

1983

The year that was

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Abstract

AUSTRALIA

After having been three times the bridesmaid at the Booker McConnell Awards, Thomas Keneally is at last the bride with his novel *Schindler's Ark* (Hodder & Stoughton). It tells the story of a smooth and wealthy industrialist who managed to use his friendship with high-ranking Nazis and his black market alcohol to help Jewish prisoners escape. With its interest in the relationship between history, reportage and fiction, its grotesque images, and its dialectic between a man too earthly to be a saint and a community which wants to make him one, it's clear that the finished novel develops some of the central obsessions in Keneally's work.

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So that although the story of Keneally's accidental discovery of his material in a Beverly Hills luggage store is now famous, the question of whether *Schindler's Ark* is a novel or not can only have been asked by those unfamiliar with the book and its author.

If Keneally manages to shock his reader out of the comfort of mythologizing the Jewish holocaust, Thea Astley's *An Item from the Late News* (UQP) leaves you stunned with its conclusion that small minds closer to home can conspire in a destruction that makes the final bomb shelter utterly pointless.

Returning to an earlier direction in her fiction with a female point of view, Astley doesn't quite bring her narrator to life, but the impossibility of the feminine principle in the grotesquely masculine world of this novel makes that partial failure inevitable. Readers who enjoy Thea Astley's comic gift may be disappointed to find this book searingly humourless, but those drawn to her earlier political novel *A Kindness Cup* will find *An Item from the Late News* even more disturbing.

Rodney Hall's *Just Relations* (Penguin) is the most ambitious of an unusual number of novels this year by writers best known as poets. This is Hall's third novel, though, so he's no newcomer to the form. Dealing, as Astley's novel does, with an enclosed and inbred community, *Just Relations* with Shirley Hazzard's *The Transit of Venus* is perhaps the most exquisitely written of recent Australian novels, and the beauty of

the writing, while a little slow, throws into startling prominence the political events that enter life in Whitey's Fall towards the conclusion and force a rereading of the novel as a whole.

As incredibly beautiful in its poetic evocation of an Australia marginal to the horror of Gallipoli, David Malouf's *Fly Away Peter* (Chatto & Windus) is the more highly praised of his two books of fiction. But it's the problematical *Child's Play* (Chatto & Windus) that his readers will return to, with its narrator who is both a terrorist stressing the ordinariness of his occupation and an intriguingly difficult metaphor for the artist.

It's almost as if these two short novels, the one with its flawless lyric surfaces, the other with its rather awkwardly expressed philosophic probing, actively deny the synthesis of poetry and ideas that Malouf's work insistently seeks.

Few Australian novelists can equal the energy and skill of Sumner Locke Elliott's dialogue and his often outrageous imagery but, despite some reviewers' suspicion of this facility, there's far more to *Signs of Life* (Penguin) than that. This new novel takes old age and death away from the brave new world of his earlier novel *Going* and, as Virginia Green dies surrounded by her family but absolutely alone, emphasises the inescapable presence of the past.

A theme taken up also by Barbara Hanrahan's fiction, though in *Dove* (UQP) her distinctive combination of childlike innocence, pretty detail, lush sexual landscape and grotesque melodrama seems more finely balanced but less risky than in, say, *The Frangipani Gardens*. Readers who have resisted the common criticism that her work is repetitious ('not another novel about her grandmother!') may be inclined here to concede.

Revised versions of Randolph Stow's *To the Islands* (Secker & Warburg) and Christopher Koch's *Across the Sea Wall* (A&R) have tightened both novels beautifully, but only Stow's theme still seems urgent.

New novels by poets Roger McDonald, *Slipstream* (UQP), and Tom Shapcott, *The Birthday Gift* (UQP), Michael Wilding's *Pacific Highway* (Hale & Iremonger) and Gerald Murnane's *The Plains* (Norstrilia) complete this list of the year's fiction with, finally, two of the three outstanding political novels by women.

Whereas Thea Astley combines her political themes with her long-standing interest in the aesthetics of language, first novels by short fiction writer Glenda Adams, *Games of the Strong* (A&R) and poet Jennifer Maiden, *The Terms* (Hale & Iremonger), focus on the politics of language and of relationships. The creation of a language and complex

of ideas, and the deliberate distancing of emotional response, make each of these novels difficult to get into, but readers who persist will find them unusually rewarding.

With two remarkable exceptions, the year's offerings in poetry have been less distinguished. John Tranter's *Selected Poems* (Hale & Iremonger) is an attractively produced collection of the best work to have come out of the so-called 'New Australian Poetry'. Tranter is known for the nightmarish fragments of vision and conversation, and the inner urban nervous energy of his poetry, but what strikes you repeatedly in rereading the poems here is a particularly dry sense of humour. Partly because individual volumes have been published in small editions, he's sometimes regarded as a 'Sydney poet', and this welcome *Selected Poems* should effectively give him a wider circulation for the first time.

Another long awaited volume, Fay Zwicky's *Kaddish and Other Poems* (UQP), winner of the prestigious NSW Premier's Award, adds to 'Kaddish' which is arguably the most powerful long poem here in ten years, a new sequence 'Ark Voices', bound to become a favourite. The intensity of 'Kaddish' itself seems to relate Zwicky to the American confessional poets, but 'Ark Voices' is unique and its imaginative daring is most evident when contrasted with the Canadian Jay McPherson's 'Ark' poems. 'Mrs Noah Speaks', the first piece in the sequence, introduces the female point of view, themes of the artist and of silence; and it's followed by eleven poems each belonging to one of the animals on the ark, with the haunting 'Wolf Song' as an interlude sung by Zwicky when she does these poems in performance.

Edited by Fay Zwicky is *Journeys* (Sisters Publishing), a thesis anthology of the kind most useful to students, with generous selections from the work of a few poets — in this case, Judith Wright, Gwen Harwood, Rosemary Dobson and Dorothy Hewett, with the main re-evaluation in its emphasis away from rocks and gumtrees in the selection from Judith Wright.

A new edition of Les Murray's *Selected Poems: The Vernacular Republic* (A&R) at last includes 'The Buladelah-Taree Holiday Song Cycle', a long poem that has aroused controversy over its turning to R.M. Berndt's translation of the Wonguri-Mandjikai Song Cycle of the Moon-Bone. The selection also includes recent work such as the very good poems to his bed, to Robert Morley, and 'The Grass Fire Stanzas', which have not been easily available before.

Robert Adamson's *The Law at Heart's Desire* (Prism) moves away from the rather flat naivety of the poems in *Where I Come From* (Big Smoke) which worked best in performance, and shows that when he stops

playing Rimbauds, Adamson can deliver the goods. And despite my initial preference for the hard-edged concreteness of Gary Catalano's *Remembering the Rural Life* (UQP) with its lettuces like babies' heads in outer suburban market gardens, I'm drawn back to the quiet abstractions of his new collection *Heaven of Rags* (Hale & Iremonger) intrigued by its deceptively simple lines.

New collections by Judith Rodriguez, *Witch Heart* (Sisters Publishing), and Vivian Smith, *Tide Country* (A&R), seem unadventurous by comparison with Zwicky and Tranter, but both these poets impress with their quiet mastery of technique: Rodriguez's poems freeing a personal warmth that has been too heavily protected in her poetry until now, and Smith's continuing to shape finely the elegant lyrics, with their interesting combination of French and American resonances, for which he's best known.

