

diction to genocide or “human rights” as conventionally understood. Its advocates already seek to criminalize “enforced pregnancy,” defined as the denial of the right of a woman to obtain an abortion — a new crime against humanity. And no conservative could write a book on world affairs and globalization that completely fails to assess the effect of collapsing birth-rates among Europeans and their transoceanic offspring or the parallel invasion of their lands by untold millions of Third World immigrants.

Neither Prestowitz’s multilateralism nor the neoconservative Republican unilateralism he criticizes can help us define policies that will enable America to remain secure and free, while ceasing to threaten the security and freedom of others. These goals are inseparable from the preservation of this nation’s identity and liberty at home, and this is the crucial point Prestowitz fails to address. Hence, perhaps, the ringing endorsement of *Rogue Nation* as “a compelling analysis of the current geopolitical situation and America’s role in the world” from that noted “philanthropist” George Soros. With such illustrious friends, this book needs no detractors.

Chronicles’ foreign-affairs editor Srdja Trifkovic is the author of *The Sword of the Prophet: Islam — History, Theology, Impact on the World*.

Deep as Dante

by H.A. Scott Trask

Hawthorne: A Life

by Brenda Wineapple

New York: Knopf, 509 pp., \$30.00



Brenda Wineapple’s new biography of the most brilliant flower of the New England Renaissance reminded me that it was time to reread Hawthorne. She delineated the man very well, got his politics almost right, but barely did justice to his work.

Writing in 1847, ten years after the publication of Hawthorne’s first collection of stories, *Twice-Told Tales*, Edgar Allan Poe complained that, “until lately, it was never the fashion to speak of him in any summary of our best authors.” Poe described Hawthorne as a “genius of a

very lofty order,” whose tales belonged “to the highest region of Art.” While he praised Hawthorne’s “invention, creation, imagination, originality,” he faulted him for insufficient “diversity” in his themes and characters, as well as excessive “melancholy and mysticism.” Poe barely understood the man.

Not so Herman Melville. In 1850, he read Hawthorne’s second collection of tales, *Mosses From an Old Manse*, published four years before, and was enraptured. The acclaimed author of the enchanting Marquesan adventure *Typee* (1846) wrote a sparkling essay entitled “Hawthorne and His Mosses” full of praise for the Salem-born author. “A man of a deep and noble nature has seized me in this seclusion. His wild witch voice rings through me.” What impressed Melville was Hawthorne’s psychological depth, his “boundless sympathy with all forms of being,” his recognition of the “power of blackness,” and his courage, in a “world of lies,” to tell the truth about man and his place in a fallen world. Melville had captured the essence of Hawthorne.

The two men became close friends. By the fall of 1850, both were living in the Berkshires. Melville would ride over, and the two would sit for hours smoking cigars, drinking Madeira, talking politics, and discussing literature. Melville was writing *Moby Dick* (1851), and it is certain that Hawthorne’s art and conversation imbue that novel. Melville dedicated it to him, “in token of my admiration for his genius.” For his part, Hawthorne was one of the few Americans to recognize the novel’s greatness. “What a book Melville has written,” he wrote to an editor, whom he faulted for not doing justice to the work.

Hawthorne and Melville were, in many ways, out of step with their countrymen, not in a political sense but morally and spiritually. Wineapple relates an appalling contrast. In 1852, Harriet Beecher Stowe’s antislavery novel *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* sold 300,000 copies, while Hawthorne’s *Blithedale Romance*, a cleverly veiled critique of abolitionism and reformism, sold fewer than 7,000. His breakthrough novel, *The Scarlet Letter*, published two years before to critical acclaim, had sold roughly the same. While Howe’s melodrama dwelt on the wrongdoing and predicaments of *other* people, Hawthorne wrote of New Englanders, past and present, whose moral earnestness and pride apparently could not abide self-examination. That Hawthorne viewed

the Puritans as gloomy, intolerant, and fanatical is well known. What has been overlooked entirely is that he saw them as pharisees whose domineering spirit, shorn of its Calvinist theology, lived on in greater New England.

