

notes that the years immediately before World War I were characterized by intense feminist activity. The war itself brought about a radical change in women's lives as they entered the work force for the first time in large numbers. In the 1920s some of the freedoms that women had won during the war were consolidated, but there was also the beginning of a new, anti-feminist reaction. Lawrence's works, Simpson argues, were informed by these developments at every point. Although she concentrates only on the novels, stories, and major essays on sexual theory, she believes that her analysis holds true for all of Lawrence's works.

Before World War I, Lawrence espoused "feminism, of a kind" (p. 16). Simpson's discussion of this period of Lawrence's development centers on the suffragist and the "dreaming woman," figures representing different aspects of feminism. Lawrence was familiar with the goals of the suffrage movement since many of the women he knew at this time were involved to a greater or lesser extent in it. Lawrence's attitude is, however, ambivalent. Although he admired the courage of the suffragists, he thought that they were misguided: instead of stressing what he saw as mechanical reforms (such as the vote for women), he believed they should focus on spiritual revolution. Lawrence wanted society to be changed radically: piecemeal reform, in his estimation, would only patch up a society that was basically rotten at the core. In his works, Lawrence rejected the militant feminism of the suffrage movement and emphasized instead *individual* liberation and development. For a while, Lawrence was attracted to the more spiritual aspect of feminism represented by the "dreaming woman," but he later rejected this too since it ignored the question of sexual liberation which preoccupied him at the time. Simpson argues that Lawrence's real sympathy for feminism was quite brief and spanned only the years 1913-1915.

The war marked a great change in Lawrence's attitude to feminism. He was disappointed in his hopes that the feminist revolution would lead to the "'feminisation' of experience, the necessity for men to take women, and the feminine side of their own natures, seriously" (p. 66). Instead, women had assimilated themselves into the masculine world of industry and technology which Lawrence loathed: they had not retained their feminine values but had merely become, in his view, more like men.

In the 1920s Lawrence's anti-feminism became even more pronounced. He believed that the dominant ideology of the post-war period was "a perverted femininity of will and idealism" (p. 17). Like other writers at that time, Lawrence believed that "a masculine renaissance was necessary to restore the balance" (p. 17). His focus on the theme of male comradeship in the novels written in the twenties shows Lawrence's attempt to redefine masculine values. This redefinition can also be seen clearly in *Lady Chatterley's Lover* where Lawrence seems to return to the feminine values of instinct, feeling and tenderness which he advocated before the war. Simpson argues, however: "By a neat reversal these values are now 'masculine,' leaving his women characters the choice of either identifying with the new 'feminine' values of celebration, will, technology and so on, or of becoming disciples of the new masculinism" (p. 138). The final chapter in the book discusses the extent to which Lawrence used women as collaborators, and women's writing as source material.

Simpson's interesting study succeeds very well in measuring Lawrence's reactions to feminism and in showing how important these reactions were in shaping his works.

Anthony Boxill

V.S. NAIPAUL'S FICTION: IN QUEST OF THE ENEMY

Fredericton, N.B.: York Press, 1983. Pp. 87. \$12.95.

Reviewed by Jack Healey

Anthony Boxill's *V.S. Naipaul's Fiction. In Quest of the Enemy* is a very welcome addition to the critical literature on Naipaul. For nearly twenty years Boxill has been one of the most patient, careful readers of Naipaul. His dissertation at the University of New Brunswick, "The Novel in English in the West Indies 1900-1962" was completed in 1966, preceding Kenneth Ramchand's *The West Indian Novel and its Background* by a good four years. What the present book gives us, therefore, are the gathered reflections of one of the pioneers of the academic study of West-