The year's best play, *The Perfectionist* (Currency) sees David Williamson more committed to probing at issues that will disturb his audiences, than to pleasing them. The play which travels about as far North as you can go, to Denmark, deals with the conflicting demands of education, marriage, parenthood in the relationship of two Ph.D. students, and develops the theme in Australian writing of the woman's losing battle for her brilliant career.

Equally sensitive in its exploration of the ways idealism is used to excuse and justify failure, the play obviously succeeded in unsettling the audience I was part of: one man in front of me, getting out of his seat and adjusting his waistband up over a business lunch, saying to the woman he was with, 'Well. I can see we're going to have *quite* an argument in the car on the way home.'

The other outstanding dramatic work this year is David Williamson's script for the film *Gallipoli*, published by Penguin along with extracts from Gammage's excellent study *The Broken Years*, as *The Story of Gallipoli*. Whatever the case against the film's mythology, and Livio and Pat Dobrez make a persuasive one in *Kunapipi*, Vol. IV, No 2, the suggestive economy of Williamson's dialogue and his sense of humour are at their best here.

Mrs Millie Mack has a load of wood delivered to her back yard and is told that one strange looking object is half a piece from a bogey louver: 'When he said that a most delicious tingle went up Mrs Millie Mack's spine.' This fat suburban woman, with her grey hair drawn into a bun, who, when she's not making jams and pickles, is constantly knitting, is the most unlikely person to share Magritte's experience of having a train come out of her fireplace. But the trains keep coming! The year's best

book for children, *Whistle Up the Chimney* (Collins) is one of the best picture books Australia has produced, with Nan Hunt's amusing words that beg to be read aloud perfectly complemented by Craig Smith's detailed and witty illustrations. Children should be warned, however, that most adults will be so involved with this book that they won't let them near it.

Drier but nevertheless valuable offerings in Shirley Walker's excellent bibliography of *Judith Wright* (OUP) and Helen Daniel's critical study *Double Agent: David Ireland and His Work* (Penguin). John Tulloch's *Australian Cinema* (Allen & Unwin) a less accessible analysis than his excellent *Legends on the Screen* (Currency/AFI) confirms the standing of his work as the best on Australian cinema to date.

And finally, on the eve of its 50th birthday, Denis O'Brien's history of *The Australian Women's Weekly*, titled as the magazine is familiarly called, *The Weekly* (Penguin). Australian culture cannot be fully understood without a knowledge of this magazine which in a country of 14 million has been bought by one million people and read by an additional estimated two million each week.

Published just before the magazine became in fact if not in grotesque name 'The Australian Women's Monthly', this fascinating montage looks back on half a century of Australian life when, as the adman said, a week without the *Weekly* was not the same.

MARK MACLEOD

CANADA

1982 was a year of cross-cultural journeyings. The Seal \$50,000.00 First Novel Award went to Janette Hospital Turner for *The Ivory Swing* (McClelland & Stewart), a story of a Canadian woman's emotional education during the year of her husband's sabbatical in south India. Popular, well-meaning fiction, the novel examines the culture shock of Canadians in an alien setting. Aviva Layton's *Nobody's Daughter* (McClelland & Stewart) takes its protagonist from middle-class Australia to Montreal and marriage with a flamboyant poet remarkably similar to Irving Layton. Occasionally funny but consistently self-indulgent, *Daughter's* confessional bitterness is easily forgotten. More interesting are Rachel Wyatt's *Foreign Bodies* (Anansi), about an English couple's sabbatical in Canada, Lorris Elliott's *Coming For To Carry* (Williams-

Wallace), about a Trinidadian immigrant to Canada, George Galt's *Trailing Pythagoras* (Quadrant), about a Canadian's journey through Greece, following an ancestor and in search of a philosopher, and *Chinada: Memoirs of the Gang of Seven* (Quadrant), a record of the visit to China of seven Canadian writers as guests of the Chinese Writer's Association. Each writer contributed a section: diary, postcards, poems and memoirs, and at the centre of the collection is an album of photographs of the contributors: Gary Geddes, Robert Kroetsch, Adele Wiseman, Patrick Lane, Alice Munro, Suzanne Paradis and Geoffrey Hancock. This is a quirky, intriguing volume that offers some insights into the dynamics of cultural exchange.

All of these books provide a context for Michael Ondaatje's remarkable *Running in the Family* (McClelland & Stewart), the story of two journeys back to Sri Lanka in order to touch the 'frozen opera' of his family's past 'into words'. Ondaatje seeks the childhood he had 'ignored and not understood', the 'era of grandparents', particularly of his grandmother Lalla, 'who managed to persuade all those she met into chaos', and, most painfully, the father he never knew as an adult, all as part of a continuing search for himself. The shifts from third to first person, from prose to poetry, from print to photograph, from Shakespeare to chronicle, give this beautifully produced book the appearance of an album and contribute to our sense of the book as 'gesture' rather than history. *Running in the Family* confirms Ondaatje's place as a major craftsman and innovator.

A very different kind of challenge to conventional orthodoxies about the shape of fiction issues from Hugh Hood's latest addition to the New Age cycle, *Black and White Keys* (ECW), where an antiphonal structure balances Matt's youth in Canada exploring popular American culture during the second World War against his father's mission to save prominent Jews from the Nazi death camps in Germany. Hood's use of Christian analogies and sacred art to comment on the structuring of his own grand design for interpreting Canadian life has never been surer. With each new book he establishes himself more firmly as a writer who cannot be ignored, although it is the grandeur of the overall design and the extent of Hood's ambition rather than the beauty of any single work that compels attention.

Imagine a novel that combines all the stock elements of Canadian fiction — the lost child, the wild child, the ambitious pioneer felling the great tree, building the great house, neglecting his wife and family, discovering a mammoth's skeleton — with a few new twists — the massacre of a plague of pigeons and a perpetual motion machine — all described in

a style that manages to suggest a strange blending of Conrad and Kroetsch while remaining a style so original, so confident and so surprisingly right that you trust yourself to it immediately. Imagine all this, and you'll have some sense of the best novel to appear in Canada this year — Graeme Gibson's *Perpetual Motion* (McClelland & Stewart). Gibson has produced a sympathetic study of the nineteenth century mind — obsessed with ideas of progress, intrigued by science and the pseudo-scientific yet still swayed by superstition — in what is very much a twentieth century novel.

Josef Svorecky's *The Swell Season* (Lester Orpen) continues his masterly treatment of Czechoslovakian resistance during the Nazi occupation. Not in the same class as Svorecky but worthy of mention are several novels about contemporary women's experiences: Carol Shield's *A Fairly Conventional Woman*, Richard Wright's *Teacher's Daughter*, Joan Barfoot's *Dancing in the Dark* (all Macmillan), and Katherine Govier's *Going Through the Motions* (M&S).

Alice Munro's new collection of stories, *The Moons of Jupiter* (Macmillan) drew the most favourable attention this year, along with some impressive collections by younger writers, most notably Guy Vanderhaeghe's *Man Descending* (Macmillan), Keath Fraser's *Taking Cover* (Oberon), and *The Birth Control King of the Upper Volta* (ECW) by Leon Rooke, this year's winner of the Canada/Australia Literary Exchange Award. *Making It New* (Methuen), an anthology of contemporary Canadian short stories with brief critical essays by the writers and edited by John Metcalf made history when it was published simultaneously in Canada, the United States, Britain and Australia.

