

Book Reviews

Julian W. Connolly, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Nabokov*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2005. xxiii, 253 pp.

The articles in this recent addition to the sea of Nabokoviana are of consistently high quality and collectively represent the most significant modes of thought currently relevant to Nabokov scholarship. Looming over it all, and present in nearly every article's footnotes, is the precedent of the massive (and expensive) *Garland Companion to Vladimir Nabokov* (1995), which more or less comprehensively summarized the state of Nabokov scholarship, on just about every imaginable question, at the end of the twentieth century. The leaner approach of the *Cambridge Companion to Nabokov* obviously compels it to leave some of the *Garland Companion's* topics unaddressed (thus, for example, no separate article here on lepidoptery). Nonetheless the Cambridge volume assembles major scholars in the field whose contributions provide an excellent overview of the intellectual and aesthetic questions raised by Nabokov's protean, and still fascinating, *œuvre*.

The volume's fourteen essays are organized into the three rather loose categories of "Contexts," "Works," and "Related Worlds"—"loose" because the principles according to which a particular contribution seems more suited to "contexts" than "works," say, are not always clear, and because the essays are distributed unevenly across the categories. "Related Worlds," for example, contains only two essays, though this is an area one might expect Nabokov scholars to begin exploring more aggressively, now that biography and works have received a fair amount of attention (the two are Barbara Wyllie's on Nabokov and cinema, and Leona Toker's on Nabokov's worldview, whose status as a "related" world seems questionable).

Most of the contributions in the volume seek to provide general surveys of their topics, and most restate views their authors have expressed elsewhere in monographs, articles, and *The Garland Companion*. If this suggests that active Nabokov scholars pressed for time might skip over parts of the *Cambridge Companion* without too many pangings of guilt, the

handful of essays that say something new clamor for attention nonetheless (general readers will find the whole volume illuminating). The limitations of a brief review make it impossible to comment on all fourteen essays, but among those that treat their subjects with particular comprehensiveness and insight are John Burt Foster, Jr's "Nabokov and modernism" and Barry P. Scherr's "Nabokov as a poet." Foster argues for a view of Nabokov as a distinctly modernist writer, but one in the vein of European modernism represented by Joyce, Kafka, and Proust, rather than the "English-language 'high-modernism'" (86) of Eliot and Pound. Nabokov thus embraced richly textured prose harboring idiosyncratic metaphysical conceits while rejecting "mythic" writing and verbal experimentation in poetry. Scherr similarly demonstrates the striking metrical and lexical conservatism of Nabokov's poetry, while pointing out that Nabokov began his career as a writer with poetry and continued writing poetry in Russian long after he had abandoned that language in prose (in some of these respects paralleling Ivan Bunin, another émigré writer with whom he had complex relations of admiration and rivalry).

Along these fundamental, but essential, lines Priscilla Meyer surveys the themes of Nabokov's short fiction, particularly those involving lost lands and loves ("Nabokov's short fiction"), while Julian W. Connolly traces the concern with creative consciousness (including the very Nabokovian dilemma of solipsism) and resistance to death and loss in Nabokov's Russian novels ("The major Russian novels"). Susan Elizabeth Sweeney examines the combination of fondness and ironic detachment in Nabokov's depictions of America (a place he claimed he was required to "invent" in order to write *Lolita*), arguing that Nabokov substitutes the adopted homeland of his middle years for the Russia he was forced to flee in his youth ("By some sleight of *land*?: How Nabokov rewrote America"). Leona Toker's "Nabokov's Worldview" revisits her debate with the philosopher Richard Rorty over the interrelation between ethics and aesthetics in the works, arguing for the presence of a commendably liberal resistance to tyranny and banality in a Nabokovian aestheticism that some have dismissed too glibly as *hauteur*. Barbara Wyllie's survey of "Nabokov and cinema" provides a delightful tour of cinematic moments in Nabokov's works, Nabokov's own attitudes toward the medium, and his complex involvement in the filming of the Kubrick *Lolita*.

