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One stands on firmer ground when turning to the inevitable lacunae in such an undertaking. I have, however, enough scruples in my particular case since I was cited as one, among others, who helped the author in his research. It is true, but I realize only now that I have my own lacunae. I did not mention, at the right time, a text on Edgar Lee Masters, *Regenerarea epigramei* (The regeneration of the epigram) (*Cronica* 10, 1969), and another one published in an American journal: *Benjamin Franklin in Romanian Literature* (*Comparative Literature Studies*, June, 1976). Neither did I mention its later Romanian amplifications (*Limbă și literatură I and II/1981*) etc. Demetrius Dvoichenko-Markov's study *Benjamin Franklin and the First American Romanian Relations* (*C.R.E.L.*, 2, 1977) also deserves mention since he makes use of American bibliography as well. I have also noted other lacunae and minor errors. But since — one has reason to believe — Romanian researchers and bibliographers are by now getting their pens ready I neither want to compete with them nor to rob them of their pleasure, a mixture of voluptuousness, constructive spirit and a little bit of sadism.

ADRIAN MARINO · Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Les Avant-gardes littéraires au XX^{ème} siècle, Vol. I Histoire, Vol. II Théorie.

Publié par le Centre d'Etudes des Avant-gardes littéraires de l'Université de Bruxelles sous la direction de JEAN WEISGERBER. Budapest, 1984. 1216 pp.

These two large volumes are listed opposite the title pages as volumes IV and V of six volumes now published under the auspices of the Association Internationale de Littérature Comparée as a "Comparative History of Literatures in European Languages."

The wide range of critics involved in the two volumes on the Avant-garde (over 50 different names in each volume), along with the deliberate and questionable division into *Histoire* and *Théorie*, results in a compilation that is neither an encyclopedia nor a dictionary of avant-garde literature, but rather a vast mélange of articles by writers whose interests determine the structure, degree of details, and illustrative examples of matters discussed. Since neither "Histoire" nor "Théorie" covers the all-important aspect of *Examples* of movements and authors, diagrams, quotations, and other materials are given in both the historical and the theoretical volumes. As a result, the apparent separation of subject matter reflected in the titles of sections of Vol. I and Vol. II (of pp. 7-9 and 627-630) is not fully followed in the two sets of texts. Nor indeed should it be, since *Practice*, the actual reality of the works produced by the various movements, has no assigned place in the volumes.

There are, let it be said, many fine and learned articles on almost every avant-garde feature of this century. No simple review could cover all this adequately.

The interests of this reviewer happen to be directed primarily at an area of the avant-garde that is covered rather summarily in both volumes, the *nouveau roman*. In Vol. I (*Histoire*), a couple of pages (pp. 582-583), in Vol. II (*Théorie*), pp. 864-872, a brief treatment of major works by Robbe-Grillet, Butor, and Simon. Although the topic is given as *Théorie*, outside of a brief mention of narrative "you" with the suggestion that the only previous examples (!) are

found in two Dutch novels (p. 865, n. 117), nothing is said or developed concerning the basic theoretical-structural principles of the *nouveau roman* in the areas of *mise en abyme*, dechronology, metaphor/metonymy, suppressed first-person narration, and the like.

Consulting the lists of page references to authors in the Index, one has the impression that the extensive coverage given to some authors is out of proportion to their importance, while other major authors receive little attention or none at all. The most striking example is probably that of James Joyce. On p. 45 we read that Joyce is one of those "grands maîtres" who "have never belonged to the avant-garde," and the relatively skimpy coverage of Joyce, the great innovator of *transition* (that avant-garde magazine whose editor Eugène Jolas is not even mentioned in the Index), carries out this strange opinion. One cannot quarrel with the attention given to Breton (about 300 references) or even Tristan Tzara (about 150) — but only 20 to Joyce against, for example, 35 for Voronca, or Soupault, or Teige, or many more for Reverdy, Kručňnych, Chleborikov, etc.?