The New Oxford Book of Canadian Verse in English, edited by Margaret Atwood, received mixed reviews for its compression of the work of older poets in order to devote about eighty per cent of its content to contemporary poetry. General Publishing brought out *West Window: The Selected Poetry of George Bowering* and Gwendolyn MacEwan's *Earth-Light*; McClelland & Stewart, Susan Musgrave's *Tarts and Muggers* (nothing new or very interesting here) and Robert Bringhurst's *The Beauty of the Weapons* (an impressive selection from a poet to watch); Oxford, Patrick Lane's *Old Mother*; Black Moss, *Bursting Into Song: An Al Purdy Omnibus*; Oberon, *The Collected Poems of Raymond Souster*; and Anansi, Don Dumanski's *War in an Empty House*, an exciting new collection from a lesser known poet.

Macmillan's *Dramatic W. O. Mitchell*, a collection of five of Mitchell's stage plays, proves that they are less impressive than his fiction. Also disappointing is *The Work: Conversations with English-Canadian Play-*

wrights (Coach House) by Robert Wallace and Cynthia Zimmerman, an ambitious, fat book that tells us very little about the work of the twenty-five playwrights interviewed, although simply because of the absence of this kind of material it provides an introduction to the area. 'Talking Dirty', a lightweight comedy by Vancouver's Sherman Snukal, made Canadian theatre history as the longest running Canadian play, but *Crackwalker* (Playwrights Canada) by Judith Thompson, produced in Toronto, won much higher critical praise. Toronto also experimented by producing a first play by Mavis Gallant — 'What is to be Done?' — to mixed reviews.

Critical publications, as usual, were very strong. The year began with the appearance of Northrop Frye's study of the influence of the Bible on literature, *The Great Code* (Academic), followed by Anansi's collection of his essays on Canadian culture, *Divisions on a Ground*. Anansi also brought out Marion Fowler's *The Embroidered Tent: Five Gentlewomen in Early Canada* and Dennis Duffy's *Gardens, Covenants, Exiles: Loyatism in the Literature of Upper Canada/Ontario*. Two new scholarly books on A.M. Klein confirmed his importance — and the sadness of his life — Usher Caplan's biography, *Like One That Dreamed* (McGraw-Hill, Ryerson), and *Beyond Sambation: Selected Essays and Editorials, 1928-1955* (University of Toronto Press), edited by M.W. Steinberg and Usher Caplan. Patricia Monk's *The Smaller Infinity: The Unity of Self in the Novels of Robertson Davies* (University of Toronto Press) and Sherrill Grace's *The Voyage That Never Ends: Malcolm Lowry's Fiction* (University of British Columbia Press) contribute to the scholarly evaluation of major figures, and *William Arthur Deacon: A Canadian Literary Life*, by Clara Thomas and John Lennox (University of Toronto Press), to the art of biography. Phyllis Webb's *Talking* (Quadrant), George Bowering's *A Way With Words* (Oberon) and Margaret Atwood's *Second Words* (Anansi) give us the writers themselves talking about language, while John Metcalf's *Kicking Against the Pricks* (ECW) presents a personal re-evaluation of the Canadian literary scene that is at once devastating, challenging, and funny. *Taking Stock: the Calgary Conference on the Canadian Novel*, edited by Charles Steele (ECW), attempts a more balanced approach to where we are now — or to where we were when the conference was held in 1978. It already seems dated. We're rapidly revising our literary maps with the publications of each new year.

DIANA BRYDON

INDIA

Scholarship, that essential prolegomena to criticism, continued to consolidate the information available on Indian literature in English. Bibliographical control is improving at the usual slow rate so far as books are concerned, and K.C. Dutt compiled and edited a *Cumulative Index* to the journal *Indian Literature* published by the Sahitya Akademi (the Indian Academy of Letters), New Delhi.

A number of useful though somewhat repetitive studies by L.M. Khubchandani, were published by the Centre for Communication Studies, Pune: the series of *Miscellaneous Papers on Indian Languages* includes *English as a Contact Language in South Asia* (No 15); *English in India: A Sociolinguistic Appraisal* (No 18); *English in India* (No 6) which has a 'Demographic Study' of English, and one on 'Indian Bilingualism'; and *Language Demography* (No 3) which has two 'Profiles' on 'Language Diversity in India'. G.C. Whitworth's 1907 book *Indian English: An examination of the errors of idiom made by Indians writing in English* was republished by Bahri Publications, New Delhi. Narendra K. Aggarwal's *English in South Asia: A Bibliographical Survey of Resources* was published by Indian Documentation Service, Gurgaon. A comprehensive survey of postgraduate *Teaching and Research in English* was published by the University Grants Commission, New Delhi.

A selection of Sujit Mukherjee's stimulating articles, published between 1952 and 1977, has been published as *The Idea of an Indian Literature* (Central Institute of Indian Languages, Mysore). Patchy and bitty though it is, Elena J. Kalinnikova's survey of a dozen novelists and eight poets (covering the period from Toru Dutt to Manohar Malgonkar) testifies to increasing interest in Indian Literature in English on the part of scholars from Eastern Europe, (*Indian Literature in Brief*, translated by V.P. Sharma, Vimal Prakashan, Ghaziabad). A collection of critical essays by various hands on new or neglected novelists such as Chaman Nahal, M.V. Rama Sarma, M.C. Daniels, Nergis Dalal, Romen Basu and Veena Paintal, *Indian English Novelists* (New Horizon, Allahabad) is edited by Madhusudan Prasad, and has useful essays on B. Rajan (H.H. Anniah Gowda), Ruskin Bond (Anandlal), Sasthi Brata (G.P. Sarma), Raji Narasimhan (Atma Ram), Anita Desai (Jasbir Jain) and Bharati Mukherjee (M. Sivaramakrishna). R.K. Dhawan edited a selection of essays on more recognised novelists, *Explorations in Modern Indo-Anglian Fiction* (Bahri, New Delhi). S.R. Bald's *Novelists and Political Consciousness* (Chanakya, New Delhi) investigates literary expressions of Indian nationalism in seven novelists between 1919 and

1947. While Sudarshan Sharma examines the *Influence of Gandhian Ideology on Indo-Anglian Fiction* (Soni Book Agency, New Delhi), V.N. Tewari edited a collection of papers presented at a seminar on the 'Impact of Nehruism on Indian Literature, 1889-1964'. This includes Karan Singh's Valedictory Address, which helpfully defines 'Nehruism' as 'humanism, pluralism, scientific rationalism, socialism, democracy, anti-colonialism and non-alignment'. However, he does point out that Nehru's contribution probably lay in creating an atmosphere which gave a fillip to Indian literature. *Nehru and Indian Literature* (publications Bureau, Panjab University, Chandigarh) includes Satyapal Anand's paper which looks more directly at 'Jawaharlal Nehru as Litterateur'.

