

ful and thought-provoking in its probing into divine and secular values. Yet although it is marvellously free from the limiting conventions and clichés of hagiography, it succeeds only spasmodically as a literary fiction, if we are to judge it by the high standards Mrs Haughton deserves. I think the reason may be that she has not yet found an imaginative language that can easily carry the weight of meaning she intends. Take, for example, this crucial and representative passage, describing the last embrace of Ludwig and Elizabeth:

The knowledge of her, and the nearness of parting, flowed together in two streams of awareness that could not meet, and in the gap between them there was a huge emptiness that called to him. Then, while his hands were on her warm body, he knew, for the first time, the demand of a total love. There was no room to explain and disguise, no protection from the image of her fiery sanctity, no argument that could make it necessary to keep her apart, in subjection,

lest she engulf him. There was nothing between them, not even Elizabeth herself, because it was not Elizabeth who called to him, but only the deep, terrifying waters of love itself.

Now, this is far from being badly written; but it seems to me that the strength and force of the passage is in its second sentence, and that the surrounding sentences do not give greater definition or concreteness to that sentence, but rather blur it. The images (streams, emptiness calling, fiery image, waters calling) do not in the last analysis connect logically, and the syntax of the last sentence is puzzling. The language does not, in other words, enact a particular sequence of thought and emotion, but gropes after it. It might be argued that such meanings can only be groped after; but I do not think Mrs Haughton would wish to take refuge in that position—she is too obviously concerned with precise expression and communication.

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CONRAD: THE PSYCHOLOGIST AS ARTIST, by Paul Kirschner. *Oliver and Boyd*, Edinburgh, 1968. Pp. vii-xii + 3-298. 70s.

E. M. FORSTER'S OTHER KINGDOM, by Denis Godfrey. *Oliver and Boyd*, Edinburgh, London, 1968. Pp. v-vii + 1-228. 45s.

These two books are recent additions to Oliver and Boyd's Biography and Criticism series. Both cover in the main familiar ground. Mr Godfrey offers us a chapter on three of Forster's short stories and further chapters on each of the five novels. Mr Kirschner includes discussions of all of Conrad's most frequently discussed works: *Heart of Darkness*, *Lord Jim*, *Nostramo*, *The Secret Agent*, etc. What is new about both books is no more than the point of view from which they are written, the perspective from which these exhaustively explored and mapped countries of the imagination are reviewed once again. The burden borne by the thesis which provides the structure for each book is in other words a very heavy one: it provides the principal reason for publication. In fact neither book is able to raise that burden without a perceptible quiver or two.

To take *Forster's Other Kingdom* first. Mr Godfrey's thesis is announced in this sentence from his first paragraph: 'It is one thing to say, as many critics do, and quite correctly, that the novels of E. M. Forster abound in spiritual implications, that they are fundamentally concerned with the relation between the seen and unseen worlds, it is quite another however to take that relationship seriously, to accept as

a fact rather than a hypothesis the reality of the spiritual world in terms of which the visible everyday world is being presented to us.' Taking the relationship between seen and unseen 'seriously' is here improperly identified with accepting the reality of the spiritual world 'as a fact'. Forster himself clearly takes the relationship very seriously indeed, but he draws back from any assertion of the fact which provides Mr Godfrey with the new perspective from which he writes his book. The consequent contrast between the commentator's confidence and his author's tentativeness remains disturbingly present throughout.

Mr Kirschner's statement of his thesis is scarcely less disturbing. He writes on his first page that he proposes 'to regard Conrad as a great psychologist' and 'to approach his work as the deliberate expression, in art, of his ideas about human nature'. Fortunately Conrad's fiction is not in fact used simply to provide evidence for some peculiarly Conradian theory of the human mind. Psycho-analytical approaches to Conrad are indeed entirely rejected. What we find is an examination of the novels and tales in terms of the idea of the self that they suggest. Whether such an examination, which could be conducted in

relation to most of the major Victorian writers, all of them preoccupied with the problem of the self, justifies the use of the term 'psychologist'—not to mention the eye-catching 'Psychologist as Artist'—is quite another matter. Where Mr Godfrey's thesis is too heavy, Mr Kirschner's is too light.