Its modest title notwithstanding, Alexander Dolinin's "Nabokov as a Russian Writer" stands somewhat apart from the volume's tendency toward condensation of existing scholarship—and has already provoked heated debate because of its reference to the "tricky mythmaking and playacting Nabokov indulged in during his later years" (53). The phrase is hyperbol-

ic and unfortunate, but Dolinin's detractors have taken it out of context. Dolinin's essay—arguably the most original in this volume—is in fact an impassioned plea on behalf of the Russian novels in their context of native verbal and literary associations, before Nabokov's own, sometimes radical, alterations of their meanings for English translation. While many (bilingual) readers will want to dispute the suggestion that Nabokov's Englishing of his early works involved elements of aggression, Dolinin's meticulous study will at the very least provide non-Russian readers insight into riches in the early works of which they would otherwise be entirely unaware. Neil Cornwell's related study of Nabokov's transition from writing in Russian to writing in English charts the process of the famously difficult switch (translations of some of the Russian novels preceding the full-fledged English effort of *The Real Life of Sebastian Knight* in 1939) while also shedding light on the extraordinarily productive period of the late 1930s in which Nabokov was in fact active in not two but three languages, writing in and translating into French as well ("From Sirin to Nabokov: the transition to English").

While Nabokov scholars cannot afford to overlook *The Cambridge Companion*, the volume seems designed in particular to spur intelligent general readers on to further research. With its chorus of diverse voices from the field, chronology of major events and publication dates in Nabokov's life, and very useful bibliography at the end, it provides excellent access to current thought about Nabokov.

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Simon Franklin and Emma Widdis, eds. *National Identity in Russian Culture: An Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xiii, 218 pp.

If Aleksandr Sokurov's film *Russian Ark* (2002)—a lavish and grandiose attempt to articulate Russia's timeless spiritual mission vis-à-vis the West—is any indication, the question of Russian identity is one that will remain both relevant and hotly contested well into the 21st century. In this sense, Franklin and Widdis's monograph, *National Identity in Russian Culture: An Introduction* could hardly be timelier. Yet timing is only the least of the book's many virtues. The ambitious scope of the monograph, which explores a broad spectrum of myths about Russia and Russianness from

the medieval period up to the present, makes it a welcome addition to the host of other scholarly works that have covered similar territory yet without providing the same panoramic, synthesizing perspective. The present work examines numerous areas of cultural expression—e.g., art, religion, music, architecture, language and others—in which the discussion about Russia's identity has manifested itself over the centuries.

The book as a whole comprises eleven chapter-essays, grouped into four sections according to theme. After situating the book as a whole in the context of Benedict Anderson and Homi Bhabha's respective characterizations of national identity, the volume opens with two chapters that examine the spatial and temporal dimensions of Russian identity, as well another two essays spotlighting Russia's attempt to articulate a sense of self both intrinsically and vis-à-vis the West (section II). Under the rubric of "Essential' Identities" (section III) we find an eclectic mix of essays that cover such varied subjects as Russian music, the relationship between Church Slavonic and East Slavic vernacular in Russian, or Russian attitudes toward *byt* or "everyday life." The volume closes with two essays that examine the importance of national monuments and other symbols of Russian selfhood. Of particular interest are the essays on time and religion by Simon Franklin, as well as Emma Widdis's piece dealing with the relationship between Russian identity and space. Thus in chapter one ("Russia in Time") Franklin examines the multiple chronologies that Russians have employed to locate themselves within a universal historical narrative—beginning with the baptism of *Rus* in 988 (and the concomitant acceptance of a Byzantine reckoning of time), proceeding through Peter's westernizing of the calendar and ending with the equally radical reconfiguration of historical time by the Bolsheviks. In a somewhat different vein, in the essay "Identity and Religion" Franklin examines the unusually intimate relationship between Orthodoxy and Russian identity—a relationship that provided the church with a virtual monopoly in the realm of cultural expression from the 10th through the 17th centuries and has continued to be felt long after Peter's secularizing reforms. Meanwhile, Emma Widdis's essay "Russia as Space" focuses on what is possibly Russia's most visible asset—its geographical expanse. Widdis explores not only the cartographic transformations of the country over time, but the potent symbolism of its open spaces as exemplified in Tiutchev's description of Russia as a land unable to be mapped by the mind, or Gogol's characterization of *Rus* as a careening troika. Finally, Stephanie Sandler's "Pushkin and Identity" (chapter 11) deals with one of the most enduring icons of Russian selfhood—the poet, writer and potent generator of cultural myth, Aleksandr Pushkin. In her essay Sandler examines the wealth of private mythologies (from Tiutchev's to those of Ts-

vetaeva, Mayakovsky and Mandel'shtam) created since the poet's death in 1837, as well as the lavish tradition of public celebrations that extends from Dostoevsky's famous Pushkin speech in 1880 to the 200-year anniversary celebration of Pushkin's birth in 1999.