The most clearly political of our novelists, Mulk Raj Anand, produced a somewhat linguistically homogenised series of reminiscences, *Conversations in Bloomsbury* (Wildwood House, UK and Arnold-Heinemann, New Delhi). Though they also include conversations with other people (e.g. bus drivers), the book concentrates on literary figures such as Virginia Woolf, D.H. Lawrence, Aldous Huxley, E.M. Forster and T.S. Eliot. These conversations seem, however, to be excuses to explore Anand's own personality, aspirations and development, and provide the background to his *Seven Ages of Man*. A collection of rather eulogistic *Perspectives of Mulk Raj Anand* was edited by K.K. Sharma (Humanities Press, New Delhi).

More substantial critical effort was represented by K.R. Rao, *The Fiction of Raja Rao* (Parimal Prakashan, Aurangabad), R.S. Sharma's *Anita Desai* (Indian Writers Series, Arnold-Heinemann, New Delhi), and by K.K. Sharma, *Bhabani Bhattacharya* (Abhinav, New Delhi) and R.K. Srivastava, *Perspectives on Bhabani Bhattacharya* (Vimal, Ghaziabad), which are useful additions to the two other books on Bhattacharya (by Dorothy Shimer and K.R. Chandrasekharan).

D. Ramakrishna's *Indo-English Prose: an anthology* (Arnold-Heinemann, New Delhi) may cause prose to begin to receive more attention, and M.K. Naik has edited *Perspectives on Indian Prose in English* (Abhinav, New Delhi), a companion volume to *Perspectives on Indian Drama in English*. Prem Kumar Basu has collected and edited the diary, lectures and sermons of the 1870 visit of Keshub Chunder Sen in England (Writers Workshop). Also from Writers Workshop is Sushil Mukherjee's *More Frankly Speaking*, a continuation of his *Frankly Speaking*, essays on social life in West Bengal. Other refreshing collections of essays are T.R. Srinivasarangam's *He Who Laughs Last* (Raghu Publications, Tuticorin), and M.L. Malhotra's reminiscences and reflections, *Warts and All* (Sunanda Publications, Ajmer), while Rahul Singh edited

Khushwant Singh's Editor's Page (IBH Publishing Company, Bombay), a collection of controversial editorials from *The Illustrated Weekly of India* and *Sunday*, and Khwaja Ahmed Abbas published a chronological selection from his *Last Page* in the weekly *Blitz* between 1947 and 1981 (*Bread, Beauty and Revolution*, Marwah Publications, New Delhi).

Ved Mehta's *A Family Affair: India Under Three Prime Ministers* is just one of the ever-increasing number of books being published in India, in English, on all sorts of everyday subjects.

Distinguished authors have contributed to the large number of books being written for children (in English) in India. Anita Desai's *The Village By the Sea* (Heinemann, London) portrays with incandescent clarity a village living out a rooted life in the middle of being modernised, and Ruskin Bond describes his own youth and that of his friends in *The Young Vagrants* (IBH, Bombay), written when he was in his teens. Also from IBH is Margaret Bhatt's *Up Country Down Country: Strange Adventures for Children*, and Nilima Sinha's *The Chandipur Jewels* won a Children's Book Trust competition. K.H. Devsare's *Who's Who of Indian Children's Writers* covers only Indic languages (Communications Publishers, New Delhi).

There was one noteworthy play (Priyachari Chakravarti's *Maharaja's Prayer*, Writers Workshop), but around fifty volumes of poetry, including some eighteen first collections. Worth noting are: Man Mohan Singh's *Village Poems* (foreword by Dom Moraes, Arnold-Heinemann, New Delhi); Jayanta Mahapatra's collection of twelve landscape poems, *Relationship* (Alok Prabha, Cuttack); G. Soundararaj, *The Harvest* (P.V. Nathan and Co, Madras); Rita Dalmiya, *In Aloneness* (Prayer Books, Calcutta); Nilima Das, *My Roots* (Reprint Publishers, Kanpur); Emmanuel N. Lall's *Blue Vanda* (Writers Workshop, Calcutta); and Keshav Malik's *Twenty Six Poems* (Usha Malik, New Delhi). With Manohar Bandopadhyay, Malik has also edited *Nineteen Poets: An Anthology of Contemporary Indo-Anglian Poetry*, which aims at introducing a younger generation of poets (Prachi Prakashan, New Delhi). Tijan M. Sallah's *When Africa Was A Young Woman* (Writers Workshop, Calcutta) draws attention once again to the Indian experience in Africa and other countries.

Poetry criticism attempted afresh to come to terms with earlier poets: Jasbir Jain's first full-length study of Henry Derozio, *The Colonial Encounter*, was published by the Centre for Commonwealth Literature and Research, Mysore; Amalendu Bose's *Michael Madhusudan Dutt* was published by the Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi; and *The Flute and the Drum*, a study of Sarojini Naidu, by V.A. Shahane and M.N. Sharma, is

available from Professor Shahane at Osmania University, Hyderabad. Urmila Verma has rewritten a fine Ph.D. thesis on *The Influence of English Poetry on Modern Hindi Poetry: 1900 to 1940* (Lokbharti Prakashan, Allahabad) in terms of technique, imagery, metre and diction.

There were a dozen volumes of short stories, of which Pritish Nandy's *Some Friends* (Arnold-Heinemann, New Delhi) and R.K. Narayan's *Malgudi Days* (Heinemann, London) are worth noting. In full-length fiction, attention continued to focus on the new availability of Jhabvala and Narayan in Penguin, though William Walsh's *R.K. Narayan: A Critical Appraisal* (Heinemann, London) must be mentioned. *Modern Indian Fiction* (edited by Saros Cowasjee and V.A. Shahane, Vikas, New Delhi) is an anthology of 'more or less self-contained' episodes from novels by eight of our principal writers.

There was a smaller crop of novels, though these tend to be of better quality generally — if only because the larger discipline involved, discourages all but the most determined: Manohar Malgonkar's latest, and large-scale, novel about espionage and the army, *Bandicoot Run* (Vision Books, New Delhi) is compulsively readable in its exploration of pettifoggery and intrigue. Prema Nandkumar's *The Atom and the Serpent* (Affiliated East-West Press, Madras) is misleadingly advertised as the first novel about campus life in India; it is realistic, if undistinguished in its language. Kamala Sanders' *Tempestuous Heights* (Exposition Press, New York) is a very readable story, but is set in a locale which confuses elements from different regions. Arabinda Ray's *Sorrow in Knowledge* (Arnold-Heinemann, New Delhi) is a moving semi-autobiographical novel about an attack of polio, and six months in a London hospital, by a now-handicapped author. Pramod Bhatnagar continues the recent interest in the hills of the north-east in *Zoramthangi: Daughter of the Hills* (Vikrant Press, New Delhi). And it is good to see Humayun Kabir's 1945 novel, *Men and Rivers* back in print (Orient Longman, Bombay). A.K. Shiri Kumar is a new novelist: *The Wonderful World of Nilayan Swamy* (Writers Workshop, Calcutta), and Kamala Markandaya's new novel, *Pleasure City*, was published by Chatto, London.

