

Resisting “the tyranny of what is written”: Christina Stead’s Fiction

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CHRISTINA STEAD’S style has angered and delighted readers and puzzled critics for years, yet most studies of Stead’s work have stressed theme above style. This study considers two of the more controversial aspects of Stead’s writing — her notion of novelistic form and her use of literary allusion — to argue that they are integral to her vision.

In *For Love Alone* Teresa notes that the “greatest sensations become the most general and the least concerned with that particular adjusted interlocking which is any kind of relation to the outside world.”¹ Because Stead’s fiction is most concerned with precisely “that particular adjusted interlocking,” she had to search for a fictional form and language that could do justice to her perceptions.² She found a more flexible system for reflecting how people actually experience the world in a vision of form recently described by the French critics Deleuze and Guattari in terms of the metaphor of the rhizome. They argue that “A first type of book is the root-book (*livre-racine*). . . . It is the classic book, as noble interiority—organic, signifying, and subjective. . . . The radicle system, or fasciculated root, is the second figure of the book, from which our modernity gladly draws its inspiration.”³ The classic book values the linear; the modern book, the circular. A third kind of book “could be called a rhizome. . . . In itself the rhizome has very diverse forms, from its surface extension which ramifies in all directions to its concretions into bulbs and tubers” (Deleuze and Guattari, p. 10). We can most properly describe Stead’s fiction in terms of the rhizome. (Interestingly, Deleuze and Guattari associate this model with Oceania [p. 41] — a region with which Stead felt a strong identification.)

Stead herself, some years earlier, employed the rhizome as a powerful alternative image for order in *The People with the Dogs*:

... and this was more than the foundation of the garden, it was a dark communication of sinew forming the body of a great being. It held, embraced, but did not crush the ground, the house, and all there brought by dogs and men: bones, sheathed copper wire needed for watering the cows, old leather shoes hidden by a predecessor of the Abbot, a sadiron, and all the things lost by this fertile careless family, and all the things loved by this productive, abundant family for seventy years; the deep ineradicable cables plunging into the hill soil and sending up at great distances their wires and threads; and the whole family and house and barns and the home-acres, in the great throttling of the twining vine.⁴

This great wild hops vine in *The People with the Dogs* provides the best analogy for describing the structure of a Stead novel: pulling everything within reach into its orbit, it does not distinguish between roots and branch; it has no clear beginning nor ending; it is an interdependent system in which the man-made and the natural co-exist. Such a system is democratic rather than hierarchically oriented. It can encompass several narrative lines at a time. It can present the fullness and detail of life without privileging either the narrowly linear idea of order implicit in traditional narrative, or anarchy — the bogey usually posited as the only alternative to the status quo. As an alternative vision of order, this fourteen-line sentence describing the vine, part of a series of seemingly endless clauses, joined by commas, semi-colons, and colons, imitates its democratic sprawl at the level of the sentence. Stead refuses to break up what she sees as interconnected.

Unlike contemporary avant-garde writers, Stead does not choose open-ended forms because she sees them as more relevant to a world that is chaotic and disordered. Her scientist father impressed her too clearly with his own understanding of the world for that. Darwin, Marx, and Nietzsche formed her vision of world order. She sees life as endlessly creative, full of multiple possibilities, but everywhere thwarted and distorted by the social orders created to organize this wealth of energy.

If we imagine each of Stead's novels as a great wild hops vine, we can see how patterns of relation become more important than

separate individuals in the dynamics of her work. Context is all. The vine — a dynamic, living thing, like all living things capable of choking as well as nourishing life — has its counterpart in the various webs spun “with the help of oppressor and oppressed” (*For Love Alone*, p. 254) to control people’s lives in our present social system. Teresa seeks to get by these webs but the novel shows how encompassing they are, precisely because she herself has contributed to their weaving. Though she sees the problems of the world deriving in part from a tendency to generalize, a failure to perceive differences, and to distinguish carefully between the subtlest shades of meaning, she herself fails to notice that Jonathan Crow is “colour blind,” totally incapable of such perceptions. The novel, of course, is far from colour blind, meeting the aesthetic programme Teresa sets out in one of her letters to Jonathan — to enlarge the expressive capabilities of the English language.

