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# REVIEWS

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José Javier Abasolo. *Una del Oeste*. Donostia: Erein, 2014. 380p.

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“A Christie for Christmas” became, for decades, an annual reminder for whodunit fans to purchase Dame Agatha’s latest Hercule Poirot or Miss Marple mystery installment. Reminiscent of such regular offerings, although not as seasonally punctual nor—to date—as prolific as Christie herself, José Javier Abasolo’s (1957-) industrious pen has brought forth no fewer than thirteen noir volumes in the past sixteen years to which one must add short story collections, a couple of children’s books, frequent articles in the trade journals, a busy blog, countless interviews and many invited talks—in Spain and abroad-- dealing with his own as well as with the state of affairs of a this popular genre taking root in Spain’s northern Basque (Euzkadi) country.

As a successful attorney in his native city of Bilbao, Javier Abasolo (he only uses his first name in print) began his foray into the world of fiction simply as a way to try his hand at what others, whose work he admired and had been reading for many years, were publishing. The experiment met with almost immediate success for not only did his first effort, *Lejos de aquel instante* (“Away From That Moment”), find a publisher quickly—an unheard of feat for an unpublished writer-- it also won an important literary prize, was a finalist in a second one, with a French translation soon to follow. Since that breakout year of 1997, Abasolo’s fictional world has grown more familiar to an increasing number of readers and critics, and though the individual works are quite different from one another, many of the themes, most of the locales, and the narrative strategies have become quite familiar to us. In the three most recent books prior to *Una del Oeste* (“A Western”), his latest and the subject of this review, *Pájaros sin alas* (“Birds Without Wings”) from 2010, *La luz muerta* (“Dead Light”) from 2012 and *La última batalla* (“The Last Battle”) dated 2013, Abasolo presented his readers with a serial protagonist, a former police officer named Mikel Goikoetxea, recycled as the private detective Goiko and whom he’s recently promised to bring back for more investigative adventures in the near future. At present there seems very little doubt that the character’s popularity will make such a decision an easy one.

*Una del Oeste* naturally should not be judged either by its cover, depicting a cracked compact mirror reflecting an armed cowboy statuette, nor even by its

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generic title which suggests nothing more than a western potboiler. And yet, it is indeed an old fashioned western narrative which greets the reader not only as its first but also its last (22nd) chapter. However, this western framing turns out to be nothing short of a red herring once we delve into a narrative so preposterous that it defies credibility. Here's a text whose failings are so numerous (anacronisms, intertexts gone astray, risible appellations and dialogue, unlikely locations, ironic asides to the reader) that these inaugural pages cannot be labelled as anything but a misshapen parody of the real thing. A curious reader who skips to the last chapter seeking relief from such malapropisms will only endure similar torment. What to do? The answer is, keep reading, especially when confronted with a different typeset by the time we arrive at Chapter 2, and certainly after a thorough browsing that reveals alternating typesettings hinging on: a) the *time* of the narrative (19th century *vs.* 21st century), b) the *place* where events occur (Laramie, WY *vs.* Bilbao, Euzkadi), and c) the *characters* that populate its pages.

There are twenty two chapters (ironically, due to a typographical error, the last two chapters are numbered 22, the wrongly labelled 21 takes place in present day Bilbao, whereas the real—and final—Chapter 22 returns to the old West). Of these twenty two chapters, seven are set in a mythical old-west-flavored Wyoming, the first (I) and the last (XXII) serving as the frame for the whole narrative and the remainder which serve as a construct of today's largest Basque city.

Abasolo thus weaves a ludic fabric of parallel texts different in every sense, for in them the reader finds himself in two distinctly imagined worlds. One set in the long ago Far West of Laramie and surrounding territories, populated by drunkards, card cheats, usurping landowners, beautiful women and mysterious strangers; and the other set in present day Bilbao, scene of a murder investigation conducted—unofficially, as is *de rigueur* in such circumstances—by two couples, a college professor and his much younger girlfriend (an unpublished poet) together with a municipal judge and his policewoman lover, whose combined expertise eventually lead the storylines to converge in a not-altogether surprising finale. With a subversive nod to postmodern feminine agency, it is no surprise that the heroine Wyoming ranch owner and the equally comely aspiring Basque poet, their charms notwithstanding, outwit their male partners and rid their respective chronotopes of corruption, murder and intrigue.

In spite of the lighthearted tenor of his latest novel, frequently more entertaining and humorous than Abasolo readers have come to expect from their favorite author, his perennial concerns remain: drugs as the prime motivator of the gravest crimes, corrupt corporate entities which consider cover-ups as a routine business practice, the unstoppable power of wealth resulting in countless personal tragedies, the

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insignificant role of writers and intellectuals that forever render them ineffectual and defeated—none of this can be swept under the rug. But then, there's also the comfort of a familiar neighborhoods in a well-loved city and, finally and perhaps for the first time in all of Javier Abasolo's many novels, the reader is treated to the assumption of leading roles by female figures, and which light hearted though it may be, it is a welcome and timely awareness on the novelist's part. If only for this—though there are truly many other reasons—the reading of *Una del Oeste* is a very worthwhile pastime.

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Katherine Burkitt. *Literary Form as Postcolonial Critique*. Surrey: Ashgate, 2012. 162p.

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The conflict between form and content in literary productions is based on a clash of civilizations, nations and their narrations, and their fragmented geopolitical locations. In that vein, Katherine Burkitt's monograph, *Literary Form as Postcolonial Critique* attempts to focus on narrative poems and verse novels to examine the various modes of postmodern and postcolonial ruptures and their inherent textual politics that such textual fragmentations produce on the cultural literary landscape.

This book in particular challenges the structure of the genre of the prose novel, poetry and epics, and as a result disrupts the expectations that readers may have from these genres. Burkitt's central argument rests on the premise that the texts and the worlds they represent are inseparable and taken together often exhibit an "uncomfortable harmony as aesthetics and politics become interwoven" ("Introduction"). Burke marks these texts as "literary misfits that make for uncomfortable reading." Specifically, Burke is referring to Derek Walcott's *Omeros* (1990), Les Murray's *Fredy Neptune* (1998), Anne Carson's *Autobiography of Red* (1998), and Bernadine Evaristo's *The Emperor's Babe* (2001).

This argument of disjuncture between the form, content and the worlds they attempt to represent is neither new, nor particularly postcolonial, and Burkitt doesn't claim any groundbreaking interrogation with these old paradigms. Rather, she carefully unpacks narratives that demonstrate the numerous ways in which this "uncomfortable harmony" reveals the inherent textual politics that marks the complexity of reading race, gender and sexual politics, and power dynamics within a (post)colonial framework.

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A strong first chapter is a lengthy rendition of Les Murray's 1998 novel *Fredy Neptune*. Burkitt classifies this novel as "post epic" with a global perspective and although Fred is "frequently away from home, *Fredy Neptune* is marked by a series of Odyssean homecomings. . ." (33). Burkitt specifically explores Fred's "Boeotian" identity, an identity that is both hybrid and devoid of any authentic self, and examines memory fragmentation and its impact on textual representations. I found Burkitt's exploration of poetry and responsibility quite sharp in terms of unpacking the various modes of narrative and historiographic discontinuities, although the critique is more aligned to a post structural than a postcolonial reading. The novel, however, becomes a postcolonial critique when it begins to dissect the hierarchical relationships based on the history of colonization in Australia. In Murray's work these various modes of colonial conflicts are present within the binary representations of urban versus rural, insider versus outsider, prose and poetry, and finally a split between the West and Australia.