In general, painters receive more attention proportionally than novelists or playwrights (Arabal is not even mentioned) and avant-garde poetry is treated more fully than fiction or drama. Film is hardly mentioned at all (with the exception of some surrealist films such as *Un Chien andalou*), even though some painters who are covered at length, such as Magritte, used films exhaustively, a fact that I do not find treated. There is no mention of Feuillede (Magritte's source); Eisenstein's influence is mentioned in a phrase (p. 943); the whole field of film/novel relationships is omitted (no mention, for example, of Magny's book on the subject). But if painters are to be featured at length in a study of the avant-garde *littéraire*, can film be thus ignored? It is certainly closer to literature than is painting. And what of the "intertextual" joining of painting and fiction (especially in Robbe-Grillet's use of Magritte's *La Belle Captive*, etc.)? Although Rauschenberg is mentioned (on p. 678), nothing is said of his avant-garde collaboration with the *nouveau roman* in Robbe-Grillet's *Traces suspectes en surface*, nor is there mention of the use in avant-garde literature of other painters' works (Jasper Johns, Delvaux).

Although Michel Riffaterre is quoted twice in other connections, he is not mentioned in the one section which purports to discuss the theory and use of intertextuality, of which Riffaterre is an acknowledged specialist. Instead, the subject is given to Ihab Hassan, whose *prétextes, metatextes, textes, paratextes, intertextes, contretextes, and posttextes* of pp. 1141-1150, although fascinating as an elaborate verbal *danse devant le miroir*, do little to relate intertextuality to the avant-garde.

This reviewer was disappointed not to find in the two volumes any mention of, or adequate treatment of, the following: Edmond Wilson's *Axel's Castle* (apparently eliminated because Wilson did not see fit to "faire mention de l'avant-garde" (p. 58); Jensen's *Gradiwa* (of surrealist importance); Dällenbach's *Le Récit spéculaire* (on the *mise en abyme* in the avant-garde); Christian Metz's *Le Signifiant imaginaire* (on avant-garde metaphor and metonymy); François Jost's *Obliques*; Kyrou's studies of surrealist film; and, since so much attention is paid to modern painting, the studies of such art critics of the avant-garde as Vovel, Torczyner, Rubin, Haslam, Marcel Jean, and others.

Despite such strictures, the two volumes of *Les Avant-gardes littéraires au XX^{ème} siècle* constitute an important contribution to critical scholarship. Its authors, European, British, and American academics for the most part, have

covered the period up to the sixties with more success than the newer period of the last decade. The fundamental question is whether a hundred-or-more critics can produce a synthetic work of unified organization and satisfactory over-all form and coverage. The camel has been called "a horse designed by a committee." *Les Avant-gardes littéraires au XXème siècle* is an illustration of what happens when a history, an analytic study, and an encyclopedia are designed by a very large committee. But as the camel has its place and usage, so one can accept these volumes and recognize their value.

BRUCE MORRISSETTE · *University of Chicago*

Proceedings of the International Conference in Comparative Drama.

Edited by DAVID KONSTAN and CHARLOTTE EL-SHABRAWY. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 1984. 147 pp.

This modest but significant volume testifies to the role that drama has come to play in the modern Arab literary scene. More than a hundred years have passed since Abu Khalil al-Qabbani was forced to flee Syria because of the opposition to his dramatic productions, but finally a landmark international conference on drama has been held in Egypt.

The table of contents, however, reveals that the title, International Conference on Comparative Drama, is deceptive, for we see before us, not a collection of articles representing international drama, but a number of articles restricted entirely to the drama of the Western world on the one hand, and to that of Egypt, whether Pharaonic or modern, on the other. Apart from the isolated case of Kateb Yacine, who is mentioned, oddly enough, in the article "The Representation of the Vietnam War in *Western Theatre*," there is no reference to any other drama outside these two areas.

