and *Tagebuch vom Überleben und Leben* (1978, "Diary of Survival and Life").

Ein Fremdling deals with the years 1949-1962 in postwar Germany. Eugen Rapp, the protagonist, lost his modest savings during the currency reform and therefore his dream of having a career as an independent professional writer becomes impossible. However, he manages to get a Civil Service job which pays very little money, but leaves him enough time to continue his writing. While the economic miracle is taking place in Germany, and his friends and relatives are having a comfortable life, Eugen Rapp remains on the sidelines of society, poor and without success. The novels he writes are published, but they do not sell. Highlights of this difficult time are a meeting with Thomas Mann, a modest scholarship to study in Paris, and an invitation to read at a meeting of the famous group of German writers known as Gruppe 47. When members of the group judge his writing as being not modern enough, he refuses to give up writing, or to change his style or to deal with topical issues. Standing outside the literary mainstream, and not partaking of a booming economy, he is subjected to the contempt of his friends and relatives. Only his wife encourages him and supports him financially when he loses his job. Eventually he gets another job, is appointed secretary to the Writers' Association of Stuttgart, and continues to divide his time between his work and his writing. The book ends on a note of contentment, for although Eugen Rapp remains an outsider, he enjoys the life he chose, in the surroundings he likes.

Themes and motifs found in Hermann Lenz's previous works (e.g. the Habsburg monarchy, Vienna at the turn of the century, the Roman empire, the Romantic movement) occur again in *Ein Fremdling*. Also the style of this latest work—with its microscopic exactness and imaginative surrealism—does not differ from his other novels. And also here, Lenz does not attempt to offer any easy answers to the problems of the past and the present, but merely reflects—while presenting the reader with an introspective and unhurried analysis of his own self—upon the issues of his time.

Although Hermann Lenz has received some early recognition (Thomas Mann commended his "original, boldly visionary and unorthodox talent" [Thomas Mann, *Briefe 1948-1955 und Nachlese*, letter of April 19, 1953]), only in the last decade did he receive public and official praise: he was awarded the Georg-Büchner-Prize in 1978, the Wilhelm-Raabe-Prize and the Franz-Nabl-Prize in 1981, and the Gottfried-Keller-Prize in 1984. (See also S. Dickson, "The Novels of Hermann Lenz," *IFR*, 7, No. 1 [1980], 39-42.)

Edward Callan

ALAN PATON

Boston: G. K. Hall, 1982. Pp. 143. \$13.95

Reviewed by B. Eugene McCarthy

Fourteen years after his initial study of Alan Paton, Edward Callan has issued this revised edition of *Alan Paton* for the Twayne World Authors Series. This revision is indeed a new look at Paton and his writings, not a simple updating of the latest materials. What Callan has chiefly to offer in this edition is a fresh, more mature and balanced view of his subject both in style and in command of his author's accomplishments. Thus, while the substance of the earlier book is intact in this one, all has been rewritten and reappraised. Of course, Paton's own work has developed considerably since 1968 and thus he offers far more depth and perspective to an author. For since that time, Paton has issued *For You Departed*, *Apartheid and the Archbishop* (the biography of Archbishop Geoffrey Clayton), a collection of his *Shorter Writings*, his autobiography *Towards the Mountain* (1980), and the first novel of his proposed trilogy, *Ah, But Your Land Is Beautiful*. Callan can now see a clear direction and pattern in Paton's writings and develops his study accordingly.

Callan's purpose in this book is to present the historical and biographical contexts and bases for Paton's writings. The study is not a biography, nor is it a critical study of the works, and one gathers only a rough sense of Paton's life from this study, which is a factor a reader must keep in mind lest more be expected than is intended or given here. In the sense of what the book does not do, it is limited and thus not an important book but a very useful one. For example, in dealing with a work of fiction, Callan is chiefly interested in finding out the originals for characters, the models for incidents or themes as Paton knew or experienced