It enlarges them through a self-conscious resistance to what Teresa in *For Love Alone* terms “the tyranny of what is written, to rack and convert” (p. 420). Stead writes against this tyranny by constructing novels like hop vines — novels that insist alternative ways of imaging community not only exist but also allow more room for joyful exuberance while more truthfully depicting her sense of what it means to be alive. Her insistence on writing against the grain informs all her writing, but is perhaps signalled most clearly in the Prologue to *For Love Alone*, where she claims the so-called antipodean perspective as her norm for forming her vision of the world. From where she is writing, the Old World is “shown on maps drawn upside-down by old-world cartographers” (p. 1). She is a New World cartographer charting life the way she sees it.

This involves rewriting many of the stories inherited from that Old World to contradict the implicit assumptions informing them. What interests me most about Stead’s rewriting, however, is that she formulates the act as instinctive, rather than self-consciously transgressive. Like Teresa, Stead’s characters do not wish to be eccentric (p. 65), yet their actions make them so because they refuse to conform to the expectations of behaviour appropriate to their gender. Edward Massine frustrates Margot

in this way (in *The People with the Dogs*) just as much as Teresa frustrates her family and Jonathan Crow (in *For Love Alone*).

Teresa casts herself as a female Ulysses (refusing the role of Penelope forced nominally at least upon her precursor in Miles Franklins' *My Brilliant Career*). Her reading of Ulysses, however, follows the Tennysonian emphasis on the never-ending questing outwards rather than the classical Greek on the quest for home. She finds her Ulyssean counterparts in Harry Girton, "who like the foot of her wandering soul would print his foot on the world" and in James Quick, of whom Stead remarks: "She thirsted after this track-making and wandering of the man in the world, not after the man" (p. 492). But first she envisions herself as the noble knight courting Jonathan, who falls naturally — from her point of view — into the role of the withholder of love, the "belle dame sans merci." Stead writes that "Teresa . . . felt that she was behaving as behaves a gallant and a brave man who passes through the ordeals of hope deferred, patience, and painful longing, to win a wife" (p. 250). She sees no difficulty in her identification with the active rather than the passive role, believing it to be the fullest expression of her womanhood and not an attempt to claim masculine prerogatives. Yet the novel illuminates the tensions created when Teresa tries to claim her rights as "woman and freeman" (p. 224). She hears the voices of her own instinct — "If you had made a move, you would have done better" — but she also hears the voices of convention: "'Men despise women who make the moves'" (p. 215). Her instinctive identification with the active principle proves strongest in each of these contests: "'None but the brave deserve the fair'" (p. 215), she concludes. The cliché becomes revolutionary when she is the brave and Jonathan the fair. Here the tyranny of what is written is lightened by Teresa's identification with strength rather than weakness. Yet what she seeks is connection with another — through marriage — rather than the traditional heroic goal of self-individuation through separation. When the quester is female, the goal is revised.

Teresa's story, of course, also updates the stories of her namesake, St. Teresa, both in the original version and in George Eliot's *Middlemarch*. Unlike the saint, Teresa seeks terrestrial,

not celestial love; and unlike Dorothea, she seeks knowledge *for* herself, not *through* another. (She mutters to herself: "Love, learning, bread — myself — all three, I will get" [p. 87].)

But the pattern of her story in *For Love Alone* can best be understood as a version of the Faust tale. Blanche Gelfant distinguishes between the "female Faust," "who sells herself to the 'devil' for 'love and security,'" giving up her *self* — a pattern described by Ann Ronald — and what she terms the "sister to Faust," who assumes not his damnation but "his aspirations and desire."⁵ In these terms, Teresa is "sister to Faust." Gelfant coins a term even more suggestive for this generic type: the "hungry" woman. Most of Stead's positive characters are "hungry." Teresa's hunger terrifies Jonathan, while forcing him to recognize that he, in contrast, is "a rotten wanter yet" (p. 199).

