

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 found 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

Realism." Klieneberger admits that the English novel of the 18th and 19th centuries is superior to the German novel, but argues that things have changed since the death of Conrad, Joyce and Lawrence. While Graham Greene, Angus Wilson and C.P. Snow are the last English novelists he mentions, Klieneberger takes the German novel up to 1975 (Handke, Grass, Böll, and Hildesheimer).

The material in the book is well organized, the study is well documented, and there is an index. The reader may be disturbed by an unhappy passage here or there ("*Der Hungerpastor* [1862-63] is derived from his [Raabe's] reading, not from personal observation, and is, consequently, lifeless cliché," p. 121), and one must object to Gotthelf being paired off with Auerbach as one who "tried to give a realistic dimension, if of a parochial and limited kind, to German literature in the eighteen-forties" (p. 61). This is the only sentence in which Gotthelf is mentioned. Few would subscribe to Dr. Klieneberger's statement that Storm's fiction is "markedly inferior" to Fontane's (p. 180).

With such a limited space at the author's disposal, one cannot expect more than outlines, but there are a few more detailed analyses and comparisons in the four central chapters. However, there are no surprises and no new insights to be found anywhere. The book is neither for the undergraduate (who is not familiar with most of the novels; no synopses are given), nor for the specialist in the field. But all those who know their way around English and German literature may read the book as a pleasant sort of "Repetitorium."

Hans Robert Jauss

TOWARD AN AESTHETIC OF RECEPTION

Trans. Timothy Bahti. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

Pp. xxix + 231. \$8.95 & \$22.50.

Hans Robert Jauss

AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE AND LITERARY HERMENEUTICS

Trans. Michael Shaw. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

Pp. xi + 357. \$12.95 & \$29.50.

Reviewed by Jerry A. Varsava

These two essay collections, Volumes 2 and 3 respectively of the University of Minnesota Press's new "Theory and History of Literature" series, present, in many cases for the first time, English translations of the work of the prominent German literary historian and methodologist, Hans Robert Jauss. Over the last dozen years Jauss's essays have appeared occasionally in English-language journals, e.g., *New Literary History* (Vols. 2, 5, 7, 10) and *Diogenes* (No. 109) and in essay collections, e.g., *Interpretation of Narrative* (ed. Mario J. Valdes and Owen J. Miller; 1978) and *What is Criticism?* (ed. Paul Hernadi; 1981). We can be thankful that a large portion of Jauss's scholarship is now accessible to those without a knowledge of German. Jauss is one of the founding fathers of the Constance school of criticism—"school" here often describing physical proximity more than identity of interest. Jauss's orientation differs from that of his Constance colleague, Wolfgang Iser. Iser, whose *The Implied Reader* (1972; trans. 1974) and *The Act of Reading* (1976; trans. 1979) are by this time well known in North America, analyzes the phenomenology of the reading experience. His focus is primarily synchronic, illustrating how reading strategies are determined by textual structures, i.e., "the implied reader." Iser is an Anglicist whose method takes him into close readings of individual texts, generally English fiction. Jauss's self-designated task has been and remains the analysis of the historicity of literary reception. Given the diachronic emphasis, Jauss, not unexpectedly, discusses the