

Ross's study of Fanny Burney—whose novels form the subtext of the book's second half—suggests best the problems women authors encountered in their attempt to portray women's lives in such a way that their readers could find themselves in them: "... disliking romance, she nevertheless needed it to explain the reasons for her dislike and to express the traditional opinions that circumstances had made unorthodox" (111). The chapter on Burney, easily the best one of the study, indicates the limits set to women authors attempting realism. The ending of novels—whether realistic or "happy" according to the tradition of romance—becomes a key point. "Committed to realism or 'the appearance of truth,' Burney tinkered with this problem. . . . But the more she tinkered the more improbable, or romantic, her endings became" (131).

After a consideration of the Gothic writing of Ann Radcliffe—who succeeded in part where Burney had failed since by her use of symbolism, Radcliffe "uncovers women's problematic relation to what men had determined to be reality" (151)—Ross turns in conclusion to Jane Austen, whose successful blending of romance and realism created the foundation for the Victorian novel. She thus arrives on a different path at the same goal as Watt. And she has managed to demonstrate that Watt's genealogy of the British novel is convincing but not the only possible one: "The way had been cleared for the expression of Austen's talent by the struggles of her female predecessors to develop a fictional form that would contain women's lives, lives that themselves had been changed in the process of being described in more than a century of novels" (167). Regardless of the weaknesses mentioned earlier, *The Excellence of Falsehood* is a major accomplishment of the historiography of the novel and a valuable partner to Watt's *The Rise of the Novel*.

Carl Dolmetsch

*"Our Famous Guest": Mark Twain in Vienna*

Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1992. Pp. xx + 362. \$29.95

Reviewed by Marvin Fisher

Carl Dolmetsch knows both his subjects intimately—Mark Twain and Viennese society. He has great affection and admiration for both, but he is also aware of the flaws, faults, and foibles of each. He also succeeds in demonstrating that Twain's work stemming from this period is in every sense the intersection, conflation, or collision of his two subjects.

Rejecting the view that Mark Twain's final decades (1890-1910) were years of unrelieved decline, depression, and despair arising from a series of personal tragedies and financial misfortunes, Dolmetsch set out to record Mark Twain's varied experiences, the various personalities he encountered, and the effects on his subsequent writings, of the nearly two years that he spent in Vienna from 1897 to 1899. He was aided greatly by a little known 1953 Viennese dissertation on press reaction to the extended visit of the Clemens family. It listed hundreds of press reports and interviews and constituted a working bibliography that effectively accelerated the initial stages of this project.

Fin-de-siècle Vienna was a city of decadent gaiety and dark foreshadowings of the twentieth-century holocaust, perhaps even more so than the Berlin scenes of *Cabaret*. It was a time and place of extraordinary intellectual and artistic ferment: painters, playwrights, composers, philosophers, architects, and the founders of psychoanalysis shaped the scene that produced modernism, while members of parliament articulated the virulent anti-Semitism and patriotic excess that shaped the mind of the frustrated artist/housepainter who became greater Germany's most charismatic and destructive leader.

Into this milieu sixty-two-year old Sam Clemens brought his family and his famous thirty-two-year-old alter ego, so that his daughter Clara might pursue her musical studies. Little attention has been paid to this period, though as Dolmetsch demonstrated, it stimulated in Clemens a surge of creativity that in variety and volume exceeded all but a few comparable periods of his career: "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg," most of *The Mysterious Stranger* cluster, the "Early Days" section of his autobiography, political polemics such as "Stirring Times in Austria" and "Concerning The Jews," exposés of human fallibility and folly in *What Is Man?* and *Christian Science*.

Dolmetsch credits the 1970s scholarship of Hamlin Hill, Charles Macnaughton, and Sholem J. Kahn that helped us to recognize the significance of Mark Twain's later work. He mysteriously ignores, however, the contribution of John S. Tuckey's 1963 monograph *Mark Twain and Little Satan: The Writing of the Mysterious Stranger*, a work that first drew attention to what was happening in Vienna and how it affected Mark Twain's various versions of a work he never completed and whose published version would have appalled him. Dolmetsch tells us more than Tuckey did about Dr. Karl Lueger, leader of the Christian social policy, mayor of Vienna, and member of parliament; George von Schönerer, leader of the German National party in parliament; Karl Hermann Wolf, another German Nationalist deputy in the Reichsrat, all of whom minimized their political differences by anticipating Hitler's scapegoating of Jews and Czechs.