Melville, believing that the doctrines of total depravity and Original Sin pointed to an irreducible reality of human nature, suggested that “perhaps no writer has ever wielded this terrific thought with greater terror than this same harmless Hawthorne. . . . This black conceit pervades him, through and through.” It set him apart from the Transcendentalists, who denied the reality of evil; from reformers who failed to take sin into account in their schemes for world betterment; from popular evangelists such as Charles Grandison Finney, who minimized it; and from Americans of all stripes who regarded sinfulness as a characteristic of other people. A people persuaded of their own righteousness will either seek an escape or a battle. The Puritans did both. They fled to the wilderness, and they reacted violently when anyone intruded upon the purity of their wintry Jerusalem. Their post-Christian descendants did the same.

“Young Goodman Brown” is one of Hawthorne’s most-read but least-understood stories. Set in the early history of Massachusetts, it tells of Brown’s evening



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*The Liberal Arts
in the Roman Catholic Tradition*

journey into the forest to attend a Black Mass. He is shocked to find everyone he knows in attendance—the leaders of the colony, his neighbors, the minister . . . his wife! Brown's rigid distinction between the pious and the ungodly is shattered. When the Devil offers him baptism into the communion of sin, he rejects it. From that night, he becomes "a stern, a sad, a darkly meditative, a distrustful, if not a desperate man," "more conscious of the secret sins of others, both in deed and thought," than of his own.

The traditional interpretation is that Brown has a disordered imagination and an excessively dark view of human nature. Academics today explain that Brown, fearing healthy female sexuality, seeks release in a voyeuristic and orgiastic experience in the woods. Both readings rely on the stereotype of the Puritan as sexually repressed and paranoid. Not so for the author. Hawthorne regarded Brown as the exemplar of the false, self-righteous Christian who refuses to admit his fellowship with other sinners and thus retreats into misanthropy. Others, such as Puritan leader John Endicott, who wrecked the maypole of Merrymount, serve as prototypes for the crusading "enthusiast" of his own day, whose righteous "Idea" leaves him in a state of war with his fellow man.

Hawthorne joined the utopian commune of Brook Farm in the spring of 1841 and remained there six months. The next year, he moved into Ralph Waldo Emerson's former home in Concord, where he conversed with the sage, as well

as with Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, William Ellery Channing, and Bronson Alcott. It was there, in the same house in which Emerson had written his Transcendentalist manifesto *Nature*, that Hawthorne wrote the tales to fill his *Mosses*. The titles alone—"The Hall of Fantasy," "The Celestial Rail-road," "The New Adam and Eve"—tell us what he thought of progressivism.

In "The Earth's Holocaust" (1843), mankind, led by a band of zealous reformers, is seeking to rid the world of all its abuses (e.g., emblems of aristocracy, instruments of capital punishment, weapons of war) by systematically burning them in an enormous fire on the Great Plains. They end up burning the entire heritage of civilization, including its literature. In the eyes of the reformers, all is tainted and must be gotten rid of in order to start over. At each stage of the destruction, dissidents step forward to protest. They are laughed at or ignored. The only thing that does not burn is the Bible, "the pages of which, instead of being blackened into tinder, only assumed a more dazzling whiteness." After the holocaust is spent, a "dark visaged stranger" emerges from the shadows to remark that the ransackers neglected to throw the one thing into the fire whose omission will lead to their whole project having been in vain—the human heart. That surviving, Americans will only go on to reenact the follies and crimes of the past. Hawthorne's is a powerful allegory. America is not exceptional—secure from tragedy,

forever innocent, destined for utopia—and never will be.