In her second chapter, "Post-epic National Identities in Bernardine Evaristo's *The Emperor's Babe*, Burkitt shifts her focus to the genre of the "post-epic." In this 2001 novel, a narrative written completely in verse form, *The Emperor's Babe* insists on a postcolonial presence within this British history as a result of the presence of black people in Roman London. Although Evaristo's text, according to Burkitt, makes the relationship with the poetic form and the various perspectives embedded in Zuleika's own poetry, and, in particular, her first sexual encounter with the emperor (and the power dynamics implied) clear, the postcolonial relationship remains unclear. Based on Burkitt's central argument that juxtaposes the play between literary form and content and as Burkitt herself posits, "*The Emperor's Babe's* epic form is recast to provide a marginal space and a voice for the voiceless in British society- both contemporary and historicized," (70) the analysis could have gained more agency if the links between the historical realities of Roman Londinium in 211 A.D. (during the reign of a black African emperor Septimus Serevus) and contemporary London and the British society were elaborated. Zuleika, the teenage mistress to the Roman emperor is clearly a proto-feminist subject, and an elaborated Black feminist consciousness which she inhabits, could have added to Zuleika's growing sense of her feminine agency. What is compelling about this chapter is the recognition that *The Emperor's Babe* is "inherently postmodern . . . And takes advantage of the unreliable core of Western history" (75).

In Burkitt's last chapter on Anne Carson's *Autobiography of Red*, the numerous ways in which this text is postmodern in articulating its political and cultural commitment is certain; the application of the postcolonial condition, however,

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is done with a certain degree of hesitance. In her strong analysis of the text, even Burkitt admits that, “there are manifold ways in which the term postcolonial is problematic to Carson’s work” (107) as a result of unclear identifications of national identities.

In discussing and theorizing these very disparate post-epic texts with distinct cultural readings and histories, Burkitt has presented to her readers various ways in which the political, sexual and gendered spaces represented in these works can be extrapolated. Some of these tensions lurking in these political spaces can be extended to the numerous geo-political and cultural ramifications in postcolonial and transnational societies.

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Enrique Dussel. *Ethics of Liberation in the Age of Globalization and Exclusion*. Trans. Eduardo Mendieta, Camilo Pérez Bustillo, Yolanda Angulo, and Nelson Maldonado-Torres. Durham: Duke UP, 2013. 752p.

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With the turn to transnational approaches in American literature and American studies over the past twenty years, Enrique Dussel’s *Ethics of Liberation in the Age of Globalization and Exclusion* is an important point of reference on the role of the intellectual in processes of critique and sociopolitical change and a useful commentary on much of Western philosophy. Originally published in Spanish in 1998, the book begins with a compelling argument that modernity is not simply the result of a cultural or social logic internal to Europe that expressed itself around the world, but that it is the result of Europe’s belief in its own centrality to world history. Familiar in its general outlines, Dussel ties this argument to his ethical position that intellectual provincialism has led to the oppression that defines modernity from the perspective of the marginalized and excluded populations of the world. However, he insists throughout that other exclusions would arise in any other system as a result of human finitude.

The body of *Ethics of Liberation* is divided into two halves, the first establishes a philosophical framework in three chapters and then a critical second set of three constructs his alternative ethics. He establishes three levels of analysis: human corporeal existence serves as the basis for factual and then normative truth claims, the question of inclusiveness drives his view of formal intersubjective validity for a given social system, and he evaluates the logical and empirical practicality of a given ethical position in terms of feasibility. Dussel then synthesizes these levels to

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create the basis for goodness claims with universal authority.

In all of this, two refrains mark Dussel's position. First, he begins several chapters with the phrase "this is an ethics of life," suggesting the wide scope of his work's application. Second, he repeatedly says that others' work is "necessary but not sufficient," which marks his claim to subsume other philosophers' perspectives and indicates the intended scope of his critical purview. In one of the most prolonged engagements, he argues that "the Frankfurt school is critical, a direct predecessor to the philosophy of liberation," because it allowed him "to politicize ontology, but, from the beginning, [he] found a lack of *positivity* in their work, an insufficiently clear *exteriority*" (235). Dussel notes that the "certain space of critical independence" may have "implied the absence of a concrete social commitment" (235). With few exceptions, notably Marx and Levinas, this judgment that other writers lack awareness of material Otherness defines the analytical stance that Dussel takes throughout the book.

To put it mildly, the scope of Dussel's analysis is enormous, and other readers have critiqued him for dealing incompletely with some thinkers, while others have applauded his historical breadth. It is worth noting in this regard that he sees this book as an "architecture" for later ethical and political writing on the question of liberation rather than a holistic treatment of all the questions that he raises throughout the course of the work (xv). Indeed, he insists throughout that while utopic in its impulses this is not intended to be a perfect ethics and instead argues for ongoing critique. Towards the end of the central fourth chapter "Ethical Criticism of the Prevailing System," he argues that the human condition is defined, in social and ethical terms, by the need to "decide, even intersubjectively, in the ambiguous space between (a) *perfect* knowledge and drives (which are empirically impossible) and (b) the clear negation of life (which is ethically impossible)" (283). Evil, he continues, is the result of attempts to totalize knowledge and transcend the finiteness of human corporeal existence, which "produce[s] victims" who "accumulate in the course of history" (283). The gesture toward dialogue mirrors a central theme of the book that the work of ethical judgment can never end.

One of the insights he draws from the Frankfurt School is instructive in this register, as he argues that "in reality [their critical theory] is a 'theory' about the conditions of possibility of 'doing' social criticism" (235). This question appears most notably when he discusses the writing of Rigoberta Menchu and Paulo Freire. Using Freire's concept of conscientization, he writes that Menchu's narrative reveals how liberatory change is "made possible by the *affirmation* of the value of the victims by the victims themselves" (297). Here, and with the description of Freire's critical pedagogy, Dussel creates some of the clearest illustrations of his

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overarching point about the interaction of his three levels of analysis. For this reason, and because of the value he places on Marx's model of co-solidarity with the working class in London, he seems to be leading into a more extended reading of both Menchu and Freire (or an analysis of other Latin American writers and thinkers) but he analyzes them to build his ethical architecture and moves on.

The issue is an apparent lack of sustained engagement with the marginalized on their own terms in favor of prolonged engagement with Western philosophers. This is where his reliance on Freire, who Dussel draws on to formulate his critical-ethical praxis, is central. He quotes Freire in critique of "the authoritarianism of intellectuals of the Left or Right," who claim to "conscientize" rural and urban workers without having to be 'conscientized' by them as well" (312-13). This reciprocity is at the heart of Dussel's ethics, but it appears in his method of justifying ethical judgment rather than in attempts to fully represent the Other.

He begins to address the issue in the introduction, writing that his purpose is, in part, "to legitimize and provide [...] philosophical grounding" for the "struggles for the recognition of victims who *transform* the character of previous liberation movements" (xviii). The three-part analysis (human corporeality, discursive community, and ethical feasibility) that he constructs in the book forms the basis for this effort. While he insists that the three levels must work together (and in his summary examples in chapters 3 and 6 are convincing here), his continued reference to human corporeality and the need for liberation on these terms means that attention to this reality in a given ethical-political context is what is vital, with Freire and Menchu as examples of the impact of human materiality on critical thought. At least one other reader has suggested that in locating historical subjectivity in the conscientized members of oppressed communities Dussel writes his own work into obsolescence. He counters this point from the outset, however, noting that as much as his Ethics is an articulation of the need to liberate the oppressed, it is also an attempt to liberate philosophy itself (41). Dussel's perspective therefore resonates with much recent work in transnational and indigenous literary studies where similar calls have been made for the reorganization of intellectual categories by engaging with indigenous and other marginalized epistemologies. Because he writes from a Latin American perspective and with twenty years since the original publication of this work, the *Ethics of Liberation* is at once a useful reminder of the need for a global scale of engagement with such questions and a reminder that an important strain of postcolonial ethical thinking emerges from the specific historical and political circumstances of Latin America at the end of the twentieth century. The task for readers of *Ethics of Liberation* might then be to use his ethical framework to create or imagine dialogic encounter in terms of

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the corporeal and subjective reality of the marginalized communities that Dussel prioritizes. This is a timely English-language publication of an important work.