National Identity in Russian Culture: An Introduction provides the reader with a fascinatingly diverse and comprehensive portrait of Russia's quest to define itself from its beginnings in medieval *Rus* through Soviet and post-Soviet times. The unique structure of the work, consisting of a series of essays each of which examines the panorama of Russian cultural history through a different prism, occasionally proves somewhat cumbersome, since the reader is forced to revisit such familiar topics as Peter's reforms more times than she/he might wish. On the whole, however, the book is a remarkable achievement—addressing a phenomenon that after more than a thousand years of Russian history is still being played out. Due to its broad focus, the book will appeal to specialist and non-specialist alike.

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Sander L. Gilman. *Franz Kafka*. London: Reaktion Books, 2005. 160 pp.

Sander Gilman's *Franz Kafka* is a short biography that combines a critical presentation of the author's life with a discussion of his major works within the cultural context of Prague and Western Europe during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Published in the Reaktion Books series "Critical Lives," *Franz Kafka* is written for a general audience that is not necessarily familiar with Kafka's works or his personal and historical background. Gilman has drawn on his extensive research on the author and turn-of-the-century culture, and especially on his view of Kafka's Jewishness as the single most defining moment of the author's life and writings.

The first chapter, "My Family and my Body as a Curse," covers Kafka's life until 1912; the second, "Writing," concentrates on his works and his relationship to Felice Bauer; and the third, "A Life Ill," is dedicated to his last years after his tuberculosis diagnosis. Like other biographers, Gilman shows the author as social, enjoying the company of friends, lovers, and prostitutes. At the same time, he describes Kafka as a man struggling to establish a positive male identity—a lifelong struggle that is deeply rooted in

the author's Jewishness and family background, and that finds immediate expression in his troubled relationship to his body. Caught between early twentieth-century *Körperkultur*, a movement whose followers believed that physical health was a sign of mental health, and antisemitic propaganda which claimed that Jews were weak and sickly, Kafka tried to strengthen his fragile body through gymnastics and dieting. At the same time, he embraced his weak constitution and became a hypochondriac who fled from personal and work obligations into sanatoriums. Tuberculosis, Gilman contends, also "was a relief for him" (98), since it did not run in the family and because it was considered an un-Jewish disease. Tuberculosis, Gilman seems to imply, freed Kafka's body from its Jewishness.

Kafka knew "how to catch the eye of his desired public" (58), and he controlled the publication of his works very carefully, which contradicts the popular notion of an author whose writings were predominantly private. Gilman draws his proof for the central role Kafka's Jewishness played in his writing from the numerous parallels to the author's life in his works, and maintains: "(t)he line between his experienced world and his literary one was non-existent" (63). Kafka often depicts the urge for physical and mental transformation or the impossibility thereof, which is directly linked to his experience of being Jewish (e.g., "The Judgment," *The Man Who Disappeared*). Even more direct accounts of turn-of-the-century Jewish experience are "The Penal Colony" and *The Trial*, which Gilman reads as immediate reactions to the Dreyfus Affair. The experience of Jews trying to assimilate into Western culture is the subject of the animal stories "Jackals and Arabs" and "A Report for an Academy." "The Metamorphosis" is about a "theme in Kafka's sense of his own body" (91), as well as Central European Jewish culture, family dynamics, and a transformation that is beyond the protagonist's control and comprehension, and may thus refer to the mass murder of World War I as well as to the situation of Jews in Europe. After falling ill, Kafka published several works dealing with disease and death, such as *The Hunger Artist* and "A Country Doctor," which is "an account of a failed cure and the meaninglessness of modern, Western medicine" (103) in the face of magic and folk remedy. At the same time, this story is an example of Kafka's technique of "universaliz(ing) the literary discourse of his texts by [...] removing the overt references to the Jewish body from his work" (106) while retaining Jewish images. In *The Castle*, the impossibility of gaining access reflects Kafka's feeling that there was no place for him in an increasingly antisemitic society. The blood in "The Burrow" is a metaphor for many aspects of Kafka's notion of Jewishness - his grandfather, the kosher butcher, rumors of Jewish rituals using the blood of murdered Christians, and his tuberculosis.

