

than the Eclogues, Georgics, and Aeneid was responsible for the formation of Broch's creative Vergil complex." He makes an interesting and quite original comment about its genre: "Having thought of the *Death of Vergil* as akin to a novel because of its enormous bulk, we suddenly realize that it conforms in all essentials to the classic type of the early Italian 'Novella' of Boccaccio and his successors, as later defined by Goethe and Tieck."

This essay was originally published in 1947. At the time of its writing Weigand was clearly ill-at-ease with a Broch who was too experimental and Joycian for his own more Mannian tastes. Two years later Broch moved to New Haven and it was planned to offer him a position in the German department at Yale (of which Weigand was a distinguished member).<sup>2</sup> This bit of literary history further attests to Weigand's wide and generous critical tolerance.

The remaining essays in *Surveys and Soundings* study such themes as the reappearance of the number seventy-two, referring to the languages of the world, from ancient Egypt through the seventeenth century *Simplicissimus* of Grimmelshausen; such writers as Goethe, Schiller, Hauptmann; such individual works as the Provençal romance *Flamenca*, *Goethe's Faust*, and Chamisso's *Peter Schlemihl*. There are even two fine excursions into Comparative Literature: one a study connecting Schiller's Sophoclean *Die Braut von Messina* with *Oedipus Rex*; the other a brief history of Shakespeare's reception in Germany, highlighting the criticism (including the *Hamlet* discussion in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*) and translation of his plays. The impressive range of these essays attests to Weigand's astonishing erudition.

Although *Surveys and Soundings* does not have the tight coherence of Wellek's *Concepts of Criticism*, we are still fortunate to have it. George Steiner told us not long ago that "literary criticism should arise out of a debt of love." In this sense,

Hermann Weigand is clearly writing literary criticism—and of a fairly high order.<sup>3</sup>

Reviewed by MELVIN J. FRIEDMAN

<sup>1</sup>Theodore Ziolkowski, *Hermann Broch*, Columbia Essays on Modern Writers (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), p. 45.

<sup>2</sup>See Ziolkowski, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup>Of particular interest is a review-essay on *Surveys and Soundings* which appeared after the completion of the present piece; see Theodore Ziolkowski, "Hermann J. Weigand and a Letter from Thomas Mann: The Critical Dialogue," *Yale Review*, Summer 1967, pp. 537-549.

### *The Prevailing Ethos*

**The Twentieth Century Mind; Essays on Contemporary Thought**, by Donald Atwell Zoll, *Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967. vii + 152 pp. \$5.00.*

**A Second Federalist; Congress Creates a Government**, edited and selected by Charles S. Hyneman and George W. Carey, *New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967. xvii + 325 pp. \$2.95.*

**The New Apocalypse: The Radical Christian Vision of William Blake**, by Thomas J. J. Altizer, *East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1967. xxi + 226 pp. \$8.50.*

PROFESSOR ZOLL writes well on philosophy, better, indeed, than most of his colleagues in political science. He seems notably competent on the more intricate issues of our time. He sees the age in which we live as one of moral slippage and as one of impending conformity and hysteria. But it is also a time of impressive philosophical achievement. Hyneman and Carey offer us well-chosen selections from

the generation of the Second Founders of the Republic, men who believed they were solving the permanent issues in the creation of a free government. Contemporary with them was William Blake, a romanticist spawned by the illusions of the French Revolution and by the idea that America represented some kind of realization of the perfections of nature. Zoll shows us what has actually come to be in our post-romantic age, in which the intellectual styles of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have long since ceased to be. Both the assurances of our Second Founding Fathers and the cyclopean ponderosities of the didactic poems of William Blake are measurements of what has happened to us in the intellectual evolution of a century and a half.

As Americans it must be clear that *A Second Federalist* is of more interest to us than even the beautiful facsimile editions of Blake the artist and the poet which have been published in recent years. Blake was inventing poetic nonsense in an age when it was rather commonly done. Our Second Framers thought in terms of political and moral practicalities and not with the symbolizations of science in relation to government. Nor would they be greatly concerned with the frictional, close-up isolations of a world that has now known war almost steadily for more than half a century. It was easily possible, I believe, to think like traditional American republicans, or even like romantic visionaries such as Blake and his fellows (e.g., Godwin, Shelley, Tom Paine—and other enemies of Edmund Burke), right down to the end of the hundred years of “almost” peace which followed Napoleon I’s disaster in the sunken road on the field of Waterloo. Ours is the vision of Dante’s Purgatory and the Inferno and not of William Blake’s Albion and Jerusalem.