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Jason Farman, ed. *The Mobile Story: Narrative Practices with Locative Technologies*. New York: Routledge, 2014. 326p.

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It is no surprise that, whether we use them or study them, technologies are providing new possibilities of analysis and integration in the classroom. Jason Farman's edited volume points to the need to carefully examine how social media, mobile phones, tablets, apps, games and even location-based technologies are producing new dialogues and platforms that are at once useful tools of instruction and offer new perspective on the study and production of storytelling. Indeed, the contributors to each chapter offer multiple perspectives on how scholarship and instructional practices work within storytelling and mobile media.

Each chapter of the six parts in this collection starts with a description of how the authors will help us understand the practice of storytelling in the mobile media age. Additionally, each chapter includes a list of two to three keywords with definitions that are used throughout the essay. For example, Farman starts his introduction with the definition of the term "creative misuse" to explain the innovative ways scholars, artist, and authors make use of current technology to produce storytelling projects. Technologies found in mobile software were not intended to be used as a place of narrative production, yet they have proven to give voice and to imagine place and history as something that can be both permanent and experiential. Farman contends that the results of these projects often produce a "deeper sense of place and a stronger understanding of our own position within that place" (5).

While each section focuses on a particular area such as design and practice, mapping, games, and others, they all have in common the production of storytelling in different capacities. However, some of the chapters will be more applicable for those interested in specific technologies. For example, the section focused on space and mapping with articles written by Didem Ozkul and David Gauntlett, Lone Koefoed Hansen, and Paula Levine, offer detailed descriptions on the use of GPS tracking and mapping on the analyses of different art, literature works and personal narratives. While each of the authors offers his or her own analysis of the technology he or she uses, instructors can easily adapt activities

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that utilize GPS tracking and mapping to study the production of narratives that defy and incorporate time and space. In her article “On Common Ground: Here as There” Levine focuses on the use of empathic narratives and spatial dissonance when she studies web-based projects such as, *San Francisco <-> Bagdad*, *The Gulf Oil Spill*, *The Berlin Wall*, *The Wall-The World* and *Transborder Immigrant Tool* and concludes that these location-based and mobile technologies “are constructing new geographies and territories formed through new interconnections and lived experiences of proximity that reshape the daily spaces in which we live” (154).

Other sections call attention to the new formats for writing and reading and producing narratives that do not follow a specific, or traditional, structure and that are often developed across multiple platforms. For instance, in Part II the essay “Dancing with Twitter: Mobile Narratives Become Physical Scores” Susan Kozel, Mia Keinänen, and Leena Rouhiainen give detailed and practical approaches to using Twitter to produce and analyze micro-narratives using a project called *Intui Tweet*, often used by dancers. When using *Intui Tweet*, dancers recording their “bodily tweets” produce scores that rely on listening to one another. The practicality and permeability of such projects comes from the way the term “narrative” itself is being questioned, thus giving instructors across several disciplines the opportunity to adapt it to their own class projects.

Of particular interest to me, but also as a section that incorporates many of the themes and technologies described elsewhere, Part VI describes how technology is being used and appropriated as a social justice tool. This last part of *The Mobile Story*, titled “Memory, History, and Community,” with articles by Alberto S. Galindo, Marc Marino and others, demands that we re-think the notion of memory and history as static and permanent events. The essays in this section describe the use of museum apps such as at “Explore 9/11,” studied in Galindo’s essay, and “The Tales of Things” and “UCL’s Grant Museum” thoroughly explained in the article “Enhancing Museum Narratives: Tales of Things and UCL’s Grant Museum” as they engage visitors and users in the creation of their own interpretation of the specific object, photograph or place. The user is invited to add new images, explore different sections upon his or her location (using GPS), insert comments, etc. In the case of the 9/11 museum app, the author argues such user engagement, in particular the use of images, “has the potential to become an ongoing deterritorializing and reterritorializing enterprise, as the spaces of 9/11 lose and gain new meanings” (272).

The last essay in this section, titled, “Mobilizing Cities: Alternative Community Storytelling,” describes two local projects that rely on the use of smart phones and/ or internet to give voice to those often negatively or incompletely portrayed in

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the media. *Voces Móviles* relies on users to report events, including police abuse, critical to *jornaleros*/day laborers. The *jornaleros*, an often undocumented and underrepresented group, become a type of civic journalist voicing and reporting the concerns of its followers. *LA Flood Project* is a work of location-based technology that uses a combination of “oral history, fictional narratives, and an emergency simulation” (296), to produce a unique narrative of lived and imagined history that becomes, “not just a speculative cartography but rather an attempt to give polyphony to a map” (297). The author believes that through the use of polyphonic narratives, *Voces Móviles* and the *LA Flood Project* “capture as many voices as possible and tell stories that often go untold” (302).

*The Mobile Story: Narrative Practices with Locative Technologies*, could be viewed primarily as a study of current web-based technology. However, within each of the chapters, those interested in enhancing the study of narrative production can greatly benefit from reading how they are being used and evaluated. This book addresses the increased use and need for the critical study of mobile technologies in the classroom, particularly as it is producing new and innovative storytelling projects that question our traditional ways of studying, understanding and experiencing notions of space, time, narrative and history. It also offers a plethora of possibilities for critical analysis of the products of this technology, i.e. Text-Message novels, iPad art, etc. and the impact they’re having in the areas of women’s and disability studies, for example. Although this volume relies on the heavy use of current internet, social media, and digital terminology, it uncovers the underexplored integration of such technology in the classroom and specifically, in the production of storytelling projects. Additionally, it offers a website, still under construction, for supplementary instructional materials, hands-on explorations and sample of projects.

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Diana Fuss. *Dying Modern: A Meditation on Elegy*. Durham: Duke UP, 2013. 150p.

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First appearing in the seventh century before Christ, but not named until the fourth century A.D., Greek *elegoi* were sad songs accompanied by the flute, and evolved into one of the most long-lasting, highly ordered subgenres of poetry called “elegy.” By the early twentieth century, elegies had inherited a predictable, strict ordering of thematic components, divided into two main theme sections.

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The first, “Lament,” has three parts: 1) Announcement of death; 2) Eulogy of the deceased, and 3) Expression of personal emotion. The Second main theme section, “Consolation,” includes 1) Meditation on the nature of death and 2) a Message of consolation or resolution of personal conflict. In addition to these thematic concerns, certain metric, tonal, topical and temporal conventions have corseted most mourning poetry into rhymed, metered (often couplets with alternating hexameter and pentameter lines), woeful laments with socially expected religious consolations.

Although the subtitle, “*A Meditation on Elegy*,” might imply the study of canonical elegiac genre and form, in *Dying Modern*, Diana Fuss sidesteps the traditional strictures and structures of “elegy” and carefully selects and creatively organizes a wide swath of twentieth century poetry about death that is less about elegy and more about an *Ars Moriendi* genre that speaks in three voices: the dying voice, the surviving voice and the reviving voice. By defining these three points of view, or “points of voice,” Fuss listens to *Ars Moriendi* in a new way and expands our appreciation of it.