Kafka experienced serious sexual relationships with women and the prospect of marriage as extremely troubling because they entailed a clear-cut role within the Jewish family and society as represented by his father, and premarital or marital sex would have sealed this fate. After writing "The Judgment" had convinced him that he was a serious author, Kafka did not want to give up his "fantasy of self-transformation" (60) by committing to a woman. Thus, although he was engaged to Felice Bauer twice and once to Julie Wohryzcek, and had a very close relationship with Milena Jesenská-Pollak, Kafka never married or even lived with a woman, except for his last love, Dora Dymant, with whom he spent his final months. "(S)he would bring her Eastern health to cure him of his own Western nervousness" (124), and in her he found the reconciliation of oppositions that he had longed for; "she was political and mystical, religious and secular, German and yet also Hebrew with a touch of Yiddish for spice" (126).

The fourth chapter, "A Life After Life," covers briefly the posthumous publication of Kafka's writings against his will and the first translations. Most of this chapter deals with the reception of his works by major artists and thinkers of the twentieth century, such as Benjamin, Brecht, Camus, Borges, Philip Roth, and Orson Welles (*The Trial*), and the question of how "he became an exemplary figure for the modern condition" (132). Gilman ends with a bibliography and filmography that give a good first overview of Kafka research and include several very recent publications. The book has thirty illustrations.

Franz Kafka will not provide new insights for the reader familiar with recent Kafka scholarship and especially with Sander Gilman's previous publications on the author. Although written for a general audience, the book requires some background in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century European culture and history in order to fully follow Gilman's argument about the connection between gender, sexuality, illness, Jewishness, and the body – an argument that is laid out much more clearly in Gilman's 1995 monograph *Franz Kafka, the Jewish Patient*. Gilman repeatedly makes very intriguing claims, yet leaves it to his readers to flesh them out, e.g., the idea that "The Judgment" was also judging the contemporary literary scene, or that Kafka considered his image of his father as inherently Jewish. In part this may be the result of the short format of the book, which may also explain the fact that the author does not directly engage other scholars' ideas. This makes it hard for the non-expert reader to put the interpretations into the context of Kafka scholarship, which would be particularly desirable with more unusual readings, such as that of "A Country Doctor" as a story about modern and folk medicine. One of the strengths of the book is the fact that it shows the complexity of Kafka's life and psyche by going

back and forth between the historical and cultural context, Kafka's experience and thoughts, his immediate environment's reactions, analyses of his works, and Gilman's own commentary. However, at times these multiple levels are so intertwined and the author moves from one idea to the next so abruptly that it is not always easy to follow his train of thought. Although the concentration on the role of Kafka's Jewishness in his search for identity seems at times somewhat narrow, *Franz Kafka* is an insightful introduction into the world of a fascinating writer.

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P/herversions: Critical Studies of Ana Rossetti. Jill Robbins, ed. Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 2004. 275 pp.

Ana Rossetti is one of the most original and versatile writers in Spain today. She has cultivated the three major literary genres—poetry, narrative, and theater—, performed on stage, television, and radio, directed theatrical productions, taught creative writing, and lectured widely in several countries. She has also written essays, fashion catalogue copy, art catalogue copy, and song lyrics. Born in 1950, she grew up in a provincial Andalusian town during the Franco regime and began her writing career in the 1970s with three plays just as Franco's dictatorship was winding down. In the 1980s—the era of the transition from dictatorship to democracy—Rossetti became a well-known poet, winning several prizes. Thus her life and work spans an important juncture in Spanish history and culture; it breaks radically with the past (especially where sexual mores are concerned) while retaining important references to Spain's traditions, especially Catholic iconography. She achieves irreverence with reverence; she has the uncanny ability to transform the erudite into the mundane and to imbue the sensual and sexual with meaning beyond the prurient and titillating. Her work is covertly feminist, revolutionary but not unsubtle; it turns all that is human and divine upside-down and inside-out, while respecting it and leaving it in tact. Rossetti has continually evolved in the last 30 years; each new work is different from what preceded it. The volume of essays that Jill Robbins has edited captures the many facets of Rossetti's kaleidoscopic artistic career to date.

The editor's introduction reveals the lasting impact of Andalusian religious spectacle, especially its intersection with gay culture and other gender matters, on Rossetti's writing. In many towns and villages during the

Franco dictatorship, religious ceremonies were the only public entertainment. Robbins also discusses Rossetti's interest in fashion and her involvement with the visual arts and gives special attention to *Virgo potens*, a work in which confession and the materiality of the word (as design) refigure the feminine. These motifs are developed in the individual essays, which focus on specific works, and are organized somewhat according to their publication chronology and to their genre. Taken as a whole, the essays, written by different well-known specialists in twentieth-century Spanish literature, serve as an admirable introduction to Rossetti's varied oeuvre at the same time that they deepen our understanding of her aesthetic achievements.