As Gelfant points out, the hungry woman seeks to appease her hunger through reading: "I wish to suggest that more heroines read than we realize, to more serious purposes than we have noted, and more texts, real and symbolic, than we have analyzed" (Gelfant, p. 270). While this statement clearly applies to Teresa in *For Love Alone*, Louisa in *The Man Who Loved Children*, and Letty in *Letty Fox, Her Luck*, its fullest significance is probably revealed in Nellie in *Cotters' England* and Eleanor in *Miss Herbert*. Stead realizes, far more fully than any of the authors analyzed by Gelfant, that the hungry heroine will feed on anything, even garbage, to satisfy her desire. The romantic and erotic literature Teresa favours offers her some escape from the narrow materialism of her own society, although she must outgrow even that to find her own voice. Nellie Cotter, however, absorbs fascist and sentimental writings that distort her hunger and cloud her perceptions. Eleanor Herbert, too, finds only empty consolation in the maxims of self-help manuals and women's magazines that she devours in her earnest quest for answers. These women are left voiceless by their reading. While Gelfant sees the role of reading as potentially liberating for the American hungry heroine, Stead's fiction never forgets "the tyranny of what is written, to rack and convert." And eventually, to silence.

Teresa first sees Jonathan as her door to the wider world of learning, but when she meets Quick realizes that he has the

knowledge she wants (p. 390), significantly describing him as “a feast” (p. 402). Although Gelfant believes that “We have yet to see a portrait of the satisfied hungry woman who transcends either social stereotypes or fairytale transformations” (Gelfant, p. 281), Stead’s novel gives us more than this — a satisfied hungry woman who will never abandon her hunger, wherever it leads her. After her affair with Girton, Teresa thinks: “Here where she stood no old wives’ tale and no mother’s sad sneer, no father’s admonition, reached” (p. 495). She has moved beyond the “tyranny of what is written” into the freedom of a world to be written anew. Therefore she can say: “I am thinking I am free” (p. 496). Yet for others, the patterns of oppression, validated in literature, may well continue. Thinking of her misguided affair with Jonathan, Teresa sighs: “It’s dreadful to think that it will go on being repeated for ever, he — and me! What’s there to stop it?” (p. 502). To this conclusion, the whole novel replies: only our hunger to read beyond the designated endings and to move beyond the “tyranny of what is written” into the writing of our freedom, as Teresa herself is doing when Stead’s novel stops. This is not an ending, nor even an open-ended ending, but merely the point where our view of the endless rhizomic interlockings stops.

Teresa moves beyond female stereotypes, but interestingly, as Rudolph Bader’s discussion of Stead’s contribution to the *bildungsroman* tradition implies, her development corresponds quite closely to the pattern associated with the male *bildungsroman*.⁶ The Introduction to *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development* suggests that the “‘two love affairs or sexual encounters, one debasing, one exalting’ that Buckley sees as the minimum necessary for the male hero’s emotional and moral growth are clearly forbidden his sisters.”⁷ Forbidden they may be, but Stead allows them to Teresa, who takes them as her right. Far from stressing women’s victimization, Stead’s fiction stresses our ability to remake the world through the power of our wills. Teresa knows “the things she wanted existed” (p. 75); she knows from her reading that “her world existed and was recognized by men. But why not by women?” (p. 76). The silence of women about the things that matter to her — her hunger for life — disturbs but

does not daunt her. She knows that as a woman she faces extra handicaps but will never allow these to hold her back. The hungry heroine seizes the world, ignoring more than defying the restrictions conventional behaviour would impose on her sex.

The pressures of gender on genre need not lead to a despairing emphasis on the entrapment of women. Rather, in Stead's work they lead to an opening up of a linear and single focused structure to rhizomic invasion. If it is true that "the basic feminine sense of self is connected to the world, the basic masculine sense of self is separate,"⁸ then Stead's concept of character — for both men and women — is basically feminine. It is also socialist, an identification which for Stead herself would take precedence.

As Judith Kegan Gardiner points out, "Feminist literary historians are now defining the contribution of women to modernism, concentrating on the fluidity and interiority of Woolf, Richardson, and Gertrude Stein."⁹ Joan Lidoff has tried to fit Stead into this model, but unconvincingly.¹⁰ While — as I have argued — connectedness is integral to Stead's vision, fluidity and interiority are almost absent. Her narcissistic characters — Elvira Western, Nellie Cotter, and Eleanor Herbert — are sharply satirized for their navel-gazing and what interiority they display is shown to be shallow and derivative. In Stead's fiction, rooms and private houses are usually perceived as traps; public places such as cafés, restaurants, and streets are the preferred locations of her characters. When Letty Fox decides she needs a room of her own, it is not to seek privacy but rather a place where she can entertain her male friends. Stead's characters are sociable beings, suspicious of introspection, anxious to communicate, often great talkers or letter writers. In several important ways, her contribution to modernism runs against the currents valorized by both male and female critics to date.