What might also be called “famous last words” poems, dying voice pre-mortem poems are spoken by the soon-to-be corpse, and are further divided by attitude—consoling, defiant, banal, and “new” last words that reveal what is most modern through changing attitudes about the deathbed and whether life’s mysteries are really revealed there. Nineteenth century consolatory first-person poems have the poet assume the persona spiritually preparing for death, are most often written by women, and are delivered upon death or in anticipatory preparation for it, giving instructions for funeral planning and grave tending, “Do not adorn with costly shrub, or tree,/ Or flower, the little grave which shelters me.” (Helen Hunt Jackson), or witnessing first-hand her own death as in the oft-quoted, “I heard a fly buzz when I died” by Emily Dickinson. Defiant last words can debunk a good death, as shown by vernacular folk ballads that eschew the peace and quiet of the grave and talk of murder, grim romances, deathbed confessions and mock forgiveness.

Perhaps the most illuminating section of *Dying Modern* is a true genre study of the medieval lyric aubade, a morning--and mourning—dawn (*alba*) song, best illustrated by Romeo and Juliet’s debate over whether the nightingale or the lark sings. Fuss’s discussion clearly and cleverly differentiates traditional aubades that mark the time before the lover must depart from modern “anti-aubades.” She identifies a group of contemporary domestic poems about the daily grind that speak of working spouses reading the newspaper, sipping coffee, or performing bathroom rituals that have little to do with ardor. These breakfast-in-bed poems

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are neither for the dearly departing or the dearly departed. In particular the study of Richard Wilbur's "A Late Aubade" evaluates a series of present participle repetitions that "captures the tensions between action and stasis that defines every dawn song." Her carefully crafted interpretation of technical components in harmony with thematic content yields a critical deep reading that marks time both in the rhythmic sense of its passing and in the symbolic sentiment of the passage of time. Asking, "if time flies, why must lovers?," Wilbur's lines beg for late-morning indulgence along with chilled white wine, blue cheese, and ripe pears, rather than "rehearse/The rosebuds theme of centuries of verse." Pointing out the "hearse" in "rehearse" and the cold, mold, and ripeness of the foods mentioned, Fuss recognizes that even Wilbur's anti-aubade is a prelude to the time when one of the lovers will awake alone.

By meditating upon various forms of *Ars Moriendi* verse, including elegy and aubade, *Dying Modern* not only identifies the dying voice, reviving voice and surviving voice, but also explores the revivifying power of poetic language to make these voices heard.

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Kimberly L. Geeslin. *The Handbook of Spanish Second Language Acquisition*. West Sussex, UK: Wiley and Sons, 2014. 576p.

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*The Handbook of Spanish Second Language Acquisition* is the compilation of thirty essays which have been organized into five parts corresponding to the following respective topical areas of research in second language Spanish: I. Theoretical and methodological approaches; II. Phonology; III. Developing grammars; IV. Individual and social factors; and V. Acquisition in the classroom. The appearance of this editorial compilation is timely because in recent years the field of Spanish second language acquisition has progressed significantly, not only evolving into a rigorous and sophisticated discipline in and of itself, but also providing insight into the acquisition of second languages more generally. The new arrival of this volume is particularly welcome given the fact that eight years have passed since the last edited collection of essays in this area (Salaberry & Lafford, 2006) was published, and particularly because it had been only three years before that when the next previously edited volume (Lafford & Salaberry, 2003) had been produced by the same authors.

From an editorial perspective, division of this compilation into five distinct areas

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is fully justified and adequately covers the wide ground in which Geeslin suggests there have been major representative advances in the field. As the author also suggests, recent work in the acquisition of Spanish as a second language is not only a global endeavor, as indicated by the “pan-national” (Geeslin, 1) representation of contributors, but it also has been approached from a wide range of theoretical perspectives, most of which have been addressed in the current volume.

Especially refreshing about this compilation is the equitable treatment of topics regardless of the extent to which they are prevalent in the current literature. The book strikes a careful balance between those areas that are at the forefront of the current research as well as those that have not attracted as much academic attention, but continue to be significant in terms of the overall enterprise. This is particularly true in regards to Geeslin’s dedication of an entire section of the book (Part II) to a mere four chapters on the acquisition of Spanish phonology, reflecting, as Geeslin suggests, the comparably scant though growing and important work that has been conducted over the years in this area. Chapters 26 and 27 (Part V), which respectively cover Spanish second language reading and writing, stand as further instances of Geeslin’s tendency for inclusiveness; in this reviewer’s opinion, these are two skills that are not sufficiently represented in the literature, yet Geeslin apportions an individual chapter to each.

The chapters that are included in Part III on the development of grammatical structures appear to provide more detail than some of the chapters of other sections, particularly with respect to findings of empirical research conducted to date. Other chapters, particularly those that are subsumed in Part I on methodology and frameworks, provide more of a general focus on historical development. Despite this difference in approach, each contribution is careful to strike a balance between previous work (either in the form of empirical studies or theoretical development) and what the direction of future work looks like.

Overall, the *Handbook of Spanish Language Acquisition* should be recognized as a welcome newcomer to the field, taking a prominent place among the fold of previous survey volumes such as those cited at the outset of this review. This book offers value to all researchers in the field, whether inside or outside the classroom, and whatever the methodological framework to which they subscribe. In some respects, the volume’s detail would make it ideal required reading for a graduate course in second language acquisition of Spanish. On the other hand, its approachability would also make the volume appropriate as additional assigned reading of selected chapters for students of similar courses at the undergraduate level. Finally, the book may also serve as introductory reading for students undertaking special projects across a wide range of topical areas in Spanish second

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language acquisition, as well as further direct them to more in-depth sources beyond the book itself.

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Stephen H. Grant. *Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry and Emily Folger*. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 2014. 244p.

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Stay, and let there be no bloody question whether Stephen Grant's second critical work, *Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry and Emily Folger*, has garnered permanent shelf space and digital cataloguing by the famous library in Washington, D.C. (rather than across the pond in London), that holds 82 First Folios, 275,000 books, 60,000 manuscripts and hundreds of valuable artwork related to the playwright William Shakespeare (1564-1616) and his time. Located on Capitol Hill, the library was built and paid for from the bulk of Henry C. Folger's fortune, left in a trust and naming his alma mater, Amherst, as perpetual administrator (the college's trustees were surprised by the announcement when Henry died). The library is a national historic landmark, designed by Paul Philippe Cret (1876-1945), who also designed the Pan American Union in Washington and the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The Folgers envisioned the library for showcasing the dramatist and poet's art and preserving his genius, and thus, with it named after Shakespeare and themselves, the futurist-minded couple set down their own legacy, too. Three hundred years after Shakespeare lived and more than a century ago from our time, the Folgers, seemingly full partners in marriage and collecting, went about acquiring nearly everything of, by, and for England's great bard – measure for measure and as they liked it. The couple obviously took to heart Ben Jonson's dedicatory remarks in the First Folio what Shakespeare left us: "He was not of an age, but for all time!" Grant's book explains how the exacting and persistent Folgers worked to make sure of that.

Their endgame, of course, became the permanent housing of their private collection in the national library the two sited and willed as a lasting gift to the American people. To make the occasion truly Shakespearean, prosaic and appropriate, the library was officially dedicated in dramatic fashion on Shakespeare's ascribed birthday and deathday, April 23rd. Many representatives of America's wealthy and elite, politicians, and scholars were present including President Herbert Hoover and First Lady Lou Henry Hoover (she was a noted

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scholar and linguist). Sadly though, one luminary was absent: Henry Folger, who had passed away in June 1930. Nonetheless, if the past 400-plus years of reading, studying, and performing Shakespeare were not enough, the Folgers' actions sincerely added to the scholarly and popular interest in Shakespeare and his works in the United States and of mythical proportion around the world.