Mr Godfrey's study of the unseen in Forster's fiction is painstakingly methodical. The method is suggested by such a sentence as this: 'Judged then, in strict accordance with their sensitivity to the unseen, and by the extent of their acknowledgement of it, consciously or from instinct, the characters now stand before us.' Nor is the judicial tone uncharacteristic. The crucial question is clearly what is meant by the unseen in the particular context. Inevitably the answer varies. In *Where Angels Fear to Tread* the unseen is a kind of emotional vitality; in *The Longest Journey* it is the instinctual life of rural England; in *A Room With A View* it is unself-consciousness; in *Howard's End* it is the power of love; and in *A Passage to India* it is love again acting through the dead Mrs Moore. That the other kingdom takes so many different shapes makes it possible to wonder whether it has the ultimate unity that Mr Godfrey believes. Certainly those elements that Mr Godfrey directs our attention to are present in the individual novels. His best pages are concerned with them. It is the value of seeking to unite them all as manifestations of the unseen that is questionable. It is certainly this that creates the gap between the commentator and the novelist that one constantly senses. Mr Godfrey often indeed seems to complain that Forster did not write in the way he thinks he should have done. What else are we to make of the suggestion that 'in its rendering of human character, *A Passage to India* has less to offer spiritually than *Howard's End*', or that in *A Passage to India*, 'Forster himself does not emerge as an advocate for Hinduism any more than for Theosophy'? Mr Godfrey is disappointed that the account of Hinduism in the novel does not 'take us somewhat further into the unseen than previously'. After this it is hardly surprising that in the final chapter of the book Forster is taken severely

to task for his failure to be more explicit about the status of the unseen in his fiction. Mr Godfrey chooses finally to contrast Forster's evasive position with the firm evidence for the other kingdom to be found in Rudolph Steiner's *Anthroposophy*.

Mr Kirschner's book is in three parts. The first is a brief biographical sketch of Conrad which tries to account for the recurring fictional pattern of a dream of the self and the fear of failure in terms of his own early experience. The second is a critical examination of Conrad's major fiction in terms of his idea of the self. The third, the most original and illuminating, examines Conrad's debt to Flaubert, Maupassant, France, Turgenev, and Dostoyevsky.

The quality of critical discussion in section two varies. On *Under Western Eyes*, 'The Secret Sharer', and *The Shadow Line*, Mr Kirschner is excellent, wholly justifying his approach. Elsewhere his distrust of the psychoanalytic approach to Conrad is excessive. For example, on the role of Marlow in *Heart of Darkness* he writes: 'we are finally not so much interested in what the experience has done for Marlow personally as in the alarming potentialities of human nature revealed to us through Marlow by Kurtz and the Congo.' Marlow's involvement in the story he tells is unquestionably greater than this account suggests: the story is about Kurtz and Marlow, not about one or other of them. What is in question here as elsewhere is Mr Kirschner's neglect of Conrad's technique as a novelist, particularly his techniques of narration. Method affects matter in Conrad to a greater extent than Mr Kirschner allows.

The third section of this study is most valuable. On Conrad's debt to Maupassant and France, Mr Kirschner's documentation is most impressive. The verbal parallels cited leave no room for doubt. Conrad made considerable use of his knowledge of both. The connexions with the other European writers discussed are less surely based. But the parallels cited are often striking. No student of Conrad can ignore Mr Kirschner's findings in this part of his book.

ANDREW HOOK

FROM CRY TO WORD: Contributions towards a Psychology of Prayer, edited by A. Godin, S.J. *Vitae Lumen Studies in the Psychology of Religion*, Vol. IV. *Lumen Vitae Press*, Brussels, 1968. 270 pp.

Man at prayer has for long been a subject of human interest, especially among the unsympathetic. The earliest recorded experimental attempts of psychologists in this country naturally enough reflect the Science v. Religion

debate of the day. Tyndall wrote to *The Fortnightly Review* in July, 1872, 'proposing to estimate the value of prayer for the sick by a controlled experiment in a selected hospital!'. (The exclamation mark is the original author's,