Writing out of the earlier traditions of social fiction discarded by the acclaimed great modernists, Stead elaborates a fiction of connection that affirms our essentially social nature as human beings while criticizing the social conventions we have developed to accommodate this need. In her study of gossip, Patricia Meyer Spacks identifies a mode of discourse better suited to understanding Stead's fictional forms and language. Noting gossip's

“liminal position between public and private,” Spacks writes that “Blurring the boundaries between the personal and the widely known, it implicitly challenges the separation of realms (“home” as opposed to what lies outside it) assumed in modern times.”¹¹ All of Stead’s fiction challenges these arbitrary divisions, questioning the very possibility of an interiority independent of external relations, showing how even the most apparently individual assertions of will have already been written as possible utterances. Literary quotation, cliché, and gossip all function to show the interweaving of what modernism wished to believe separate.

House of All Nations and *The Little Hotel* are generated by gossip — both the bank and the hotel and the novels that create them live through gossip. The “Credo” that opens *House of All Nations* establishes a communal voice: cynical, calculating, acutely aware of the ironic disparities between appearance and reality and expectation and fulfilment.¹² *The Little Hotel* begins with a direct address by the wistful but ever hopeful Selda: “If you knew what happens in the hotel every day!”¹³ Both books gossip about these everyday happenings, offering an insider’s perspective to the uninitiated and revealing the instability of the conventions on which interactions within these institutions depend for their survival.

Gossip also sets the tone of *Letty Fox* and determines much of the action of *Cotters’ England* and *Miss Herbert*. It is gossip that gives these books their unusual shapes — seemingly roundabout, rambling and excessively detailed, full of gaps in knowledge yet pointed nonetheless. Conversation — that “fire of social life”¹⁴ — provides the action and an implicit counter to the tyranny of what is written. Two posthumously published stories — “Life is Difficult” and “Accents/Neighbours on the Green” — go even further toward making gossip their sole mode and subject.¹⁵

Gossip is the form of discourse best suited to Stead’s vision of life as an intricately spun web. Carol Gilligan argues that

Illuminating life as a web rather than a succession of relationships, women portray autonomy rather than attachment as the illusory and dangerous quest. In this way, women’s development points toward a different history of human attachment, stressing continuity and change in configuration, rather than replacement

and separation, elucidating a different response to loss, and changing the metaphor of growth.¹⁶

This new feminist psychology, in its elucidation of "different ways of structuring relationships . . . different views of morality and self . . . [and] different modes of assertion and response" (Gilligan, p. 62) motivating each gender's construction of reality, provides further insight into the differences Stead's writing introduces to established traditions.

The web of interconnecting relations, like the wild hops vine, informs most of her work as an image of connection. While Teresa seeks to get by the difficult social webs spun to restrain the joy she seeks, swearing instead by the metaphor of the voyage out, the embarkation to Cythera, our innermost desires, this metaphor too is a social one, stressing positive connection rather than inhibiting connection or isolating separation.¹⁷ Teresa's final vision of the goal she has been seeking all her life is also communal: she feels "many thousands of shadows, pressing along with her . . ." (p. 494). In contrast, it is Jonathan who realizes the traditional goal of the male quest: he becomes "that incomprehensible type, the bachelor . . . sucked into himself like a sea-anemone" (p. 500). Value here resides in Teresa's ringless commitment to herself first but also to the men in her life, and not in Jonathan's flight from commitment.

Similar patterns inform *Letty Fox*. The novel begins with her seeking "company for the evening,"¹⁸ is motivated throughout by her belief that "Fulfilment is the secret of energy, not self-sacrifice; at least for my type" (p. 255), and ends with her having "got a start in life" through marriage, awaiting the birth of her baby and thinking that "the journey has begun" (p. 502). Although Letty's marriage is usually seen as a cop-out, an abandoning of her quest for selfhood, I believe this ending is less ironic than it is another serious assertion that marriage and the attaining of selfhood are not necessarily incompatible in Stead's vision.