The new and anti-traditional genre of autobiography looms larger and larger: of exclusively literary interest is Prakash Tandon's latest volume, *Return to Panjab, 1961-75* (Vikas, New Delhi); Jagjit Singh's *Memoirs of a Mathematician Manque* (Vikas) is by the father of Operations Research in India; Minoo Masani was a member of the Lok Sabha, the Lower House of Parliament, from 1957 to 1970, Indian ambassador to Brazil, and Chairman of a UN sub-committee on Discrimination and Minorities (*Against the Tide*, also Vikas); Saroj Chakrabarty's *My Years*

with Dr B.C. Roy, 1882-1962, former Chief Minister of West Bengal (self-published, Calcutta) makes extensive use of Roy's correspondence with national figures such as Nehru, Pant and Patel; another Chief Minister, E.K. Nayanar of Kerala also published his autobiography, *My Struggles* (Vikas again); and N. Keshavan, ex Member of Parliament, published *Autobiography of an MP* (Vichara Sahitya, Bangalore); the civil servant K.P.S. Menon's *Many Worlds Revisited* (Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay) is a companion to his earlier *Many Worlds*. P.D. Tandon, journalist and politician, produced *Flames from the Ashes* (St Paul Society, Allahabad); R.N. Sen, industrialist and businessman, wrote *In Clive Street* (East India Publishers, Calcutta); Mar Aprem's *Strange But True* (Maryland Publishers, Trivandrum) is the honest and humorous self-portrait of the youngest Indian arch-bishop; and *Towards a Revolutionary Theatre* (M.C. Sarkar, Calcutta) consists of the reminiscences of the socialist Bengali director, producer and stage and screen actor Utpal Dutt, which throws considerable light on the People's Theatre movement in the context of recent political developments.

While not, in the strict sense, English Literature, all this shows how broad and varied has become the context of English-language literary activity in India.

PRABHU S. GUPTARA

NEW ZEALAND

With more than twenty collections of verse published in 1982, besides the *Collected Poems* of Alistair Campbell, the *Selected Poems* of our two foremost poets, Curnow and Baxter, two poetry anthologies, and a landmark anthology of contemporary Maori writing, the poetic year has been both abundant and various.

Alistair Campbell won the year's New Zealand Book Award for poetry with his *Collected Poems* (Alister Taylor); although its publication date is given as 1981, it didn't arrive in the bookshops until the new year. It is largely drawn from *Kapiti: Selected Poems 1947-71* and his two subsequent collections *Dreams, Yellow Lions* (1975) and *The Dark Lord of Savaiki* (1980) and marks a summing up of his career so far, rather than a new burst of creativity.

In that respect it may be compared with Allen Curnow's *Collected Poems 1933-1973*; since that fallow period Curnow has produced work of

quite extraordinary power, and the publication of *Selected Poems* (Penguin) replaces a book that has become increasingly redundant as subsequent work has appeared. The new selection encompasses a poetic career ranging across forty years, from 1939 (Curnow selects nothing before *Not in Narrow Seas*) to 1979 (all of *An Incorrigible Music* is included); one of the most enduring impressions one has is of the wholeness of the enterprise: like Eliot: 'What we call the beginning is often the end/ And to make an end is to make a beginning' — and another is the continuing increase in poetic strength that Curnow displays from one collection to the next. This book presents, to my mind, as excellent a body of verse as has been produced in this country; it also suggests that Curnow must be considered among the best of the contemporary writers of verse in English.

The other important selection is that of James K. Baxter and has been made by J.E. Weir, the editor of the monumental *Collected Poems* (1979), a splendid achievement both for publishing and scholarship but because of its necessary bulk, one that makes ready access to Baxter's finest work difficult; with its publication a selection was clearly essential. *Selected Poems* (Oxford) takes 248 poems from the 774 of the earlier work — which in turn were drawn from the more than 2,600 poems that Baxter wrote. Again a fine achievement; the only quibble one might make is that after not only preparing the *Collected Poems*, but also the three volumes of posthumous selections, Weir might well have stood aside as editor of this volume — which will remain the definitive one for some time — in order that a different perspective be given on this poet.

Oxford has also brought out its *Book of Contemporary New Zealand Poetry*, chosen by Fleur Adcock. This presumably 'updates' Alistair Paterson's *15 Contemporary New Zealand Poets* (1980) — publication rights for which, incidentally have been taken up by Grove Press in the United States — but I find it gives a much more conservative and colourless account of the contemporary scene than does the earlier one. Although Adcock presents twenty one poets, she has but eight in common with Paterson, due partly to some silly nonsense about whom she defines as a New Zealand poet (of course Paterson also made some foolish omissions, which he defends on the spurious grounds that, in 1980, there was a particular direction in which New Zealand poetry was moving; his selection was designed to reinforce that view, and so the cart came before the horses), and also to what some have seen as a bias towards Wellington based poets. In any event the forthcoming publication of Penguin's replacement of Curnow's *New Zealand Verse* (1960), this time edited by Ian Wedde and Harvey McQueen, should by all

accounts supercede the Adcock venture. The other general anthology is volume five of the biennial *Poetry New Zealand*, a competent but largely uninspiring survey of two years' output.

However, the most important anthological publication has been that of Maori writing, *Into the World of Light* (Heinemann), edited by Witi Ihimaera and Don Long. Having acknowledged the long tradition of oral Maori literature, the editors discern a radical change dating from the early 1960s whereby 'Maori literature began to unfurl the views of the people, until then participants in virtually the largest underground movement known in New Zealand, into the world of light'. The 39 contributors offer *waiata*, poetry, prose and drama and the anthology is truly an exciting justification for the editors' argument.

Any attempt to assess the large output of individual verse collections would be foolhardy; nevertheless an outline of the product can be given. Allen Curnow has immediately supplemented his *Selected Poems* with a new collection, *You Will Know When You Get There* (Auckland University Press, Oxford University Press), which is, in my opinion, equally as powerful as his acclaimed *An Incurable Music*; the two books seem designed to be taken in tandem with each other.

Other established poets who produced further collections in 1982 were C.K. Stead with *Geographies* (AUP/OUP); Vincent O'Sullivan who had both *The Butcher Papers* (AUP/OUP) and *The Rose Ballroom and other poems* (McIndoe); Bill Manhire, *Good Looks* (AUP/OUP); Rob Jackaman, *Solo Lovers* (South Head Press, Australia); Barry Mitcalfe, *Beach* (Coromandel Press); W.H. Oliver, *Poor Richard* (Port Nicolson Press); Louis Johnson, *Coming and Going* (Mallinson Rendel); Alistair Paterson, *Qu'appelle* (Pilgrims South Press); Sam Hunt *Running Scared* (Whitcoulls), and John Summers, *Prancing before the Ark* (Pisces Press). Hone Tuwhare has *Year of the Dog: poems new and selected* (McIndoe).

Of these, I particularly enjoyed *Good Looks*; I thought Jackaman achieved real assurance in *Solo Lovers*; I was impressed with the technical excellences of *Geographies*; and delighted to renew an acquaintance with Butcher, Baldy and company in O'Sullivan's *Papers*. Mitcalfe's *Beach* is both a poetic and visual evocation of the New Zealand coastline — during his year as Writer-in-Residence here at Canterbury he also completed a long narrative sequence called 'Parihaka' which was published both in *Pacific Quarterly Moana* and in *Poetry Australia*.

Two poets followed up successful first collections with a second — Meg Campbell with *A Durable Fire* (Te Kotare Press), and Anne Donovan with *Heads and Leaf* (Walden Books, Westland). Both of these are well produced and both confirm the initial promise shown by their authors.