To a surprisingly large extent Clemens took advantage of the cultural opportunities of this cosmopolitan city that was simultaneously so politically provincial. Concerts, recitals, plays, and parliamentary debates were all part of his schedule, and apparently his proficiency in German was at least adequate to the task: one newspaper account observed, "Er spricht ziemlich gut deutsch mit amerikanischem Akzent." His frequent attendance at plays renewed his interest in play writing, individually and collaboratively, and his entrepreneurial instincts drew him to attempt translations of new plays for commercial export. According to Dolmetsch, he was more successful, however, in translating ideas he encountered on the Vienna stage into his own idiom: some of what happens in "The Man Who Corrupted Hadleyburg" Clemens found in a philo-Semitic melodrama by two Alsatian-Jewish authors.

Readers of Mark Twain's later works could not mistake their pessimism and nihilism, but Dolmetsch introduces an important qualifying adjective in "therapeutic nihilism," a term that not only expresses deep distrust of all human remedies for human problems, but also connects his two subjects in an unlikely confluence of America's best-known humorist and Vienna's emerging psychoanalyst. Twain's

fascination with dreams in "the Great Dark" and *The Mysterious Stranger* cluster is only one of numerous Freudian analogues in the American writer's exploration of consciousness and irrationality. Unfortunately, Mark Twain made no overt reference to Freud, but more fortunately Freud mentioned listening to Mark Twain and made overt and covert allusions to both humorous and polemical writings. It would be inconceivable for them to have missed meeting each other during Twain's two-year sojourn and in view of his wide spectrum of acquaintances and activities in Vienna.

Dolmetsch has produced a readable, informative, and intelligent book. With a cast of resident players that includes Freud, Mahler, Klimt, Herzl, Wittgenstein, and numerous political and journalistic personalities, the script seems made to order for the writers and producers of *The Young Indiana Jones Chronicles*, who could focus on the heretofore unrecorded meeting between an American humorist better known by his *nom de plume* and a Viennese housepainter who had not yet discovered his *nom de guerre*.

David Der-wei Wang

*Fictional Realism in Twentieth-Century China: Mao Dun, Lao She, Shen Congwen*  
New York: Columbia University Press, 1992. Pp. viii + 367. \$45.00

Reviewed by Robert E. Hegel

By common consensus, the greatest modern Chinese writer was Lu Xun (or Lu Hsün, the penname of Zhou Shuren, 1881-1936): he not only pioneered a new vernacular fiction strongly influenced by European writers, he is also considered the most capable writer in the "critical realist" mode. Likewise, the depth of his engagement with the social and political issues of his day served both as model for Lu Xun's successors (many of whom perforce had to ignore his determined resistance to all authority, even from the Left); until fairly recently the politics of modern China also placed shackles on all interpretive readings of his work. Not that the artistry of his complex stories has gone unnoticed—recent studies by Marston Anderson (*The Limits of Realism: Chinese Fiction in the Revolutionary Period* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990]) and Leo Ou-fan Lee (*Voices from the Iron House: A Study of Lu Xun* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987]) have penetrated ever farther into their convoluted meanings. David Wang's book builds on the solid basis of the latest scholarship to produce a significant new study of the other major narrative artists of the early twentieth century—the writers whose "voices [arose] within the discursive paradigm set by Lu Xun" (1) but who revised Lu Xun's conception of Realism (and of reality) to experiment with narrative modes in ways never explored by Lu Xun himself.

Professor Wang begins with a position paper: here he demonstrates the level of abstraction on which he works, his critical vocabulary, his facility with—and his lack of sympathy for—the political biases of most students of modern Chinese fiction. With deft strokes he exposes the literary artistry of one of Lu Xun's first and best-known short stories ("Kuangren riji," *Diary of a Madam*) in terms of his