This is surely unfortunate, for one would expect that a conference taking place in Egypt, if only by virtue of its geographic location, would have a wider conception of the term international. Clearly not. For the group is not even able to operate on the Pan-Arab level, let alone on the level of other cultures. It would seem that Africa can claim no dramatic production, past or present; the countries of Asia, some of whose dramatic tradition extends as far back as the Pharaonic, have no existence, and, in the Western Hemisphere, the Latin American countries may as well never have been discovered.

But aside from the issue of what defines the international, another question arises from the title of the conference: what does *comparative* drama mean? In their brief introduction, the editors define their sense of comparative as "an attempt to situate drama in a larger context than the single play or author." The shortcomings of such a definition are obvious. Within the articles themselves, two or three of the writers address the issue of comparative literature, such as Mona Abu Sinna and Ferdous Abdel Hameed. But, overall, there seems to be no unifying framework nor indeed any basic concern with establishing at least the plankwork for the building of their forum.

On the individual level, the redeeming pieces of the collection are Denis Jonnes's "Innocence and Authority: Father-Daughter Relationships in the Domestic Drama From Lillo to Strindberg," and Mona Abu Sinna's "Drama from Mythos to Logos: Comparative Perspective." In his article Jonnes, basing his

analysis on a combination of sociological (Max Weber) and psychoanalytical theories of bourgeois family structure, argues that the father has come increasingly to occupy the center of bourgeois domestic drama. He advocates that the father, rendered victim in a highly competitive bourgeois environment, seeks refuge in a "compensatory patriarchy" within the family, but usually fails.

Mona Abu Sinna's article propounds a historico-cultural approach to the study of comparative drama. Using three texts from modern Egyptian drama, she traces the development of the dramatic sensibility from mythos to logos. Though the interpretive approach is clearly established, her choice of texts is unfortunate, since present-day Egyptian drama did not truly evolve but used as its model already existing drama from different parts of the world, primarily the West.

Manfred Draubt's article "From 'All the World's a Stage' to 'All the World's a Madhouse': The Paradoxical Concept of Reality in Modern European Drama" displays a thorough familiarity with modern European drama and with its scientific and philosophical background, but oddly provides the theoretical basis only at the end. Jane Tammany's "*Peer Gynt*: In the Desert" wavers between an Existential/Kierkegaardian interpretation and a view of the play as a medieval pilgrimage play. Ferdous Abdel Hameed's "The Theme of Human Delusion in Eugene O'Neill and Tewfiq al-Hakeem" raises a number of questions on the nature of Comparative Literature and "international consciousness," but does not sufficiently answer them in her treatment of the two plays. Benaouda Lebdai, in "The Representation of the Vietnam War in Western Theatre," provides the most systematic analysis from a comparative perspective in that he traces a theme with an eye to classifying its components and analysing its manifestations. Mary Mas'oud simply provides us with a historical survey of the religious and mystery play in ancient Egypt in "When and Where Did Drama Really Start? Evidence for the Drama in Pharaonic Egypt."

Fatma Moussa's "Foreign Influences in the Plays of Nu'man Ashour" is extremely disappointing, coming as it does from a prominent critic of modern Egyptian literature. Moussa starts with a look at the influence of Gorky on Nu'man 'Ashour, but then loses patience with her topic and the whole essay disintegrates into a superficial and disorganized enumeration of other possible influences.

One must view these proceedings as a beginning and accept the editors' apologies for their "modest" scale. Perhaps, after all, one should applaud the effort, if not the product, for the difficulties involved in organizing such a conference in Egypt, or, indeed, in any other part of the Arab World, is tremendous, both on the political and on the economic level.

MONA FAYAD · *University of Illinois*

American Poetry and Japanese Culture.

By SANEHIDE KODAMA. Hamden, Connecticut: The Shoestring Press, 1985.

America has been a stepping-stone between Europe and Asia ever since Columbus imagined that he had discovered India; and Asia remains a source of wisdom for Americans. In *The Great Circle: American Writers and the Orient* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983); Beongcheon Yu showed how much Indian and some Chinese thought permeates the work of Whitman,