Two of the best of the first collections have also been written by women: Keri Hulme's *The Silences Between* (Moeraki Conversations) (AUP/OUP), and Cilla McQueen's *Homing In* (McIndoe). New Zealand women verse writers find themselves part of a strong tradition and these four poets do nothing but strengthen what was started by Blanche Bughan and Ursula Bethell.

Other collections during the year were *Zephyr* (Piano Publishing) by Gary McCormick, *This Night Is Winter* (Helicon Press) by John Paisley, and *Solo Flight* (University of Otago Press) by Bill Sewell. Koenraad Kuiper's *Signs of Life* is a haiku-style sequence beautifully printed by Wai-te-ata Press, and a first book, as is Bill Direen's *Twenty Nine One* (Prototype Publications) and R.F. Brown's *Gone No Address* (Coromandel), with illustrations by his son Nigel. Fiction writer Barry Southam has collected poems written over a number of years as *The People Dance* (Northcott Reeves). The title suggests Southam's social concerns; his subjects are treated both satirically and compassionately.

Women writers also contributed strongly to the fiction written during the year. The best novel of the year was a first novel: Sue McCauley's *Other Halves* was immediately successful, and tells of the relationship between a divorced woman and a Maori adolescent, displaying both rage — at social and bureaucratic iniquities — and tenderness, in discussing the trials of the protagonists. Yvonne du Fresne's *Book of Ester* is also a first novel and treats a bicultural theme, here the life of a girl born of Danish parents in New Zealand and her efforts to combine aspects of her past and her present in a new whole. *Greenstone Land* (MacDonald Futura) is a wide-ranging costume drama by Yvonne Kalman, already in paperback, as also, from the previous year, are Fiona Kidman's *Mandarin Summer* and Phillip Temple's *Beak of the Moon*. From the indefatigable Coromandel Press are two novels by Sue Freeman, *Wales on a Wet Friday*, *I Cried in My Do-nut* and *Fat Chance*, both road novels, the second set in New Zealand. Finally, I look forward to reading James McNeish's latest novel *Joy* (Hodder & Stoughton), a comic satire about a town called Joy and its inhabitants, the Jovians.

The output of short fiction has not been as considerable as in 1981 but three collections stand out. Fiona Kidman follows her two novels with *Mrs Dixon and Friends* (Heinemann), Owen Marshall displays the fruits of his 1981 Writer-in-Residency here at Canterbury in *The Master of Big Jingles and other stories* (McIndoe) and Michael Gifkins has impressed with his stories in *After the Revolution* (Longman Paul). Out too late to be remarked in last year's Year was Michael Morrissey's *The Fat Lady*

and *The Astronomer* (Sword Press): it won the 1982 award for the best first work of fiction.

A fascinating re-publication has been Vincent O'Sullivan's edition of Katherine Mansfield's *The Aloe*, with *Prelude*, where the earlier story is set side-by-side with the later one. It's a fine effort too by Port Nicholson Press, a new publishing house whose initial list includes not only this and Oliver's *Poor Richard* (above), but also an autobiography by Ormond Wilson, *An Outsider Looks Back*. In this field, and following his death, Penguin have reprinted the three volumes of Frank Sargeson's autobiography — *Once is Enough*, *More than Enough* and *Never Enough* — together as *Sargeson*, and also *The Stories of Frank Sargeson*; these two volumes include a great deal of his finest work.

With the death of Bruce Mason at the end of the year, it was not only the world of New Zealand theatre that suffered a great loss; Mason was not only a man of letters in the widest sense but in his generosity towards young artists of all kinds he was an enormously positive influence on the development of the arts in New Zealand. His loss will be deeply felt.

The majority of dramatic publication in New Zealand emanates from Wellington, and from two established outlets in particular. From the consortium of Price Milburn, Victoria University Press and Currency comes Roger Hall's latest publication, *Fifty-Fifty*, while Playmarket under the general editorship of David Carnegie continues its thrifty service in publishing New Zealand Theatrescripts with Mark Prain's *Seized*. The exception is Hodder & Stoughton's *Once on Chunuk Bar*, Maurice Shadbolt's first play.

Hall's latest performed play is *Hot Water*, an indication that there has been no drying up of his prolific talent. David Carnegie's account of the Second New Zealand Playwrights' Workshop (in *Landfall* 144) is of a highly successful occasion and speaks well of the four fully workshopped plays — Hilary Beaton's *Outside In* ('an intense female prison drama'), Marcus Campbell's *Household Gods* ('a play of Chekov-like inactivity punctuated with surrealist visual images on the margin of an erupting Ruapehu'), Seamus Quinn's *A Street Called Straight* (set in Protestant East Belfast) and Carolyn Burn's *Objection Overruled* ('a serious play in comic mode about women and society'). This last has already been performed — a popular success at Christchurch's Court Theatre.

The end of 1981 also saw the publication of the first full length critical and historical study of our drama. Howard McNaughton's *New Zealand Drama* (Twayne) begins from 1840 and follows the development of writing for the New Zealand theatre through to 1979 and playwrights

Joseph Musaphia and Roger Hall. A work of thorough scholarship.

Two major works of literary criticism are both concerned with New Zealand fiction. Peter Simpson has written a study of Ronald Hugh Morrieson, an author whose four novels and two short stories were only 'discovered' after Morrieson's death in 1972 at the age of 50, his life having been spent in the seclusion of the small Taranaki township of Hawera. Besides being a first class study of the writer this book has already attracted considerable attention because of Simpson's radical argument for a re-appraisal of the critical approaches to New Zealand fiction as a whole. The latest issue of *Landfall* (144) has a well considered critique of the approach by Lawrence Jones. Simpson's *Ronald Hugh Morrieson* is in Oxford's New Zealand Writers and their Work series.

There has also been *Critical Essays on the New Zealand Short Story* (Heinemann), edited by Cherry Hankin. This may be seen as representing a conservative tradition in the criticism of New Zealand fiction. There is a particularly fine essay on Witi Ihimaera and Patricia Grace by Bill Pearson.

As far as the journals are concerned I should mention first that *Pacific Quarterly Moana* has upheld its high standard of interest and punctuality, despite my neglecting to notice it in last year's *Kunapipi* review. Besides a general issue, the journal has included two issues covering specific areas — *Oral and Traditional Literatures* and *Each Other's Dreams*, the second an anthology of contemporary Black American writing selected by L.E. Scott.

Following the death of former editor, Peter Smart, *Landfall* continues under the editorship of David Dowling and Michael Harlow. The first issue of *Parallax*, a journal of post-modern literature edited by Alan Loney, made its first appearance; but there was nothing from *Islands* in 1982. Finally, while not strictly a New Zealand journal, *Span*, the SPACLALS organ, is being edited from the University of Canterbury by Peter Simpson, after its sojourn in Queensland.

All in all, a strong year, especially for poetry. Besides Alistair Campbell's *Collected Poems*, the 1982 New Zealand Book Awards were Maurice Gee's *Meg* and Vincent O'Sullivan's *Dandy Elison for Lunch* jointly for fiction, and Robin Morrison's book of photographs, *The South Island of New Zealand from the Road*, for non-fiction. Allen Curnow will spend 1983 in Menton as the Katherine Mansfield Fellow.