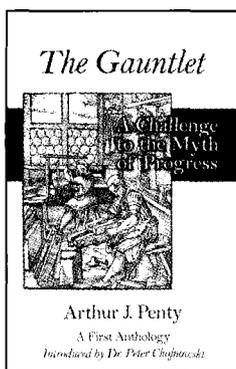
"The Birth-mark" tells the story of a scientist who becomes obsessed with removing a small birthmark from his wife's cheek. Although it did not bother him before their marriage, it becomes loathsome in his eyes, marring her otherwise perfect beauty and symbolizing for him "his wife's liability to sin, sorrow, decay, and death." Effacing it, at any cost, becomes Aylmer's "one idea, the central point of all." Following critical tradition, Wineapple sees Aylmer as a Transcendentalist, but Hawthorne intended him to be an abolitionist. Consider that his wife's name is *Georgiana*, and the rest falls into place. (Aylmer may have been the inspiration for Melville's Captain Ahab, another monomaniac and metaphorical abolitionist.)

Hawthorne's brilliant anti-utopian novel, *The Blithedale Romance*, was based loosely on Brook Farm. Its fictional leader, Hollingsworth, is a zealous philanthropist whose "rigid and unconquerable idea" was the reformation of criminals. The "besetting sin" of such reformers, according to Hawthorne, is that they believe that the importance of their "public ends" justifies setting aside their "private conscience." Hawthorne's progressive acquaintances were not fooled: They believed that he was portraying *them*. It was for stories like these that Russell Kirk added Hawthorne to his pantheon of American conservatives.

Hawthorne and Melville were Democrats when the party was the party of liberty and conservatism, dedicated to leaving things alone and keeping the government in its cage. Neither had truck with abolitionism. Hawthorne's prescription for slavery was forbearance and time. In his 1852 campaign biography of Franklin Pierce, a lifelong and cherished friend, he wrote that slavery was

one of those evils which Providence does not leave to be remedied by human contrivances, but which . . . by some means impossible to be anticipated . . . when all its uses shall have been fulfilled, it causes to vanish like a dream.

It was a plea for evolution rather than revolution. When progressives lauded John Brown as a martyr after his execution in 1859 for his murderous raid into Virginia, Hawthorne said simply, "Nobody was ever more justly hanged."



PENTY TEXTS REPRINTED

IHS PRESS PRESENTS: *The Gauntlet: A Challenge to the Myth of Progress*. Including selections from *Old Worlds for New* (1917), *Post-Industrialism* (1922), *Towards a Christian Sociology* (1923), and *Means and Ends* (1932), this is the first anthology of Penty's works, presenting a vision both of what's wrong with the world and of what socio-economic order would help to make it right. This volume provides a sampling of Penty's critique of the myths that dominate modern economic and social thought, and outlines his intellectual and practical program for its restoration.

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As much as any Southerner, Hawthorne feared the consolidation of power in Washington. He believed it would destroy “the individuality of the states” and, hence, the individuality of New England. Any ambitious federal program, whether to abolish slavery or to subsidize the railroads, would lead to others and eventually “place the capital of our federative Union in a position resembling that of imperial Rome.” In 1857, writing from Liverpool, England, where he was serving as American consul, he regretted that “we have no country—at least, none, in the sense in which an Englishman has a country. . . . The States are too various and too extended to form really one country.” So, when the Southern states began to secede after Lincoln’s election, Hawthorne supported a peaceful separation. “We do not belong together,” he wrote in late 1860. “The Union is unnatural, a scheme of man, not an ordinance of God.” He would be “glad to exchange the South for Canada,” or to see New England join with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to form a Northeastern confederacy.

By the fall of 1861, Hawthorne argued for fighting only to retain the “Northern slave states” (Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri) and letting the rest go. The July 1862 issue of the *Atlantic Monthly* carried his antiwar essay “Chiefly About War Matters, by a Peaceable Man,” in which Hawthorne used the device of editorial footnotes to debunk the censorious spirit of the North. Despite its subtlety and irony, the piece would never have been published had his friend James T. Fields not been the editor. By early 1863, Hawthorne confessed that he “never did really approve of the war”; his greatest wish was that “New England might be a nation by itself.” In July of that year, he wrote to a friend that the abolition of slavery could in no way redeem the war because it “could and would have been brought about by a gradual and peaceful change.” He also admitted that “I despise the present administration with all my heart.” Hawthorne died in 1864.