The first three articles form a trilogy on Rossetti's early poetry collections—*Los Devaneos de Erato* (1980; *The Delirium of Eratus*), *Dióscuros* (1982; *Dioscuri*), and *Indicios Vehementes* (1985; *Intense Revelatory Signals*). The themes and techniques addressed in each essay—performance, classical intertexts, and autobiographical sexual psychology—could be an entrée to many of Rossetti's other books, and the themes do recur in later essays. Although there is no separate article on Rossetti's early theatrical works, Sharon Keefe Ugalde contextualizes *Los Devaneos de Erato* within performance theory, including drag performance, and the author's own theatrical experience to uncover its poetics of “raising the curtain” (66). Ugalde concludes that one “must read the physical language of theater recreated in an ekphrastic-like fashion in the poem” (66). Andrew P. Debicki emphasizes the intertexts, the complex use of classical allusions, in *Indicios Vehementes*, which includes Rossetti's first two volumes *Los Devaneos de Erato and Dióscuros* (1982) and adds a third section “Sturm und Drang” containing “Chico Wrangler,” one of her best-known poems. In his signature style, Debicki traces how Rossetti takes the reader from the mythical to the mundane and back to the mythical. This insightful article, the last one Debicki wrote, reminds us of the singular loss to twentieth-century Spanish poetry criticism when this extraordinary scholar died on January 20, 2005. John Wilcox, another major critic of contemporary Spanish poetry, analyzes the two selves represented in *Dióscuros*, ten poems in which the poet (Ana) reflects on her childhood (as the young girl Anna) with her brother and sister. Wilcox reveals this collection of poetry to be a psychological self-analysis that explores the gender implications of sibling rivalry.

Tina Escaja and Silvia Bermúdez turn to the Catholic, theological dimension of Rossetti's poetry in *Devocionario: poesía íntima* (1986; *Prayer Book*) and *Punto Umbrío* (1995; *Deep Point*), respectively. Escaja points out that Rossetti first learned amatory language and the power of the word from the Catholic prayer book. She explores the intersection of the reli-

gious and the erotic in *Devocionario*, in which “the elaborate mechanisms of representing self-knowledge through poetic devices [crumbles] in the last poem of the book in which the author explores the devastating experience of AIDS victims” (121). Bermúdez’s interpretation of *Punto Umbrío* begins suggestively with an evocation of the emotive tone of Augustine’s *Confessions* that leads into a discussion of how in this most recent book of poetry Rossetti attempts to “explore the abyss where the lightening of revelation will bind together the real and the symbolic” (135). Rossetti’s poetic voice deepens and moves further from the ludic in *Punto Umbrío* to offer “the visionary language of epiphany and apocalypse that would allow for the articulation of the connection between words and affects” (141).

Brad Epps, Maite Zubiaurre, and Sylvia Sherno focus on Rossetti’s narrative. While none of the three critics claims that her fiction writing is equal to her poetry, each finds multiple layers and complexities in Rossetti’s forays into the genre. Epps takes us on a subtle and sinuous excursion through *Plumas de España* (1988; Spanish Plumes), Rossetti’s one novel, to tease out the narrative play on gender (especially drag) and the Spanish nation. He determines that Rossetti’s apparent gender bending in the novel is as tenuous as Spain’s attempt to institute rapid socio-political change. Zubiaurre focuses on Rossetti’s handling of the female body in *Alevosías* (1991; Treachery), a collection of short erotic narratives, which Zubiaurre divides into diurnal tales that fragment bodies and nocturnal tales that “favor bodies seen as a whole . . . defined by dress and the convoluted rhetoric of ‘sexy’ adornments” (189). Her apt feminist reading concludes that *Alevosías* presents a harsh critique of patriarchy’s “reification of woman” via an “ironic and highly self-conscious usage of the female body as fetish” (199). Sherno brings her expertise in contemporary Spanish poetry and children’s literature to her analysis of *Una Mano de Santos* (1997; Wonder Workers), a collection of narratives about saints and angels intended for both adult and younger readers. Sherno finds that, just as in Rossetti’s early poetry, these narratives have a transgressive quality and that “her rhetorical stratagem of choice even now remains the carnivalesque deployment of humor, irony, and parody” (205).