Letty has a tough and amused sense of herself; Teresa, an agonizingly serious one. The novels in which they appear take these women's desires for sexual satisfaction and companionship as seriously as their different kinds of idealism. They want every kind of fulfilment and each in her own way manages to get what

she wants, partly because the men in their lives share similar needs. Stead's most sympathetic male characters also place a high value on human relationships, delighting in conversation and parties or wandering the streets soaking up the atmosphere of big cities.¹⁹ Unlike many women writers, Stead stresses the shared humanity — rather than the gender differences — between her characters. And she invests something of herself in all of them, even those most repellent.

Whereas Letty's gossip is creative, enabling her to make sense of her world and helping her negotiate through it, Stead's least sympathetic characters employ gossip destructively, to separate from rather than connect themselves to others. Nellie Cotter and Eleanor Herbert are the worst offenders. Significantly, each loses a husband she sought to control and each betrays her friends to bolster up her shaky sense of self. Unlike their creator, neither can escape "the tyranny of what is written." Nellie's story of her life, ironically embedded in Stead's gossipy framework, is by contrast "a story of thickets, brigands and enchanters; and herself riding some bare-boned nag through it all, but always forward on a straight path through it all to the present moment."²⁰ Nellie's heroism proudly sees life through "a rosy tender veil" (p. 344). Eleanor Herbert in *Miss Herbert* is even more dramatically slave to the mangled fragments of what has been written. She "hewed to the line" and "cultivated [her] garden," remaining loyal to a false vision of her society and herself despite its contradiction at every turn.²¹ These women fail to see the repercussions of their blind drive to conform to the false ideals they have set themselves. Their blindness translates into an insensitivity to language that leaves them spoken by the dominant ideologies of their times rather than speaking subjects. The strength of these novels lies in their embedding of these inauthentic voices — the true expressions of unlived lives — in narratives that offer glimpses of alternative ways of speaking, writing, and imagining the world.

All Stead's major characters are readers. Those who succeed are resisting readers who write their own stories, making conventions serve them. Those who fail are the unimaginative readers, who seek to make their lives conform to pre-established plots. Stead's concept of fictional form is similarly designed to serve

her iconoclastic vision of what is possible. Focus on a single character or a single line of action would falsify her vision of life as an interconnecting web or root system. While the *bildungsroman* tradition provides some illusion of conventional structure, close examination of the novels employing this convention shows that even here much is included that would be considered irrelevant in the traditional *bildungsroman*. Often gossip provides the means of entry for these tentacles of connection to other lives.

Thus, although Stead's work resists easy classification as feminist — in its relative lack of interest in interiority, fluid ego boundaries, women's victimization and their exclusively female support systems — as well as easy classification as modernist — in its insistence on social context and its refusal to elevate the artist or the individual consciousness — her work cannot be simply dismissed as old-fashioned or formless. Stead's fiction challenges easy generalizations about these movements and reveals in language and fictional forms the potential for resisting the "tyranny of what is written."

NOTES

- 1 Christina Stead, *For Love Alone* (London: Virago, 1978), p. 253. Further references appear parenthetically in my text. My argument throughout this paper refers to and elaborates upon that first advanced in my book *Christina Stead* (London: Macmillan, forthcoming). I am grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for a Leave Grant in 1984-85 and to the University of British Columbia for a research grant enabling me to complete my work on Stead.
- 2 For other discussions of this organizing aspect of Stead's vision see Terry Sturm, "Christina Stead's New Realism," in *Cunning Exiles: Studies of Modern Prose Writers* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1974), pp. 9-35; Susan Higgins, "Christina Stead's *For Love Alone*: A Female Odyssey?" *Southerly*, 38, No. 4 (1978), 428-45; and Bruce Holmes, "Character and Ideology in Christina Stead's *House of All Nations*," *Southerly*, 45, No. 3 (1985), 266-79.
- 3 Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *On the Line*, trans. John Johnston (New York: Semiotext(e), 1983), pp. 5-7. Further references are abbreviated to D & G and included in my text.
- 4 Christina Stead, *The People with the Dogs* (London: Virago, 1981), p. 151.
- 5 Blanche H. Gelfant, "Sister to Faust: The City's 'Hungry' Woman as Heroine," in *Women Writers and the City: Essays in Feminist Literary Criticism*, ed. Susan Merrill Squier (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1984), pp. 268, 284-85; Ann Ronald, "The Female Faust," in *Feminist Criticism: Essays on Theory, Prose, and Poetry*, ed. Cheryl L.