Zoll’s final chapter in which he undertakes to characterize our time is an intellectual achievement, since it is a striking synthesis of scientific and humanistic thought. He shows in this chapter and in

other parts of the volume that much of our behavioral science is based on an outdated empiricism, or a theory of science more like that of David Hume perhaps than like the formation of empirical concepts about things we cannot see. The scientist is generally an adherent of some sort of logical realism, while many a social scientist acts like a radical empiricist as empiricism has been redefined by modern positivists. Clearly, however, Zoll’s report on the scientific basis for the extra-experiential is one of the most important of the sections in the volume. We have in this short book significant chapters for the student of methodology.

In his first chapter Zoll presents the psychological weaknesses of contemporary democracy. He is pessimistic but he is not morose—as the dust jacket affirms. Still, in Chapter Two he takes after Senator Goldwater—with all the absurd clichés of the 1964 campaign. I suspect that Barry Goldwater would agree with nearly every line of Chapter One. Might he not note: “Zoll also says in many ways what I said in 1964 when left-intellectuals were calling me a racist, though a member of the NAACP, and a war-monger in spite of the Kennedy-Johnson plunge into war on the Asiatic landmass.” My personal hope is that even Zoll may someday shed the abrasive blinders of 1964. I wish he had used more material from continental conservatism in his asseverations regarding the failure of American conservatism.

Hyneman and Carey show us in their rich selections that the authors of *A Second Federalist*, like those of the first one, believed in the American practice of popular sovereignty, even at times extending it to the interpretation of the rights of man. A free republic would surely be one that is based on the ultimate sovereignty of its citizens. Today much has changed; we are losing our tradition. It has become respectable to advocate now some conception of elitist government. In the time of World War II, elitism was considered fascist in our crusade to save democracy.

Note well Peter Bachrach's *The Theory of Democratic Elitism* (1967) in which it is argued that we must rely on established elites to maintain the "rules of the game." Popular participation must be accepted if it is in defense of liberalism. He urges upon us that we let the liberal elite alone, but that we should go after the oligarchies of private business. What a contrast Hyneman and Carey show us! An earlier and conservative, as well as liberal participation, has been part of our tradition, but it is rejected in the contemporary elitism of social "scientists." It is rejected, because as Zoll brilliantly shows, the social scientist has a baggage of hidden postulates based on the fear of the authoritative affirmation of popular values. (pp. 75-76) Even William F. Buckley, Jr., recently and unhappily objected to the most democratic of all our procedures—the initiative, referendum and recall. I suspect that it is only certain kinds of conservatives who love the people as they are, as surely did many of the speakers in Congress in the first generation after the adoption of the Constitution.

Early American republican theory was the American proposition about human happiness in the actual world. It was flavored with utopia in the sense that it was regarded as the natural constitutional law of the free society. In contrast, the French Revolution was practical in that it destroyed the old institutions, it attempted to create a new political order, and it attempted to spread its ideology by war. Still, behind the revolutionary movement were a hundred shadings of utopian dreams. The relationship between nineteenth century romanticism and these dreams is complicated, too complicated for casual statement. But it must be agreed, I think, that the English poets and dreamers of the new order of life, including Blake and his friends, were utopian and romantic.