Grant is a senior fellow at the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and previously authored the biography, *Peter Strickland: New London Shipmaster, Boston Merchant, First Consul to Senegal* (New Academia, 2006). Of note, like Henry Folger, Grant, is also Amherst alum. Laden with history about the Folger Library, interesting facts and cameos encapsulating the Folgers' lives and networks, and anecdotes about history's most celebrated author, Grant's book offers a treasure trove to the researcher's obvious targeted audience of historians, scholars, readers, and performers of Shakespeare.

Attuned to effective marketing and successful sales, Grant's 244-page book was published in hardcover and released by John Hopkins University Press in February of 2014 to herald Shakespeare's spring birthday and coincide with the 450th anniversary of his birth year. Hence, the book respectably documents the lives of the husband-wife duo that collected the mass of rare Shakespearean materials (now worth millions of dollars) and founded the Folger Shakespeare Library, which opened to the public in 1932. In the tradition of Elizabethan theatre, Grant offers both a prologue and epilogue to his work, along with acknowledgements, an appendix of directors for the Folger, notes, bibliography and index. Adding to its archival durability and scholarly aspect yet popular reading interest, the book includes dozens of black and white photographs, drawings, and tables, most of them portraits of the Folgers, of Shakespeare and other persons connected with the library, and depicting the elegant Elizabethan-themed reading rooms, exhibitions, theatre, and special items inside and outside of the library monument.

Particularly, the book accompanies a progressive rise in studies about books, book history and the history of authorship, reading and publishing. It follows on the express heels of Travis McDade's *Thieves of Book Row* (Oxford University Press, 2013), which details the vivid world of bookselling in the late 1920s and early 1930s and how a notorious rare book ring in New York was underestimated by libraries and other institutions, befooling book sellers and book buyers and keeping law enforcement at bay. The book also flows within a narrow and very specialized path of scholarship dedicated to books, bidders, and book collecting and including, but not limited to, A. S. W. Rosenbach's *Books and Bidders: The Adventures of a Bibliophile* (Little, Brown and Co., 1927), Edwin Wolf and John Fleming's *Rosenbach* (World Publishing, 1960), James Thorpe's *Henry Edwards Huntington*:

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*A Biography* (University of California Press, 1994), and James Raven's *The Business of Books: Booksellers and The English Book Trade 1450-1850* (Yale, 2007), among others. Further, Grant's text is patterned after a short and irregular string in critical texts published by John Hopkins and about persons, organizations, museums, and libraries that collected rare books and other items: *William and Henry Walters, the Reticent Collectors* (1999) and *Henry Walters and Bernard Berenson* (2010), the latter text about two men who sought Italian renaissance paintings.

Of course, the popularization of Shakespeare, of his works, and of books in general and the expanding market for books over the centuries, especially during late-Victorian and early twentieth-century American book dealing and collecting, and the library carrying the Folgers' and his namesakes are described and promoted by Grant, as well as the expert understanding he wishes to make: that, as Shakespeare was a visionary, so too were Henry Clay Folger (1857-1930) and his wife, Emily Clara Jordan (1858-1936). On April 23, 2014, The Washington Post called Grant's book "superlative." Six days later on the 29th, its cross-town, conservative rival, The Washington Times, acknowledged Grants; book, too, and printed that it was "thoroughly researched and accessibly written." Michael Dirda from the Washington Post concluded that the book is "one that ranges from Amherst College in the 19th century to the gilded age of Standard Oil to the glory days of high-end book collecting."

Grant's text is indeed well-researched and written, in a snappish and easily-readable style, even though there are many details. It contains a well-framed narrative, too, with chronological layout across 10 chapters and beginning with commentary about the Folgers' early lives and schooling, followed next by anecdotes about their meeting and courtship and finally, their commitment to each other and literature. Then follows a report about Henry's five decades at Standard Oil, his investments to "buy the bard," his maneuvers in the book market, and how the couple's collection developed and led to the eventual purchasing (with approval by Congress) of a plot of land for the then, future library and its eventual siting, design, building, directions for operations, and continued financing during the Great Depression and beyond. In essence, the book is a love story about two well-educated and literary-minded people who gained fame and fortune, networking and climbing their way into high society and managing a very public yet somewhat reclusive "presence" (even a recalcitrant aura-of-sorts considering Henry's moody behavior), while all the while pursuing their private passion for books and Shakespeare.

Grant's certain detailing of how the Folgers' literary inclinations and interests in book collecting were generated, in part, from higher learning affirms the power

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of a liberal arts education, which both Henry and Emily received, at Amherst and Vassar respectively. Classical studies and college experience directed them to their professions and guided them in their professional lives and collecting “hobby.” Henry excelled at college, fitting comfortably into fraternity life and doing well in coursework (12). While not the top student (he graduated fifth in his class), he performed well and in exams, demonstrating early his life-long parsimony in prose and acumen with numbers. He thrived in classical languages, rhetoric, math and geometry. The lowest grade Henry Folger achieved in any subject during his four years at Amherst was an 85 in Greek. Higher education helped him to become a refinery expert and eventually, John D. Rockefeller’s right-hand “data” man. Similarly, Emily performed well too, and her best subjects were composition, French, astronomy, botany, chemistry, math, and English criticism. She was elected class president which Grant interprets as serving her well, first as a teacher in a Brooklyn secondary school right after college graduation and then later as the partner to a business executive who had wide-ranging literary interests (16). Needless to say, both Folgers were Phi Betes and avid theatre-goers from their college days onward.

Interestingly, Henry Folger was first bitten by the book collecting bug as a child. His mature interest was in reading and collecting works by American authors. He was awestruck by Twain’s humor and fascinated by Emerson’s language. After marrying Emily, who wrote her master’s thesis at Vassar on Shakespeare, Henry and his bride coalesced their learned interests and decided to act on their mutual love of Shakespeare by locating and buying the most uncommon of Shakespeare materials plus books by scholars and writers whose own critical and creative works appropriated or were influenced by Shakespeare. For nearly half a century, after they married in October of 1885 and until Henry’s death in June of 1930, Henry Clay Folger used his earnings from America’s surging petroleum industry to work with his wife as equal partner, and the two gathered 75,000 *rare* books and other *exceptional* objects about Britain’s most well-known playwright, actor, and poet. In fact, the Folgers accumulated “the staggering figure of 92,000 books” in total and, as Grant calculates, their forty years of collecting “averages six books added-every day” (82).

Too, the Folgers collected more than rare books of Shakespeare and the sixteenth century. In one of the books most interesting sections, chapter 5, Grant documents some of the rare books of prose, poetry, and drama they obtained including the following: a rare copy of *Groatsworth of Witte* (1592) in which the pamphleteer Robert Greene knocks Shakespeare for his early theatrical successes and calls him an “upstart crow”; a letter from Elizabeth I to the king of France advising restraint

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in the religious strife between Catholics and Protestants; manuscripts of plays and masques by Shakespeare's contemporary and nemesis, Ben Jonson; a series of early fourteenth-century manuscripts of Aristotle (the first titled *Physica*); and literature and memorabilia about writers and theatre from classical Greek and Rome up to and through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (75-94).