- Brown & Karen Olson (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1978), pp. 212-21. Gelfant's analysis of the politics of hunger in female fiction suggests further directions for extending the analysis begun by Don Anderson in his superb article, "Christina Stead's Unforgettable Dinner Parties," *Southerly*, 39, No. 1 (1979), 28-45, particularly his observation that the refusal of characters such as Teresa Hawkins, Nellie Cotter, and Henny Pollit to share in communal meals is partly a denial of "the dominant culture" (p. 34). It might also be worth considering more fully Jonathan Crow's comment to Teresa in *For Love Alone*: "if, since she was going to write a book about a woman's life, she had read *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser" (p. 356). Teresa does not know the book, yet her story comments on the limitations of Dreiser's vision of the hungry heroine.
- 6 Rudolph Bader, "Christina Stead and the *Bildungsroman*," *World Literature Written in English*, 23, No. 1 (1984), 31-39. My first reaction to this essay was that Bader was ignoring the effects of gender on genre; but further reflection suggests that Stead, unlike many women writers who change the form to fit typically female experience, actually uses the form—substantially unchanged—to show up its shortcomings when forced to deal with female perspectives on reality as well as female experience.
 - 7 *The Voyage In: Fictions of Female Development*, ed. Elizabeth Abel, Marianne Hirsch, and Elizabeth Langland (Hanover & London: University Press of New England, 1983), p. 8. Jerome Buckley specifies his "principal characteristics" in *Season of Youth: The Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 17. Interestingly, *Sister Carrie* also allows its heroine to grow through this pattern, which may suggest its usefulness as a model for Stead.
 - 8 Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), p. 169.
 - 9 Judith Kegan Gardiner, "On Female Identity and Writing by Women," in *Writing and Sexual Difference*, ed. Elizabeth Abel (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 185.
 - 10 Joan Lidoff, *Christina Stead* (New York: Ungar, 1982). See her coining of the term "domestic gothic" and her discussion of women's "weak ego boundaries" (pp. 123-24).
 - 11 Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Gossip* (New York: Knopf, 1985), p. 262.
 - 12 Christina Stead, *House of All Nations* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1974).
 - 13 Christina Stead, *The Little Hotel* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1973), p. 7.
 - 14 This is Baruch Mendelsohn's phrase in Christina Stead, *Seven Poor Men of Sydney* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1965), p. 141.
 - 15 Christina Stead, "Accents/Neighbours on the Green," *Southerly* 44, No. 2 (1984), 217-32, records the gossip of two women who are literally and metaphorically "on different sides of the fence" (p. 224). Christina Stead, "Life is Difficult," *Southerly* 44, No. 3 (1984), 351-64, reconstructs the fragile lies of a life and sifts for the truth, primarily through the gossip of observers.
 - 16 Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's*

Development (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982), p. 48. Further references are abbreviated to Gilligan and included in my text.

- ¹⁷ For a fuller analysis of the Watteau painting that inspired Stead's treatment of this theme of embarkation for Cythera, see Jean H. Hagstrum, *Sex and Sensibility: Ideal and Erotic Love from Milton to Mozart* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 335.
- ¹⁸ Christina Stead, *Letty Fox: Her Luck* (London: Virago, 1978), p. 3. Further references appear parenthetically in my text.
- ¹⁹ For a slightly different account of Stead's tendency to refuse characterization through gender stereotypes see Bruce Holmes, "Character and Ideology in Christina Stead's *House of All Nations*," *Southerly* 45, No. 3 (1985), 272, which suggests that "there is a movement towards androgynous characterization. . . ."
- ²⁰ Christina Stead, *Cotters' England* (London: Virago, 1980), p. 343. Further references appear parenthetically in my text.
- ²¹ Christina Stead, *Miss Herbert (The Suburban Wife)* (London: Virago, 1982), p. 308; see also p. 168.