The final two essays of the volume by Carmela Ferradans and Margaret H. Persin address aesthetic issues in Rossetti’s *œuvre* that relate to a number of her works, a fitting conclusion to a fine and comprehensive volume. Ferradans focuses on the fetishistic aspects of arguably Rossetti’s most often-cited poem “Calvin Klein, Underdrawers” inspired by the billboard of a male model wearing the apparel mentioned in the poem’s title. She uncovers Rossetti’s reversal of the stereotypical female as object of the male gaze. Margaret Persin extends her amply demonstrated knowledge of

ekphrastic practices in contemporary Spanish poetry to Rossetti's collaborative books with male visual artists (these are catalogues for the artists' gallery expositions). Rossetti's is not the usual ekphrasis in which a verbal text evokes a work of art; rather these collaborative books "combine verbal texts by Rossetti . . . with the simultaneously published paintings whose images evoked the lyrical response . . ." (240). Persin highlights Rossetti's extraordinary talent for taking a sensory experience to an intellectual plane without destroying the original sense-based impulse.

Robbins has assembled a truly remarkable set of essays by some of contemporary Hispanism's most distinguished scholars. Specialists in twentieth-century Spanish literature will learn much from this collection, as will those who are interested in women's studies, gender studies, the intersection of the verbal and visual, and contemporary literature from any western country.

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Jennifer Warburton. *John Fowles: A Life in Two Worlds*. London: Cape, 2004. 532 pp.

John Fowles. *The Journals, Vol. I*. Ed. Charles Drazin. London: Cape, 2003. 706 pp.

Within months, Jonathan Cape has come out with two new books that have the potential to change the way we read and analyze British writer John Fowles, who died in 2005. Indeed, Eileen Warburton's biography and Charles Drazin's edition of the first volume of Fowles's journals appear at a time when interest in Fowles's work has started to pick up once again.

Warburton's *John Fowles: A Life in Two Worlds* was announced a number of years ago, and many readers of Fowles have been anxiously waiting for its publication. They will not be disappointed by her work. The substantial volume provides an exhaustive look at Fowles's complete life. Warburton concentrates on the early years and the author's private life, leaving comments about his public persona and published work to a minimum. Her volume thus wonderfully compliments existing scholarship on Fowles and should have a major impact on future research. Early on in her biography, Warburton rings a warning note when she stresses that Fowles's own willingness to share his memories with her were tainted by his readi-

ness to invent his own life, turning it into fiction while putting it into words. Despite the obvious risk involved in believing the novelist's narrative, she draws heavily from his records, adding, wherever possible, information gathered from Fowles's friends and family. All readers of Fowles will find Warburton's account of Fowles's life highly informative and even entertaining since his first forty years, in particular, were filled with many unique experiences. Later in life, the author turned his memories into the passionate novels that have earned him a place amongst the most respected writers of post-war England.

While researching her biography, Warburton had access to a great number of unpublished sources including not only Fowles's diaries, which are located both at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center in Austin, Texas, and at the University of Exeter, England, but also a substantial amount of his correspondence as well as numerous unpublished manuscripts. In addition, both Fowles and the people closest to him spent time talking to Warburton, providing countless details and insightful memories to her book. Warburton's narrative splendidly interweaves many different stories into a clear overall portrayal of Fowles's struggle to get published. She draws a compelling picture of his childhood and the formative years between college and the publication of his first novel, *The Collector*, in 1963. Countless scenes in Fowles's novels appear in a new and different light after reading Warburton's account of his life. To give but one example, Fowles's fascination with mysterious sounds, as evident in *The Magus*, can be traced back to a childhood experience at Bedford, his boarding school. During the German blitz, the BBC orchestra was secretly housed at the school, recording at night while some of the pupils stood guard on the roof of the school's great hall. They listened to the music seeping through the rafters while keeping their eyes on the planes overhead and the burning cities in the distance. The emotional impact of such a memory must have stayed with Fowles for many years to come.

In addition to providing a detailed account of Fowles's personal life, Warburton also gives her readers insight into Fowles's writing process as well as into the close proximity between the biographical life and the literary output. In many cases she is able to trace aspects of particular novels to experiences in the author's life, from the years spent in Greece that went into the making of *The Magus*, to the years spent as a museum curator in Lyme Regis that went into the making of the historical novel *A Maggot*. These extensive forays into what some critics might consider the realm of the biographical fallacy do, however, bring to the fore new and original aspects of the novels that do not reveal themselves from a straight-forward reading of the original texts.