SIMON GARRETT

PAKISTAN

An eventful year, it witnessed a country-wide teachers' strike for a quarter of the academic year and harsh federal cuts in the grants to universities, which the Punjab University attempted to ameliorate by celebrating its Centenary with such frills as literary congresses and symposia. Meantime, the International Literacy Day passed unnoticed. And a reflective gloom hung over the literary world as Death took away some of our best Urdu writers: poets Ehsan Danish, Hafeez Jullundhari and Firaq Gorakhpuri, and novelists and short-story writers Khadija Mastoor and Ghulam Abbas.

Although Ustad Daman, the famous septagenarian Punjabi oral poet, turned down grants awarded him by the Academy of Letters and the Punjab Governor, for reasons of conscience, the Government intends to direct greater attention to the questions of culture and language. The Academy of Letters in Islamabad plans to give annual awards for literary works published in all the main tongues spoken in Pakistan (which includes English). Sindhi writers and intellectuals have called for the creation of a language commission to settle the question of languages and finally determine the relationship of the national language (Urdu) to the regional languages. In addition, a panel of English professors met in Lahore, at the University of the Punjab, and discussed the teaching of English in the country. The meeting, which was chaired by the Vice Chancellor of the University, analysed the problems of teaching languages within the educational system and concluded with a resolution of support for bilingualism in education, thereby affirming the continuance of both English and Urdu as instructional media. A couple of seminars were held in Islamabad to explore a larger subject, Cultural Identity, but these were dominated by religious and social science talk without much reference to creative expression in society. But Islamabad can be lively and went to town for an international mushaira (poetry symposium), with Pakistani, Chinese and Egyptian poets, on Independence Day (14 August).

Translation, on the whole, has picked up in the last couple of years and its substance and significance can now be seen. Taufiq Rafat's *Bulleh Shah: A Selection Rendered into English Verse* (Lahore, Vanguard) has made its mark as a beginning for literary translation in the 1980s, and more volumes are expected. The present book is the widest selection available in English of the work of the mystical Punjabi poet, Bulleh Shah (1680-1758). The book also contains a fine introduction to Bulleh Shah and his times by Khaled Ahmed. Faiz Ahmed

Faiz has been translated widely, and last year alone saw the publication of English translations of his Urdu poems by Ikram Azam, in *Poems from Faiz* (Rawalpindi, Nairang-e-Khayal Publications); by Carolyn Kizer, Naomi Lazard and Alamgir Hashmi, in the *Annual of Urdu Studies* (Chicago); and by Faiz himself, in *Only Connect: Literary Perspectives East and West* edited by Guy Amirthanayagam and S.C. Harrex (Adelaide & Honolulu, CRNLE & East-West Center). Also of interest were the *Selected Short Stories of Ahmed Nadeem Qasmi*, translated from the Urdu by Sajjad Shaikh (Karachi, National Book Foundation), and the appearance of the second edition of *Pakistan: Modern Urdu Short Stories* (Islamabad, RCD Cultural Institute) compiled by the late S. Viqar Azim. Khushwant Singh's English translation of Muhammad Iqbal's *Shikwa & Jawab-i-Shikwa (Complaint and Answer: Iqbal's Dialogue with Allah)* (Delhi, OUP) has drawn much adverse criticism in India, Pakistan and other places. C.M. Naim, Daud Kamal and Khalid Hasan published their translations of Urdu and Punjabi work in several journals.

Zulfikar Ghose's new novel, *A New History of Torments* (London, Hutchinson; New York: Holt, Rinehart), is a substantial addition to his Brazilian saga. Set in contemporary Brazil, the novel exploits the resources of the story in multiple directions to elicit from the land a meaning for those who inhabit it. Ghose knows how to make his language sing, and it is good to have him back on the familiar ground since his last novel, which might soon begin to look like an inter-novel. The present novel has already drawn wide and favourable interest. Its 'torments', however *unreal*, are the believable segments of an increasingly sombre vision.

Poets have been publishing in magazines both in Pakistan and abroad: Taufiq Rafat in *The Ravi* (Lahore), Kaleem Omar in *The Ravi* and *Tempo* (Karachi), Daud Kamal in *The Muslim* (Islamabad), *Lotus* (Beirut) and *Viewpoint* (Lahore), and Alamgir Hashmi in the *Liberal and Fine Arts Review* (USA), *Ariel* (Canada), *Orbis* (UK), and *Aspect* (Australia).

Ahmed Ali has been investigating the socio-political problems in Pakistan's refurbished Islamic set-up and giving TV lectures in Karachi. He has also revised his novel, *Ocean of Night* (1964), for re-publication. And I must mention two titles in criticism and non-fiction: *Islam and Modernity: Transformation of an Intellectual Tradition* by Fazlur Rahman (University of Chicago Press) and A.K. Brohi's *Islam in the Modern World* (Lahore: Islamic Book Foundation/al-Maarif). From among contemporary writers, only the work of Zulfikar Ghose, Alamgir

Hashmi and Intizar Husain was the subject of criticism, in the form of reviews and articles. Gerhard Stilz's volume, *Indien (India)*, in the Fink Verlag (Munich) series concerning New Literatures in English only covers 'Indian' Literature in English and will not help much for the literatures of any other parts of South Asia, although some items of Pakistani and Sri Lankan interests are included.

The Ravi, edited by Babar Hashmi, brought out a fine issue (LXXI 2) deservedly praised by *The Pakistan Times*. It included the work of several Pakistani poets and the prose writer Shuaib bin Hasan. *Explorations* (Lahore) is still under involuntary suspension. The Jamshoro journal, *Ariel*, is of critical and scholarly interest, apart from being the only English professional journal published in the year.

ALAMGIR HASHMI

SINGAPORE

After the excitement of the previous two years, 1982 was surprisingly a very quiet year insofar as literary activity is concerned. Indeed, one is left to wonder if the energy burnt itself out?

Only one book needs to be specifically mentioned here: Goh Poh Seng's *Bird With One Wing*. This collection of poems is Goh's third and is handsomely presented. The contents are quite another thing. Goh has a good satirical touch but this he does not exploit to advantage in this collection. Nor does his sharp, incisive commentary show itself in this volume. Rather he has moved on to more personal themes (such as relationships, history, myth) using the narrative as his major mode. On occasion he succeeds, but rarely: he does not, with very few exceptions, have the ability to sustain a long poem. The poetry becomes prosaic (and Goh is certainly a prose writer of strength) and threatens to slide off. The positive thing about *Bird With One Wing* is that it shows Goh coming to grips with a new and, one might add, important, aspect of creative writing — the confessional, especially when this is linked to broader themes. One looks forward to Goh's next book with a certain amount of interest.

The Ministry of Culture's *Singa* magazine continued a struggling existence. Produced two times each year *Singa* can play a vital role in forging a viable literary identity as it publishes translations of Malay, Tamil and Chinese works as well as those written in English. And some quite good

new talent is to be discerned within its covers. Furthermore each issue has an essay or an article that deals with one or other of the remaining arts of dance, drama, painting, etc. As always, the two issues which came out this year are very attractive and, for the price (\$2.50), exceedingly cheap.

