

list has a publication date of 1980 or later. On the other hand, there has not been a lot of interesting writing on Turgenev.

Wasiolek succeeds well in introducing the debates on aesthetics and social philosophy which motivate much of the action of the novel. The figure of Chernyshevsky looms large in his discussions, and Dmitry Pisarev plays his role as well. Dobroliubov is nearly absent, and one wonders why, although this is not a serious defect. Wasiolek courageously pays considerable attention to Chernyshevsky's tedious aesthetics, as well as to his literary response to *Fathers and Sons* in his novel *What is to Be Done*. A slight shortcoming emerges here insofar as Wasiolek does not come to terms with Turgenev's own artistic and philosophic relationship to positivism outside of his interactions with Chernyshevsky. This is, of course, a complex and thorny problem, and perhaps it is better left to a more specialized study.

Wasiolek has done a fine job of presenting a complex socio-historical and literary-aesthetic scenario in a manner which will encourage the interest of new readers of Turgenev as well as stimulate more specialized ones to reassess the dynamics of the fascinating characters who have made this novel so enduring.

Toby Avard Foshay

Wyndham Lewis and the Avant-Garde: The Politics of the Intellect

Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992. Pp. 177. \$34.95

Reviewed by Axel Knoenagel

Wyndham Lewis has been one of the more difficult twentieth-century authors to neatly fit into a critical compartment. Temporally parallel to the period of high modernism and, during the vortocist phase, on the leading edge of modernism, Lewis's texts nonetheless exhibit too many differences from and conscious distances to the modernist canon to be included in that movement. Foshay approaches Lewis by regarding him not as a modernist but—following Peter Bürger's *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*—as an avant-gardist in constant debate with the main artistic and political issues of his time. In his attempt to place Lewis artistically and philosophically, Foshay sets out to "trace Lewis's critical and creative development" (20) in the form of a cursory reading of Lewis's most important works in the light of their biographical context.

Two issues dominate Foshay's study of Lewis's texts: Lewis's insistence on experience rather than aesthetics as the basis and reference point for art, and the central relevance of Nietzschean concepts for the shaping of Lewis's philosophy as it found expression in his novels and essays. In his survey of Lewis's oeuvre, Foshay omits the vortocist phase and concerns himself with the literature written, as Lewis himself stated repeatedly, under the impression of his participation in the First World War. Reading the parable *The Caliph's Design* (1919), Foshay identifies Lewis's belief that "by breaking out of its institutional thralldom, art can achieve an *organic*, living experimentalism, and so transform culture as to lead to

the emergence of a new form of humanity. . . . Lewis's revolution would place art *in control of politics*" (9).

This approach works quite well for *The Caliph's Design* but less so for Lewis's later texts. Foshay's reading of the drama *Enemy of the Stars* as well as the novels *Tarr*, *The Apes of God*, *The Revenge for Love* and *Self Condemned* suggests the central relevance for Lewis's art of the search for a definition of personality and character as Friedrich Nietzsche had developed it. The novel *Tarr* in particular emerges for Foshay as the key to Lewis's writing: "*Tarr* is the vehicle of Lewis's own reaching after and attempt to posit this new relation to the religious, moral, philosophical, and artistic tradition. *Tarr*, and the novel of which he is the focus, are Lewis's reaching after the will to power, after his own self-creation as 'the artist himself'" (68).

Working from the premise of "Nietzsche as the silent protagonist" and "as the dynamic source of [Lewis's] thinking" (79), Foshay includes in his study brief definitions of Nietzschean concepts. Considering the relevance of these difficult concepts for the study, this feature is to be commended, but at the same time one has to note critically that Foshay bases his definitions not so much on Nietzsche's own works but rather on Heidegger's reading of them, thus on an interpretation by a philosopher in his own right. Interpolating his reading of the novels with analyses of Lewis's criticism, particularly of *The Art of Being Ruled*, Foshay manages to demonstrate how a significant part of Lewis's writing emerged as a reaction to Nietzsche that exemplifies Nietzsche's concept of *resentment* and finds its ultimate conclusion in Lewis's autobiographically shaped protagonist in *Self Condemned* whose perception of history is the same as Nietzsche's (162).

Foshay traces the various developments and inconsistencies in Lewis's writing and summarizes them as "a steady move away from reflection on self toward observation of others, and so to a perception of inauthenticity and *resentment* . . . followed by reflection—by a significant turn toward autobiography" (145). This analysis of an essentially Nietzschean development is as coherent as Nietzscheanism allows, but it is rather independent of the question for Lewis's brand of modernism or avant-gardism that the study had set out with. Foshay describes Lewis primarily as one of many authors of the first half of the twentieth century—D.H. Lawrence, André Gide, Gabriele d'Annunzio, to name just a few—who reacted in their writing to the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche. *Wyndham Lewis and the Avant-Garde: The Politics of the Intellect* is an illuminating study of an important author, but its title is unfortunately chosen.