Wineapple never explores the question of whether Hawthorne was a Christian, yet, in story after story, Hawthorne hints at a physical resurrection, God’s mercy, and eternal life as the solution to life’s riddles, balm for the suffering, and consolation for the old. “The truly wise,” he thought, will eschew enthusiasms for “the common path, and, in homage to the human nature that pervades them, will gather gold, and till the earth, and

set out trees, and build a house.” Those who are “unable to imagine any but an earthly happiness” can never be happy. Those who hope for eternity, in contrast, can relish the good things of this world—the beauty of nature, the love of a woman, a warm fire, a cup of tea, a glass of wine, close friendships, and family. Hawthorne relished all of these.

H.A. Scott Trask has finished his biography of the northern political economist Condy Raguet and will be devoting this summer and fall to finishing Copperheads and Conservatives: The Northern Opposition to the Civil War.

Sailing to Urbino

by James O. Tate

Urbino: The Story of
a Renaissance City
by June Osborne

Chicago: University of Chicago Press;
208 pp., \$50.00



William Butler Yeats was not talking about literally sailing to a literal Byzantium in his famous poem, and I know that Urbino is a mountain fastness, not a port. Even so, sailing to Urbino is necessary, and it does not matter how you do it—only that you do. One way to approach Urbino is through the mediation of June Osborne (lecturer, author, art historian, and former research assistant to Ernst Gombrich, the greatest art historian of all time), who has written the first book on Urbino in English.

My own approach to Urbino, as I remember from some four decades ago, was different and accidental. I was reading poetry, and I wanted to understand both the letter and the spirit of what I was reading.

And Guidobaldo, when he made
That grammar school of courtesies
Where wit and beauty learned
their trade
Upon Urbino’s windy hill,
Had sent no runners to and fro
That he might learn the shepherds’
will.

These lines, and others from the poem “To a Wealthy Man who promised a

Second Subscription to the Dublin Municipal Gallery if it were proved the People wanted Pictures,” were inspired by the Italian Renaissance in general and Castiglione’s *Il Cortegiano* (*The Book of the Courtier*, 1528) in particular, as Yeats meditated on the clash between artistic ideals and democratic politics in the Dublin of 1913. Castiglione’s beautiful book meant much to Yeats, as in his poem “The People,” where Urbino is cited again, as an image and an ideal of community and aristocratic life. Yeats’ citations and passionate devotion are one way to approach Castiglione, who, of course, set his superb dialogues in Urbino, whose court was, in his informed opinion, the finest and the most cultivated in Europe.

By the time Castiglione wrote of it, that court’s best years were already becoming a memory; it was to fix that memory forever that Castiglione made his book. The great courtiers died as he inscribed, but the memory of the culture he had known in the ducal court of Urbino became for Europe an ideal of the good life. The High Renaissance spread to France through the influence of Castiglione, who had known François I, who is cited in his book, before he became king. And through Hoby’s translation of 1561, the image of the Renaissance man was fixed in England by such examples as Sir Philip Sidney, the man of letters who died as a soldier, and the tragic Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, who was trapped in an unworthy court.

June Osborne has taken for her subject not the glorious book but the reality that inspired it, its roots in the Roman dispensation and the medieval period, and the flowering under the leadership of Guidobaldo’s father, Frederico da Montefeltro, count and then duke of Urbino, who assumed power in 1444 and died in 1482. A highly successful *condottiere*, Frederico made a lot of money for decades both by fighting and by not fighting. He knew what to do with his wealth—his leadership and patronage were what made Urbino both a glorious reality and a legend.

Duke Frederico was and is a supreme example of an enlightened monarch. He stayed in close touch with the people he ruled and was not at all grand in his style of address. He said that the secret of leadership was “*essere umano*,”—to be human, and also to be humane. We find this humanity in his personality, in his patronage, and in his social relations. His household amounted to 500