A regular and popular part of the local literary scene, the Sunday Times' *Poetry Corner* came to an unfortunate close after nearly three years. Its editor, K. Singh, took up a visiting appointment at the University of Papua New Guinea and *Poetry Corner* ceased as a result. This is the third time that such a feature has come and gone. The earliest *Poetry Corner* column was begun by Edwin Thumboo, it was later rekindled by Arthur Yap and, finally, by K. Singh. We do not know if a fourth attempt will be made. The thing that we do know is that through its columns some fine poems emerged and it is hoped that the contributors to *Poetry Corner* will not be denied other avenues for publication.

The highlight for 1982 as far as the arts are concerned was the Singapore Arts Festival which took place towards the end of the year. It naturally attracted huge crowds and manifested the fact that in spite of its image overseas as essentially a 'shopover' city, Singapore has a soul. But from a literary point of view it is saddening to note that the consultant-director, Anthony Steel (who may be known to some readers as having directed the well-established Adelaide Arts Festival) did not see fit to incorporate some kind of a Writers' Week. There is enough going in this respect to make such an event practical as well as interesting. There were some dramatic works put on — and we might here mention *The Samseng and the Chettiar's Daughter* which was based on *The Beggars Opera* — but more could have been done by way of forums, discussions, workshops. Perhaps the next time round the organisers will bear writers in mind?

Other usual literary activities such as those organised by the University's Literary Society, the Society of Singapore Writers, the National Library, the National Book Development Council, continued as normal, but without any great impact. Maybe what is lacking is a concerted effort to pull resources together to ensure that literature does not suffer the ignominious fate of undue neglect.

KIRPAL SINGH

SOUTH AFRICA

1982 saw Athol Fugard mark his fiftieth year with the semi-autobiographical play *Master Harold and the 'Boys'*. Set in a café in Port Elizabeth during Harold's (Fugard's) youth, this powerful exploration of a characteristically South African 'master-boy' relationship deserved the honours accorded it by American critics during its opening runs at Yale and in New York. And recognition of Fugard as a leading contemporary dramatist was confirmed in the form of *Athol Fugard: A Source Guide* (compiled by Temple Hauptfleisch, Donker, Johannesburg) and a 'case-book' of critical articles, *Athol Fugard* (ed. Stephen Gray, McGraw Hill, Johannesburg). In addition, a major monograph and Fugard's own *Notebooks* are due to appear from Donker in 1983.

The 'casebook' on Fugard was one of a new 'Southern African Literature Series', published by McGraw Hill, and was launched together with *Soweto Poetry* (ed. Michael Chapman), a collection of press reviews, interviews and articles that attempts to place the black poetry 'renaissance' of the 1970s within a literary and social context. This 'casebook' may fruitfully be read in conjunction with two comprehensive anthologies, *Voices from Within: Black Poetry from Southern Africa* (eds Chapman & Achmat Dangor, Donker) and *The Return of the Amasi Bird: South African Black Poetry 1892-1982* (eds Tim Couzens & Essop Patel, Ravan Press, Johannesburg), while further volumes of black poetry to appear were Mongane Serote's *Selected Poems* (Donker), Mafika Gwala's *No More Lullabies* (Ravan) and Oswald Mtshali's *Sounds of a Cowhide Drum*, reissued by Donker.

Other important reprints included Sol. T. Plaatje's great political book, first published in 1916, *Native Life in South Africa* (Ravan), a powerful response from this pioneering black writer to the Native Land Act of 1913, in terms of which Africans began to feel the impact of institutionalised apartheid. The theme of racial confrontation is also central to Harry Bloom's novel, *Transvaal Episode*, and Todd Matshikiza's autobiography, *Chocolates for my Wife*. Both works were banned when they originally appeared around the time of Sharpeville and have now been released in South Africa along with Can Themba's collection of short stories, *The Will to Die*. (All of these books appear in a new series, 'Africasouth Paperbacks', by David Philip of Cape Town.)

In fact, 1982 was notable more for its reprints, anthologies and secondary works than for developments in imaginative expression. Nevertheless, alongside such seminal publications as Peter Alexander's *Roy Campbell: A Critical Biography* (OUP, London & David Philip),

Jack Cope's *The Adversary Within: Dissident Writing in Afrikaans* (David Philip) and *South African Literature 1980* (the first in a series of annual overviews of literary events, Centre for Southern African Literature & Donker), there appeared two interesting volumes of poetry (Chris Mann's *New Shades* and Stephen Gray's *Love Poems: Hate Poems*, both from David Philip), a novel on the legacy generated by 'Soweto' (Mbulelo Mzamane's *The Children of Soweto*, from Ravan) and a first collection of short stories by Mutloatse Mothobi entitled *Mama Ndiyalila* (Ravan). The appearance, too, of David Adey's anthology, *Under the Southern Cross* (Donker), was a reminder that the short story is a major genre in South African literature — but one that has not yet received adequate critical attention.

If 1982 was a lean year for novels (André Brink's blockbuster, *A Chain of Voices*, was perhaps the most notable achievement), there continued to be encouraging signs of activity in 'fringe' theatres in Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town, with a playwright of definite promise emerging in Paul Slabolepsky, whose *Saturday Night at the Palace* offered a particularly fresh treatment of the 'master-servant' relationship that was also germane to Fugard's *Master Harold. Woza Albert*, in which Mbongeni Ngema and Percy Mtwa utilise (under Barney Simon's direction) the conditions of Poor Theatre, vividly depicted the return of the Messiah, as a black man, to South Africa of the present day, while Maishe Maponya's *The Hungry Earth* (staged, like *Woza Albert*, both in South Africa and abroad) continued to define a poetics of protest and resistance within 'township drama'.

What with the ever-inventive example of Fugard, the increasing willingness of 'fringe' theatres to produce indigenous plays and the expected appearance, in 1983, of the first comprehensive anthology of South African English drama, the coming decade could well see a truly 'South African' theatre at last beginning to gather momentum.

MICHAEL CHAPMAN

The absence of reports on East and West Africa and the Caribbean is not due to prejudice on the part of the editor. The absence is due to the failure on the part of the people who promised to write the sections to fulfil their promise. Editor.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Michael Rawdon lives in Alberta. A book of his stories will be published this year. *Bruce Cudney* is a Canadian poet living in Ontario. *Monty Reid* is a co-editor of the Canadian journal *The Camrose Review*. *Irene Gross McGuire* is a Canadian poet who lives in Ontario. *Keith Harrison* teaches at Dawson College, Montreal. His novel *Dead Ends* was published in 1981. *Wilson Harris's* most recent novel is *The Angel at the Gate* (Faber). *E.A. Markham* is assistant editor of *Ambit*. His collected poems are soon to be published by Anvil Press. *James Berry* won the 1981 British National Poetry Prize. New Beacon Press have recently published a book of his poems, *Lucy's Letters and Loving*. *Stephen Watson* teaches at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. *Kevin Green* teaches at the University of Besancon and is writing a book on Xavier Herbert. *Mark Macleod* is poetry editor of *Meanjin* and teaches at Macquarie University, Sydney. *Robert Drewe's* most recent novel is *A Cry in the Jungle Bar*. *Patrick Morgan* teaches at Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education, Victoria. *Margaret Butcher* is Education Officer at the Commonwealth Institute in London.

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E.D. Blodgett

"what the hell is a journal of lutheran thought"

Ed Dyck

"But whosoever do feel any love or desire to the word, let them acknowledge with thankfulness, that this affection is poured into them by the Holy Ghost"

Martin Luther

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