Additionally, the Folgers' collection includes genuine Shakespeare signatures, rare scenes from Shakespeare's plays, remarkable costumes, and several portraits of Shakespeare, plus other relics and small objects such as thimbles, goblets, and mulberry cups that were especially pursued by Emily. Grant marks that the Folgers collected 11,000 sales catalogs, 1,300 bibliographies, glossaries, and literary society publications, and numerous reference materials, encyclopedias and dictionaries including five editions of Withal's English and Latin dictionary from Shakespeare's period. These are copies of a publication which the bard himself would have undoubtedly accessed, probably securing a copy from a book dealer or accessing an edition while possibly and perhaps personally overseeing the composing of his manuscripts and printing of his first two books, the long-poems *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), which became instantly popular. Some scholars have speculated Shakespeare served as an apprentice in a printer's shop after he first moved from Stratford to London in the 1580s.

In the spirit of the dramatist and poet whom they adored, the Folgers pursued their passion and found a way to share it with society. As Shakespeare was focused on his drama and poetry, the Folgers were focused likewise in their collecting, and all three were motivated to make a significant contribution to their culture. Simply, for this childless couple, their collection of Shakespeare materials (which is the world's largest) and the library that was designed to house their collection were their offspring, comprising some of the rarest of Shakespearean texts ever to be safely kept and geared to inform and please researchers, teachers, students, families, and practitioners, patrons, and critics of literary arts and theatre. According to the library's website, today the Folger welcomes more than 100,000 visitors a year and provides professors, scholars, graduate students, and researchers from around the world with access to the collections. The dust jacket to Grant's text claims the library is a vibrant center in Washington for cultural programs, including theater, concerts, lectures, and poetry readings. The library provided Grant with unprecedented access to the primary and archival sources within the Folger vault. He drew on interviews with surviving Folger relatives and visits to 35 related archives in the U.S. and Britain in order to create this all encompassing portrait of the Folgers. He delineates how the couple further set about to collect works that highlighted Shakespeare's time and the crafts and professions that

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the bard would have known intimately. Grant carefully records the Folgers were spellbound by Shakespeare's creativity and breadth. Once Henry recalled, "There is a long shelf of books in my library, every one a tribute to Shakespeare's technical knowledge in the line of which the writer is at the head" (31).

The synopsis to Stephen Grant's fascinating story about the global amassers of Shakespeareana promotes a rich narrative in American history and English studies and one that could be remembered best as *Alls Well That Ends Well*. Regarding the name of Shakespeare's problematic comedy and the couple's uncommon endeavors, readers should substitute "Alls" with "Oils," for without Henry Folger's earnings gained through the petroleum industry, the Folgers could not have become extraordinary collectors of all things Shakespeare. Henry Folger was president of Standard Oil of New York (which trademarked Mobil in 1920). Standard Oil was one of the two largest companies of 33 smaller companies established from the dissolution of John D. Rockefeller's monopolizing Standard Oil Trust. The break-up was ordered by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1911. Folger then served as chairman of Standard Oil of New York from 1923 to 1928, more than two decades after he began working in the oil refinery business in 1881. Without oil proceeds though, the Folgers could hardly have envisioned the library that showcases the dramatist and poet's art and preserves his genius into perpetuity.

The Folgers and their collecting provided more meaning to Shakespeare's life and art and added to the aura and popular interest that immortalizes him and his works. Still, with the library becoming reality (situated as founded at 201 East Capitol Street Southeast in Washington) and in spite of the couple's excessive bibliomania and shared philanthropic ideals, because of Henry's wealth, the United States would, most assuredly, never have been able to lay claim to one of the most renowned libraries and academic research centers on our globe. Thus, all which was well, in fact ended well, and truly by the Folgers doing well.

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Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs, ed. *Rebozos de Palabras: An Helena María Viramontes Critical Reader*. Tucson: Arizona UP, 2013. 276p.

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In the last decade in particular, Latina writers and Latina writing have been topics of interest for critics and scholars alike. Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs critical reader, *Rebozos de Palabras: An Helena María Viramontes Critical Reader*, joins in the conversation with one of the many important and needed collections of essays on

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Latina writers. In the foreword, Sonia Saldívar-Hull states that Viramontes makes her readers “*look* at the lives of the subaltern who are murdered daily, figuratively and literally, by the conditions of containment” (X). Much like Viramontes, Gutiérrez y Muhs forces us to acknowledge and see the need for a critical reader that studies Chicanas’ works and their relationship to other American writers.

The reader is divided into four parts, including a section with two interviews with Viramontes. Part one explores the author’s distinctive narrative style and thematic elements, pairing up writers such as John Steinbeck and his novel, *The Grapes of Wrath*, with Susana Sánchez Bravo and her novel, *Espacios Condenados*. What these essays show is a strong connection between religious imagery and the close relationship of religion and social justice explored in the novels. While Steinbeck shares similar thematic elements with Viramontes, in *Under The Feet of Jesus*, Viramontes uses a strong female protagonist to protect and demand equal treatment for farm workers. Barbara Brinson Curiel finds that, “Estrella encompasses references not only to feminine divinity but also to the masculine divinity of Jesus” (38). Curiel explores these two works to show that both authors, although from very different backgrounds and several decades apart, share an interest in “the representation of agricultural workers and to a critical engagement with Judeo-Christian traditions and beliefs” (44), but it is clear that Viramontes uses a strong feminist perspective of the Chicano/a movement to celebrate a young woman’s consciousness development that goes beyond the traditional growing-up story. Raelene Wyse studies *Espacios Condenados* and Viramontes’s *Their Dogs Came with Them*, as they both rely on the act on remembering and memory to ensure survival. Both novels also explore the impact of the city on their characters and the possibility for community. Wyse finds that both novels suggest that, “external and internalized oppression wreak havoc on individuals and communities” (55) particularly when suspicion and fear threaten the possibility for strong supportive relationships.

Part two focuses on Viramontes’s representation of the female body, and how people come together in struggles drawn by fear, labor, violence, and love. The authors in this section explore both of Viramontes’s previously mentioned novels, but also her short story collection *The Moths and Other Stories*. The studies on the gendered body in the articles of this section show how characters are connected to the earth, institutions and the city, but also how their bodies are often subject to violence as a means to “control both gender and race at the expense of mutilating an individual’s freedom” (110), as Juanita Heredia notes in her study on the women in east Los Angeles in this section.

Gutiérrez y Muhs’ uses the term ‘Maztlán’ to describe “the Chicana mythic

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homeland that unites us to womanhood” (12), this is particularly evident in part three titled, “Ethics and Aesthetics,” which explores the way Viramontes uses love and ethics not only to construct knowledge, but also as a liberating force that makes it possible for her characters to love, know, and live on their own terms. Mary Pat Brady, among many other important points, finds that Viramontes suggests that the city or urban spaces, despite the forces that criminalize its inhabitants and condemn their houses, wants us to see “East LA not as ‘blighted,’ but as home to brave and determined people caring for others” (181). In the same manner, Viramontes makes the reader realize the way that people who work the land are part of it. Joyce Garay here remarks that “Petra emphasizes for Estrella that the mother Estrella has not only Petra herself but also a relationship with the earth of which those who consume its products are rarely mindful” (210).

Part four offers two wonderful interviews with Helena Maria Viramontes that allow us to understand a bit more about her thought process and inspiration in writing these texts. Certainly, the most significant contribution of this collection is not only the need to have individual Latina writers studied in depth, but also how it stresses the need to create similar readers that show how Latina writers are grounded in culture, history, and political interests, and the ways that they enter into conversation with other writers nationally and internationally.

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Chad Harbach, ed. *MFA vs. NYC: The Two Cultures of American Fiction*.  
New York: Faber & Faber, 2014. 312p.