As a revolutionary William Blake had no interest in participating in ordinary political agitation. His visions through the poetic imagination apparently led him to

believe that the world was inevitably headed in the right direction. Perhaps it is for this reason that Professor Altizer (who has written among other books *Radical Theology and the Death of God* [1966] and *The Gospel of Christian Atheism* [1966]) believed one might use the abstractions of Hegel to explain the wordy giants of Blake's didactic poems. Hegel, it would seem to me, merely makes Blake less understandable than before. As a revolutionary Blake seemed to hate the institutions of Great Britain (his Albion), especially the formally organized Christian Church. To this reviewer it is clear that Altizer is more concerned with Blake's contribution to "God is Dead" ideas than with his potential revolutionary reconstruction of society in some visionary epoch outside of time. Many would, I think, be more content to read Blake's facsimile editions with their remarkable paintings, printing, and poetry than to see in Blake a contemporary advocate of a theological view, which to many is surely of only passing interest. For us today who are logical and scientific as well as imaginative (like Zoll) there is not much political juice to be squeezed out of Blake. If we are conservative we will return to *A Second Federalist* and not to the *Radical Christian Vision of William Blake*, in part because the radical Christian vision of today is activist; it is on the streets with violence and a reform, but hardly with a program.

Reviewed by FRANCIS G. WILSON

### *The Utopian Mirage*

**Utopia—The Perennial Heresy**, by Thomas Molnar, *New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967. 245 pp. \$5.95.*

AT A TIME when—to quote Kierkegaard—"men, having refused to use their freedom

of thought, claim freedom of speech as a compensation," a book like Professor Molnar's *Utopia* is a great comfort. In an atmosphere polluted by a multitude of shallow and confused books on religion, on God and on the world, on love, on sex, on freedom and filled with slogans such as "modern man," "man has come of age," "the necessity of adapting religion to the industrialized age," Molnar's book is a current of clean, healthy air. In it we find clear and sober thinking, good taste, a courageous unmasking of fashionable false prophets. Ours is a period in which the gregarious instinct has reached its peak, in which "aliveness" rather than truth is the norm, in which the fact that an intellectual trend is "in the air" is taken as proof of its validity, and it is therefore a great consolation to encounter a mind that is not infected with historical relativism nor overpowered by the "dynamism" of public opinion—that is, an independent mind. We mean the real independence of a mind interested only in truth and thus firmly rooted in the truth that has been conquered in the past, the independence which gladly and gratefully accepts the invaluable treasures of tradition. There is no greater lack of independence than that of the man who above all seeks the "new" and believes that by severing himself from all tradition, whether good or bad, true or false, he is making himself independent.

In *Utopia, the Perennial Heresy* Molnar exhibits an extraordinary scholarship. But unlike many scholars he does not make of scholarship a fetish. He does not replace thought with scholarship; nor the pursuit of truth, with the striving for scholarship. In so many instances certain positive qualities only unfold their true value when they are not the theme, not in the foreground; thus it is with scholarship, which acquires a real value when it remains in the background, an accompanying factor leaving the stage to true insights.

And notwithstanding his broad scholarship, Molnar does not fall victim to the widespread historicism which C. S. Lewis

so brilliantly exposed in *The Screwtape Letters*:

The Historical Point of View, put briefly, means that when a learned man is presented with any statement in an ancient author, the one question he never asks is whether it is true. He asks who influenced the ancient writer, and how far the statement is consistent with what he said in other books, and what phase in the writer's development, or in the general history of thought, it illustrates, and how it affected later writers, and how often it has been misunderstood (specially by the learned man's own colleagues) and what the general course of criticism on it has been for the last ten years, and what is "the present state of the question."

Molnar's book is also characterized by originality. He does not inform the reader about all the literature on utopia or offer a multiplicity of references to other authors; rather, he presents an original intuition of this phenomenon, a profound diagnosis of this perennial heresy. Again, we stress: originality is by no means what he is aiming at—just truth. True originality is only to be found in the author who is not seeking to be original. Originality is essentially an epiphenomenon. As soon as it becomes the end of an author's work, his originality is doomed.

When an ideal, a plan, or an expectation is labeled "utopian," the connotation is primarily of something that, though beautiful and desirable, can never become real. The blame implied in the term "utopian" is usually without reference to its value; it rather refers to the fact that it is incompatible with reality—an outgrowth of wishful thinking, a dream—castles in the moon, as one used to say, as long as one did not prepare for a landing on the moon. But in Molnar's terminology, "utopian" means much more than an ideal that cannot be realized. The utopia that he calls the perennial heresy is not only something unrealistic, but something evil:

Utopian thinking is no mere exercise in wish fulfillment; it is a constitutive ele-