Indian literature. He deals with all of the fiction up to *A Bend in the River* (1979). He does not address the journalism or the nonfiction directly. He does not enter into the polemical battles that have accompanied Naipaul's career. The focus is continually on Naipaul's fiction as literature and his attention to it has a firm aesthetic and moral balance. The book works from a perception: "From the beginning of his career as a writer, [Naipaul] has been trying to identify and isolate what it is that causes man so much anguish, that renders his efforts in this world so futile, that frustrates his ability to understand himself and to relate to his fellows" (p. 7). Boxill develops this perception into a thesis which his analysis of the fiction wears lightly: "To intensify the conflict in his fiction, and to make his abstract groping more concrete, Naipaul has chosen to label mankind's problems as the enemy, or rather, many of his characters tend to see their struggle in life as between themselves and an enemy" (p. 7). Because Boxill has *inhabited* the imaginative world of Naipaul's novels with such tact one gets an *interior* sense of the *whole*. He gives a real shape to the ripples and the reflections of a complex writer moving in and around the themes of colony and empire, society and history and, above all perhaps, the travails of a self attempting to negotiate *in* and *as* fiction the faces of order and disorder in contemporary history. The controversial nature of his subject as a site for political and ideological emotion has often led to a subversion of the text itself. The novel gets swamped into a mesh of ideological affiliation that *might* attach to its subject *if* that subject were freed from its fictional field. Of course, the logical question arises as to what the subject of a novel *not* subjected to the imagination of a *particular* writer would be. In this form the question is ridiculous. It is only by extending the dogmatics of a social realism to the normative assertions of an ideological realism that one can confidently and prescriptively say what a novel *ought* to do with a subject. It is possible, of course, to say that a novel is counterrevolutionary, is reactionary, corrupts the morals of the young, stereotypes this group, this culture, this period of history. Whether or not this is, properly speaking, literary criticism has to turn on how seriously it addresses the novel. The attempt to understand a novel has to be connected to reading *that* novel in its givenness of subject, language, character, tone. Boxill puts himself in front of novels.

This is never a neutral nor an easy task; in the case of Naipaul's *Guerrillas* (1975) with its raw violence, an excessively heavy demand is placed on the act of reading and the task of critical evaluation. Boxill faces directly the tangled mythos of the black man—white woman syndrome that Naipaul *found* tangled tragically into the tissue of his subject. He places the Jimmy Ahmed—Jane violation and murder episode over against the Makak beheading of a Moon Goddess in the symbolic terrain of Derek Walcott's *Dream on Monkey Mountain*. This is particularly interesting. It is so because it opens out a close reading of Naipaul's literary text into another text operating inside the constraints and insights of a similar imaginative discourse. In short, Boxill frees up Naipaul's handling of the black man—white woman mythos from the fatal extrinsic clasp of ideological assertion, and gives it a chance to establish its distinctive shape and density, *in itself*, against the backdrop of the novel. A kind of thinking, the feel of thought locking into clumps of experience, is one aspect of what literature is about—the feel of thought reaching tentatively, as Thom Gunn has put it, "into the unexplained areas of the mind, in which the air is too thickly primitive or too fine for us to live continually." Between Naipaul's thickness in *Guerrillas* and Walcott's fineness in relation to this particular subject, Boxill has placed threads of interpretative connection which genuinely advance our understanding of Naipaul, which open out, through close and courageous reading, the horizons within which Naipaul and his concerns move with such intricate stubbornness. This is a welcome book.

H.R. Klieneberger
THE NOVEL IN ENGLAND AND GERMANY.
A COMPARATIVE STUDY
 London: Oswald Wolff, 1981. Pp. 254.
 Reviewed by I. Schuster

H.R. Klieneberger begins his study with Defoe and Richardson on the one hand, and Gellert, Schnabel, and Wieland on the other. The first chapter ("The Novel in the Age of Romanticism") and the last ("Into the Twentieth Century") are surveys; chapters two to five are devoted to more specific topics: "Adalbert Stifter and the Reception of his Work," "George Eliot and Gottfried Keller," "Charles Dickens and Wilhelm Raabe," "Fontane and English