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In the Introduction to *MFA vs. NYC*, Chad Harbach writes that when the titular essay was first published, it prompted feedback from some readers abroad who claimed that his discussion was depressing, and that it even made them reluctant to return to America. Both the essay and the larger work in which it appears focus on the shift in the power center of American fiction from the major New York publishing houses to the many MFA programs that have sprung up in American universities over the past few decades. Harbach avers that his goal with this work may have added to readers’ feelings of depression: “to consider the fiction writer less as an utterly free artistic being . . . and more as a person constrained by circumstance” (4).

This collection of essays makes it clear that the American fiction writer works within the confines of circumstances largely beyond his or her control, whether

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within academia or among the traditional big publishing houses. The essay “How to Be Popular,” written by literary agent Melissa Flashman, clearly shows how a book’s success is oftentimes the result of: its appeal to book clubs across the country; the extent to which it touches on subjects of interest in popular culture at the moment; its viability as an assigned text in American colleges; and simple luck and good timing. In “Application,” Diana Wagman humorously details her own experience as an instructor in an MFA program, particularly highlighting the tension that sometimes exists in the academy between those who teach literature and those who create it. David Foster Wallace also touches on this tension in his work “The Fictional Future,” a most appropriate addition to this volume, as it first shone the spotlight on the multitude of MFA programs when initially published in 1988.

As an MFA student, albeit in poetry rather than fiction, I can say these revelations are indeed depressing, or at least disillusioning. And, *MFA vs. NYC* has its greatest value in just that. This is a good resource for someone considering a career in creative writing, because it encourages such a person to think and rethink about the reasons for wanting to enter that field. I would assign this work to undergraduate students deciding whether to enter an MFA program, especially if I suspected they wanted to do so in order to get rich writing the next great novel. Reading this book would show them that there are many other people with their same desire, their same drive, and their same ability who have not been able to make that happen, either through pursuing the academic culture or that of the New York publishing houses. Similarly, people who believe avoiding academia will keep their writing true and unfettered will find from this book that both MFA and NYC bring their own restrictions and worries for would-be fiction writers.

*MFA vs. NYC* also has value beyond its depressing truths, insofar as it paints a clear portrait of both the academic and publishing worlds, sharing insights about each that would be unknown to people outside those communities and showing that both main paths toward becoming a writer can be useful and worthwhile. “My Parade” by Alexander Chee and Maria Adelman’s “Basket Weaving 101” eloquently discuss the sense of community one can gain from entering an MFA program. Likewise, Darryl Lorenzo Wellington poignantly shows in his “Reality Publishing” that writers so long for a community that they would be willing to endure the demoralizing contest for Amazon.com’s Breakthrough Novel Award in order to gain one there.

The book provides a relatively well-rounded portrait despite a tight knit group of contributors. Reading the essays, one quickly realizes that the “Keith” referred to in Emily Gould’s “Into the Woods” is Keith Gessen, author of “Money

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(2006)” and “Money (2014)” in this volume, and that the “Chad” mentioned in Gould’s essay is Chad Harbach, editor of this volume. Harbach can be forgiven for drawing on his friendships for contributors, as this simply exemplifies the sense of community that can exist both in academia and traditional publishing. The reader, however, may feel as though he or she is peering into a literary family tree of sorts. Granted, this effect is lessened somewhat through the inclusion of essays by such well-known authors as George Saunders and Fredric Jameson. Still, a wider-ranging group of contributors may have given voice to some underrepresented areas in *MFA vs. NYC*, such as writers who attended MFA programs in the South or West, or faculty who gained one of those rumored but often elusive tenure-track positions still available to MFAs. *MFA vs. NYC* nonetheless succeeds in portraying the two worlds of American fiction, the advantages and pitfalls of each, and the struggles and triumphs of those who live within them.

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Linda Hogan. *Indios*. San Antonio, Texas: Wings Press, 2012. 62p.

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Linda Hogan is a Native American poet. She is also a master story-teller, playwright, novelist and an environmentalist. Her book *Indios* is an expression of all these traits compressed together, which gives the reader a novel experience. Is it a long dramatic monologue, written in blank verse? Is it a novella with such meaningful gaps that the reader becomes the author, and through imagination is able to create for herself the long painful story of the indigenous tribes of America? Or is it the voice of the environmentalist who, with a deep urgency, appeals to the ‘civilized’ colonizer not to destroy nature and the indigenous knowledge system of a tribe that had, till then, taken care of both man and nature?

Hogan dedicates her book to all aboriginal women who, she is sure, know the story of the captive woman accused of killing her children. This story resonates with the echo of the Greek mythological story of Medea as told by Euripides. Yet it is Hogan’s own individual creation because she has successfully distilled an old local story through the famous Medea myth, and thus has made its appeal universal. She does not stop here. Rather, she subverts the story of Euripides and saves Medea and the captivated aboriginal woman from a false stigma.

*Indios* is a dramatic monologue – the stage being the prison cell and the prisoner speaking to a journalist named Clare Finley. The style is as successful as that of Browning, but while Browning stuck to the English Romantic twilight of

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the Victorian era, Hogan's voice echoes round the world wherever colonization has affected and almost erased the identities of the indigenous inhabitants. She successfully includes the interviewer's reaction in the story of *Indios* in an indirect manner. When *Indios* says – "Life hasn't hardened me here" (3) the reader imagines the face of the interviewer awestruck by the still lingering beauty of the prisoner. Like Medea, *Indios* too is an exceptional woman. She would not plead for innocence. She has indeed committed murder, but she has not killed her children.

At this point we hear the voice of *Indios* subverting the famous Medea myth retold by Euripides, which of course is patriarchal in tone. In Euripides, Medea is the enchantress who kills her children. The story of *Indios* also reverberates with other local myths like that of a legendary Hispanic beauty who marries a ranchero and kills her own children, or the myth of Pocahontas, the Virginia Indian who saved and married a captive named John Smith and then converted to Christianity.

Levis Strauss showed how myths of different countries are enjoined by expressing the elementary structures of the human mind. All the above mentioned myths reveal woman as the betrayer who leaves her own people to marry an outsider. She falls outside the category of the normal, for she is an enchantress and even capable of killing her own children or refusing to return to her own tribe. When the symbolic discourse of a myth turns to rational discourse in the form of written words, its dynamism is marred by the hegemonic ideology of the society of which the writer is a member. In the western patriarchal paradigm, it is the story of the deviant woman. But Hogan's writing subverts this tendency and shows how, in all these myths, the women are destroyed because of their love for their husbands and their children. *Indios* is a tragedy turned inside out. It is the strong and tragic woman's voice that holds center stage, a reversal of her role in world famous tragedies where women remain as shadows to the male counterparts dramatizing their fall.

Hogan's use of myth helps her transcend the single voice. The single voice of *Indios* merges with all the voices of Native Americans, especially the women. As the colonizer is attracted to the gold mines, she too is innocently attracted to the 'golden man,' i.e. the white skinned male. This is her flaw. To the colonizer she is exotic, but at the same time part of a game plan. And for her own people she has the potential of the martyr to rescue her tribe, but at the same time she is a traitor. Thus she is doubly victimized. The father of *Indios*, when realizing the inevitability of white colonization in America, marries her away to the 'golden man' in the hope that in the status of a queen she could speak for her own people who are forced into servitude.

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Mythic poetry had been disparaged during the enlightenment as a form of primitive irrationality. Yet this irrationality is underscored in the story of Indios whose love is betrayed irrationally. Thus it becomes a true vehicle of her voice which mocks the very rational game plan of the colonizer. Her husband, the 'golden man' had married her to legally inherit her land – all the trees, rivers, birds and beasts. After the occupation her marriage is pronounced illegal, and she is banished while the 'golden man' weds a white woman.

