

contempt. In such an atmosphere Orwell, who distrusted any orthodoxy, saw himself as a kind of in-house critic of the Left as a whole, as "the Left's Loyal Opposition."

Although Zwerdling's book is nominally about Orwell's aims and perceptions, its real value lies in its discussion of his tactics. In a world of theoreticians, Orwell was an empiricist. He regarded ignorance as the major obstacle to socialism, not so much ignorance of socialism as of the conditions that socialism, as Orwell understood it, offered to correct. As a mechanism of self-protection, capitalism and imperialism had erected a series of blinds behind which their beneficiaries could live their lives without having to face or understand what was being done in their names. Orwell made it his task in life to tear down those blinds and to make people face what the British rule in India and the operations of modern industrialism at home are like, what it is like to be a policeman in Burma, or a tramp, or a Parisian dishwasher, or a frowsy bookshop assistant, or an unemployed coalminer. Orwell's work is always rooted in the psychological fact of life as people are actually compelled to live it. He forces us to see the human meaning of the political and economic evils for which socialism is to provide the cure. As Orwell said more than once, the primary disadvantage of being oppressed is that it makes you invisible and voiceless.

But such a program implies considerable optimism on Orwell's part about the essential decency of his audience. It assumes no less than that people will move to change a social evil once it is made manifest to them. It involves both an appeal to reason and a belief that political problems can be approached rationally. Throughout the late thirties and on into the forties, however, as Orwell witnessed the rise of the totalitarian states and the apparent blindness of his fellow leftists to the horrors of the communist regime in Russia, his belief in the decency and reasonableness of his fellowmen began to fail him. He saw, as so few of his contemporaries were willing to, that a collective society is not necessarily either democratic or egalitarian, that utopia does not come into being simply because capitalism perishes.

The method by which he communicated this insight, according to Zwerdling, was once again empirical. He will make us perceive directly, or as directly as the medium of fiction will allow, how it is that a

revolution is betrayed, what it is like to live under the complete control of the state. The realism of the early novels and documentaries is inadequate. The mythologies of state collectivism and power worship will yield only to new counter-mythologies, and these are what Orwell hoped to provide in his last two works, *Animal Farm* and *1984*.

Zwerdling's prose is a delight, and his knowledge of the ins and outs of leftist political writing is really very impressive. The book is particularly useful for the light it sheds on *1984*. One might disagree with some of his readings of the early novels, and with his rather low valuation of their literary merit, but they do not really bear directly on his subject.

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*The Adversary Literature*

*The English Novel in the Eighteenth Century:*

*A Study in Genre*

New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1974. Pp. 360.

*The Adversary Literature* promises much. It begins with an Introduction ("The Novel as Subversion," pp. 3-54), in which there is a brief historical survey of the antecedents of the eighteenth-century English novel. Then, in the first chapter ("Don Quixote as Archetypal Artist and *Don Quixote* as Archetypal Novel," pp. 55-67), there is a discussion of the role which *Don Quixote* plays in the development of certain aspects of the novel. The remaining chapters are dedicated to a study of various English novels and novelists. These chapters are: "Daniel Defoe: The Politics of Necessity," pp. 68-98; "Samuel Richardson and *Clarissa*," pp. 99-145; "Henry Fielding: The Novel, the Epic, and the Comic Sense of Life," pp. 146-182; "Smollett's *Humphrey Clinker*: The Choleric Temper," pp. 183-204; "*Tristram Shandy*, the Sentimental Novel, and Sentimentalists," pp. 205-234; "Gothic, Gothicism, and Gothicists," pp. 235-274; "Near-Novels," pp. 275-289; and "The Development of Technique in the Eighteenth-Century Novel," pp. 290-336.

In spite of its many good points, amongst which one must include the large number of major and minor novelists studied and the interesting concept of literature as an adversary, this book does have several serious shortcomings. In the first place, when examining the antecedents of the eighteenth-century English novel, only three Spanish works are discussed in any detail. These are *Lazarillo de Tormes*, pp. 14-15, *La vida del buscón*, pp. 66-67, and, of course, *Don Quixote*, to which a whole chapter is dedicated. The remarks which Professor Karl makes about the first two of these are unfortunate in the extreme. Thus, Professor Karl prefaces his paragraph on *Lazarillo* with the blunt statement that "picaresque began, in the anonymous Spanish book *Life of Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), as a realistic portrayal of sixteenth-century Spanish frontier life" (pp. 14-15). The terms "realistic" and "frontier" are both questionable, as is the rather bald declaration that "picaresque began . . ." Further, in spite of the fact that two of *Lazarillo's* first three masters might be said to leave him, Professor Karl states, rather ambiguously, that *Lazarillo* "moves on" (p. 15) in order to survive. Again, the assertion that "when the outcast or rogue becomes respectable and independent, the comedy is finished," (p. 15) is suspect, and the claim that a cuckolded *Lazarillo* "has achieved the good life" (p. 15), is completely inadequate.

The two pages which Professor Karl dedicates to *La vida del buscón* (pp. 66-67) also leave a great deal to be desired. The statements that "Quevedo relied entirely on the simplistic forms of the picaresque" (p. 66), or that he "rarely questions the reality underlying its assumptions," (p. 66) betray a fundamental unawareness of the impor-

tance of some of the more recent studies on Quevedo (for example: C. B. Morris, "The Unity and Structure of *El buscón*: desgracias encadenadas." Occasional Papers in Modern Languages, 1, University of Hull, 1965; P. N. Dunn, "El individuo y la sociedad en *La vida del buscón*," *Bulletin Hispanique*, 52 [1960] 375-96; A. A. Parker, "The Psychology of the 'Pícaro' in *El buscón*," *Modern Language Review*, 42 [1947] 58-69). Finally, to say that "Quevedo concerned himself solely with the actual" (p. 67), or that he "stays within the picaresque form, providing scenes of great strength, of Zolaesque naturalism," (p. 67), is clearly misleading, for naturalism is surely the opposite of the "grotesque world of surrealist fancy" which is so aptly analyzed by A. A. Parker (writing about *El buscón* in *Literature and the Delinquent*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1967, p. 58).

The question of the relationship between *Don Quixote* and the picaresque novel is a very troublesome one. There is no space to discuss it here, and the interested reader is referred to Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, "Cervantes y la picaresca. Notas sobre dos tipos de realismo." *Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica*, 11 (1957), 313-42. Since the role which *Don Quixote* plays in the evolution of the eighteenth-century novel is a key one, and since there are obvious discrepancies between our interpretations of the Spanish antecedents and those put forward by Professor Karl, it would be as well to terminate this review by concluding that *The Adversary Literature* makes some good points. However, as we have tried to show, it does have some grave shortcomings.

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