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The intention of the author of this short survey (I use these words, although I know that the Intentional Fallacy and the danger of Authorization are threatening me) seems to be to encourage the traditional classicist to look more closely at the foundations of his literary interpretation and to be more conscious of the different viewpoints he takes, and, on the other hand, to encourage critics immersed in one literary theory to look around for fresh viewpoints outside of their single path. This is done by surveying twenty different modes of approach to literature, not in their historical sequence nor under their usual headings (New Criticism, structuralism, deconstructionism, etc.), but by mapping out the different attitudes of critical approach - starting from the examination of the discrete units of the text (sounds, vocables, syntactic data, metrical units) and ending with the signification of the text considered in its largest historical and social context. This disposition has the advantage of showing the similarities of seemingly different approaches and pointing out some refreshing parallels in ancient and modern trends of criticism; on the other hand, it is not particularly easy to follow, and one is left wondering for whom this survey is intended. A student of classics would probably need a more clear introduction to the different literary theories, and a classicist at a more advanced level would perhaps wish for a more profound discussion. However, it is commendable that literary criticism is, for once, approached from the classicist’s point of view. There is also a useful bibliography.

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