Throughout her book, Warburton does not shy away from pointing out parallels between Fowles's personal life and the characters in his novels. She seems in particular taken with the role of Elizabeth, Fowles's wife for 36 years, emphasizing her crucial presence as both his critical muse and the overall center of his personal well-being. Indeed, Warburton writes not only the life of John Fowles, but also that of his first wife. To Warburton there can be no question about the influence the wife had on her husband's writing life: "Elizabeth is at the center of the books" (xi). The biography goes to great lengths to give credit to Elizabeth Fowles far beyond the well-known editorial help she provided during the writing of Fowles's first novels. The last paragraphs of Fowles's biography are, quite remarkably, devoted to the memory of Elizabeth, his companion through most of his literary life.

Some of the most captivating moments of Warburton's *John Fowles* no doubt are her extensive comments on unpublished stories by Fowles, some of which remained in his possession and have therefore not even been accessible to researchers working at the Fowles archives in Austin and Exeter. Another corpus of Fowles's text has been available to scholars for quite a while, but has not yet received much critical attention: Fowles's diaries, spanning nearly his entire adult life. In addition to hastily drawn notes with ideas for stories and information about personal events, they also include highly fascinating information about Fowles as a reader, and in particular about his process of writing. However, since most of these journals and notebooks exist only in manuscript form, with the legibility of Fowles's handwriting varying tremendously from one page to the next, the scholarly community has not yet made sufficient use of these fascinating resources. The first of two volumes to put Fowles's diaries in easily-accessible print is therefore highly welcome.

Let the greatest concern with Drazin's wonderfully fascinating first volume of *The Journals* be stated at the outset: due to the enormous amount of material that Fowles committed to his personal pages over the years, it became necessary to shorten the text significantly prior to publication. What readers therefore find in *The Journals* is not the complete output from 1949 to 1965, the start and end dates of the first volume, but rather abbreviated snapshots of some of his thoughts. This first volume of the diaries will nevertheless open up Fowles's personal life as well as his strategies and processes as a writer to a much larger audience. Alas, as Drazin points out in his introduction, serious scholars will still have to go to Texas; those unable or unwilling to travel there will appreciate the published form of the journals.

Despite this proviso, there can be no doubt that anybody researching Fowles will want to read this book; and will immensely enjoy the experi-

ence, especially when read in conjunction with Warburton's biography. The two books compliment each other in a number of ways; they also, unintentionally, emphasize that both "views" of Fowles are by default incomplete. Indeed, the almost simultaneous publication of Fowles's biography and journals provides a fascinating glance at the generative power of the written word: while both books provide a convincing story, they both reveal their own constructedness when read in conjunction with each other. For instance, the law suit related to *The Collector* appears in the biography, but is entirely missing from the journals. Both books, then, are at best approximations to Fowles the writer and the person. (Fowles's own witty Borgesian piece "The J.R. Fowles Club," included in his *Wormholes*, comments on the elusive nature of the "real" John Fowles.)

We should, therefore, not make too strong a claim about the text's historical veracity but rather enjoy Fowles's *Journals* for what it has to offer: a substantial new corpus of Fowles's writing. The book indeed shows the author's powers of narration in the making, and his growing mastery of language and style over the years. After a long period of doubting his own talents, the publication of his first novel finally gave him the self-assurance to trust his literary instincts. The diaries also, however, reveal Fowles to be an occasionally impatient and even opinionated man, particularly during his youth. His sense of artistic vocation is repeatedly called upon to excuse his behavior, giving him, at least in his own view, special license to act in his own idiosyncratic manner, often at odds with not only the literary establishment in London but also his friends. In later years, Fowles grew more understanding and patient.

Anybody who has worked with the documents at the Fowles archive will notice that aspects of Fowles's life have been left out of both the biography and the published journals. The reader of the archival material thus discovers a third "Fowles," complimenting the two figures presented by Warburton and Drazin. Hopefully, such a reader will realize that even this three-dimensional picture of the author cannot represent the historical reality behind Fowles, his work, and his historical context. The two books under review here demand an equally careful response. And yet, it is fair to say that we have never before seen Fowles so clearly, thanks to the efforts of Warburton and Drazin.

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