

erotic plane, while subtly uniting the two interpretations to form a most attractive reading. Whatever second thoughts one may have later, it is tempting to believe with the author, at the close of the book, that "the artist's true identity may be appreciated only from his imaginative creations" (p. 91).

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*Les Écrits d'Aimé Césaire. Bibliographie commentée.* By THOMAS A. HALE. *Études Françaises*, pp. 213-516. Montreal: Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1978. Hale's ambitious annotated bibliography permits us the first comprehensive overview of Aimé Césaire's political and poetic evolution from 1935 to the present. It reveals the extent of Césaire's involvement in two vast enterprises: the struggle of Third World peoples to win political and economic freedom and the efforts of black writers to stamp their work with their racial uniqueness while making it a viable instrument of universal communication.

A chronological survey of Césaire's writings reads like the modern history of Martinique. For the centenary republication of Victor Schoelcher's *Esclavage et colonisation* in 1948, Césaire's presentation noted that, a century after the great abolitionist helped to end slavery in the colonies, inequality between overseas *départements* and those of France proper still needed amelioration (p. 292). In 1972, Césaire revised his presentation to reflect his feeling 24 years later that *départementalisation* had conclusively failed.

Césaire's attempts in the 40's and 50's to work within the system had met with repeated frustration. In 1948 he had admonished the French National Assembly that "nous avons demandé l'assimilation des droits de l'homme et du citoyen. Celle que vous nous offrez, c'est celle de la matraque et des gardes mobiles" (p. 301). By the early 50's Césaire had virtually dropped the word "assimilation" from his vocabulary, while referring to "revolution" more and more.

As Hale points out, the 1956 essay "Décolonisation pour les Antilles" marked a definitive turn in the political orientation of Césaire. "Césaire y établit un lien dialectique entre la loi de la départementalisation et la naissance d'un sentiment national à la Martinique" (p. 359). Six months later he would break with the French Communist Party for its political stands and, above all, its colonial attitude towards the Third World. In the face of bitter attacks, he created the Parti progressiste martiniquais in 1958 to answer the needs of the people of Martinique. The P.P.M. advocated the transformation of overseas *départements* into "régions fédérales" preserving ties with France while enjoying internal autonomy (p. 371).

In the 1960's Césaire resumed his opposition to assimilation. In March 1968, for the first time, he openly spoke of an independent Martinique (p. 458)—an idea he has persisted in to the present day.

Césaire's poetry has moved with the ebb and flow of his political life. Following the powerful poetic utterance of his early poetry, which excited surrealists, from the late 40's to the mid-50's Césaire abstained almost completely

from literary activity. Then, in 1955, in the *Lettres françaises*, René Depestre, Césaire's friend and fellow communist, declared that, influenced by the ideas of Aragon, he was seeking to rid his poetry of an "individualisme formel." In a poem entitled "Réponse à Depestre, poète haïtien" appearing in *Présence africaine*, Césaire urged his friend to ignore Aragon because it would lead to a type of poetic assimilation at odds with the black struggle for cultural liberation (pp. 352-53).

An ensuing debate between the two poets stirred up longstanding differences between surrealists and communists and reflected Césaire's own poetic-political schizophrenia, for Césaire identified poetically with the former, politically with the latter.

*Ferrements* (1960), containing poems Césaire wrote primarily in the late 50's, exemplifies Césaire's evolution in the 50's from relative silence to a growing political-cultural-literary *engagement* (p. 396). In the 60's, striving for direct communication, Césaire turns to the theater. "Il me semble que c'est le meilleur moyen de faire prendre conscience aux gens, surtout à des peuples où on ne lit pas" (p. 425). Césaire's concern for *activité* shows up also in his feeling about *Négritude*. He criticizes Senghorians who have made it into a rigid doctrine instead of "une histoire vivante," a constantly changing perception of life and way of acting.

Through the years Césaire's political views and poetic impulses have merged. In a radio broadcast of January 1976, Césaire offered a fine tribute to his life's work: "s'il y a quelque chose de positif que l'on peut mettre, si vous voulez, à mon actif, ce sera peut-être de dire: après tout voilà un homme qui n'a jamais trahi le peuple de son pays, et un homme qui a travaillé à la prise de conscience de l'homme martiniquais, qui a défendu, qui a voulu défendre, malgré la pauvreté de ses moyens, la dignité martiniquaise" (p. 486).

The publication of Hale's *Les Écrits d'Aimé Césaire* is an event of considerable importance to the study of the francophone world and Aimé Césaire. The nearly 500 entries testify to the hard work that must be undertaken for such fundamental bibliographical tools to be successful. Moreover, Hale's exemplary erudition, combined with clear and concise commentary and judicious quotations, teaches us how such undertakings can be most effectively enhanced.

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*Charles-Ferdinand Ramuz*. By DAVID BEVAN. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1979. Pp. 140. David Bevan est en passe de devenir le spécialiste anglo-saxon de Ramuz. Après *The Art and Poetry of Ramuz* (New York and Cambridge: The Oleander Press, 1976), c'est en effet le second livre qu'il consacre à l'écrivain suisse romand.

*Charles-Ferdinand Ramuz* se présente comme une étude de synthèse, dont la perspective est à la fois historique et analytique. Après une chronologie, l'ouvrage comprend quatre chapitres, centré chacun sur une étape de la car-