A myth is acutely conservative in nature for it is grown in a particular soil and preserves the environment along with its culture and people. Indios, even after her marriage, retains her habits and gives birth to her children in the river. This is strange to the civilized colonizer who, in a systematic process of regressive colonization, has begun the extermination of the unwanted, uncivilized aboriginals. Her indigenous knowledge, close knit with nature, looks like crude witch craft. She is excommunicated, and her children are stoned to death. This echoes the original myth of Medea whose children were hybrids, and the people feared a hybrid ruler. The son of Indios was dark but had golden hair, and her daughter had blue eyes. The reader is exposed to the hypocrisy of the "civilized."

Hogan dexterously divides her poem into five parts. These breaks realistically imply a series of meetings between Indios and the interviewer. The reader experiences two layers of temporality – the flow of time within the story of Indios, which is longer, and the few days required for the interviewer to listen patiently and sympathetically to the story of a prisoner. The last part 'In Here' brings us back to the prison cell which completely segregates her from nature. Here Indios stands for the depletion of nature. Her marriage boils down to the ownership and overpowering of nature by the white colonizer. Her destruction runs simultaneously with the destruction of nature.

Linda Hogan, like T.S. Eliot in *The Wasteland*, has successfully encapsulated a particular time in a long poem, "modern" in Eliot's case, and "colonial" in Hogan's. But it may be questioned if in using a modern form to represent the native voice Hogan misses out on the tribal ethos. Using Biblical allusions and Greek myths to depict the modern condition has been a trend in modern English literature. The question that arises is whether there would have been any other way to capture the native mind befuddled and bewildered by the aggression of European colonization.

While Indios speaks with the interviewer, it is Linda Hogan who enters her consciousness. She says, "I see you continue thinking I am moral" (46). The tribal world is amoral, and the tribal world view is in tune with the nature that surrounds it. The character of Indios is completely transformed as she enters the

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prison cell. We are reminded of Althusser's Ideological State Apparatus that acts as the interpellator. Indios is embroiled in Western binary discourse when she tries to locate herself in the world of morality and immorality. The irony lies in the position of one representing the collective psyche of the Native American through the modern mode of written literature. This form, through which she is trying to question modern imperialism, is a product of modernity. Linda's voice tries to submerge with the voice of Indios but ultimately ends up coping with the paradigm of so called human civilization represented by the prison cell. The sophisticated urban personality of the interviewer with her questionnaire drags Indios into this world of morality and immorality, and for Indios all other doors of self-identity are closed. This is a paradox.

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John Horton and Peter Kraftl. *Cultural Geographies: An Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge, 2014. 325p.

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In recent years, cultural geographers have produced an important body of work that holds interest for literary scholars as well as a wider audience interested in cultural studies. *Cultural Geographies* provides an in-depth introduction to this rich body of research about cultural practices and politics. It explores the role of artistic and written representations in understanding social identities and subcultures. Although it is first and foremost a textbook for students of human geography, complete with case studies and learning activities, the text could also serve as a resource and reference for scholars interested in interdisciplinary work. Particularly interesting in this regard are the chapters on textual geographies, performed geographies, and identities. Other chapters deal with cultural production, consumption, architectural geographies, landscapes, material things, emotional and affective geographies, and bodily geographies.

The chapter on textual geographies explores the connections between the discipline of geography and texts of all kinds. This chapter also foregrounds the debates about representation in cultural geography. Due to the standpoint of the authors, who are both British cultural geographers, the emphasis of this chapter, as of most of the book, is on the importance of texts as objects of enquiry for cultural geographical research. The authors do, however, also provide insights that are applicable in reverse, for scholars who are more interested in the importance of cultural geography as a factor in the study of texts and performances. Cultural

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geographers have turned to fictional texts as sources that can tell us about subjective experiences of particular places and landscapes; a focused study of geographical aspects and their representation can also broaden our understanding of fictional texts.

The following chapter, entitled performed geographies, raises some general questions regarding the nature of art and performances. It then considers musical performances, sporting performances, dance (with a case study on dance, performance art and politics in India), and the performance of everyday life. Horton and Kraftl's insights on how lifestyles perform and depict places in new ways, and turn places themselves into objects to be consumed or ignored, should be of interest to scholars beyond the disciplinary confines of cultural geography.

This line of thought is further developed in the chapter on identities, which more deeply explores the connection between the social and the spatial. Asserting that identities are always time- and space-specific, Horton and Kraftl turn their eye to the social construction of identity. They provide a short, yet detailed discussion of feminist geographies and the role of gender in public and domestic spaces. In order to illuminate the social construction and performativity of identity with the help of case studies, the authors examine the Australian citizenship test, colonial constructions of childhood in British Columbia, and the role of internet usage in regard to Chinese national identities. Their discussion of geographies of the internet, while just a relatively short introduction to the topic, should be particularly useful to scholars who are interested in the effects and ramifications of new social media.

Throughout this text, Horton and Kraftl engage with a wide spectrum of social and cultural theories. They discuss the multiple meanings and uses of the word "culture," and they also remind us that knowledge is always situated, and writing is positional and embodied. Last but not least, they provide a richly annotated bibliography of key readings in the field of cultural geographies and neighboring disciplines.

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Lena Khor. *Human Rights Discourses in a Global Network: Books beyond Borders*. Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2013. 294p.

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In her original study of human rights discourse, Lena Khor addresses the concern by other scholars and critics of the globalization of human rights discourse. While

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other scholars maintain that the discourse of human rights is being forced upon us from an imperialistic stance from what is referred to as the “Global North,” Khor argues for an exemplary move away from using human rights as a term to mean an absolute and imprecise thing, and instead she focuses on how human rights is a communally constructed language. She first broaches and explains her term “global discourse network of human rights” in the “Introduction” (Khor, 4). She devotes the first chapter to show the reader how the human rights discourse is now a global network, and delves into the language that is constructed to elucidate the human rights movement. Khor uses Paul Rusesabagina as an example of someone who has witnessed genocide and explores his autobiography *An Ordinary Man* as well as Terry George’s film *Hotel Rwanda* in her second chapter. The non-profit humanitarian outfit of *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF) or Doctors without Borders is presented as a proposed human rights hero/savior in the third chapter, while in the fourth chapter Khor uses Michael Ondaatje’s novel *Anil’s Ghost* to illustrate the restrictions of the movement. In her Conclusion, she returns and revisits the subjects of Doctors without Borders to further highlight some of the controversies of the global human rights movement as well as the innate tensions.

Throughout the entire book, it appears as though Lena Khor’s sole mission is to offer a new way of thinking about human rights through a network of global discourse and language. While there are numerous things that Khor executes very well throughout this book, this review will focus on the two which are the most successful. The first is her exploration of the ways in which scholarly criticism can oftentimes hold the cause back, and the second is that even the heroes and saviors of the cause are not above the same censure. It should also be noted that the book is formatted in such a way that it is impossible to miss Khor’s mission for her book. Each chapter is filled with italicized words and phrases that are key terms she wishes the reader to know, and the subheadings in each chapter keep the argument organized, something that is essential when tackling such a large subject matter as global human rights.

Khor is breathing new life into the topic of global human rights by exploring the ways in which the language of human rights is crucial to either furthering or holding back the movement. She offers a complete overview of the difficulties in writing about and discussing global human rights, paying particular attention to the ways in which those who have witnessed genocide, such as Paul Rusesabagina, are sometimes criticized as making themselves out to be more of a hero than they really are. In the same vein, she uses Michael Ondaatje’s novel *Anil’s Ghost* to draw attention to how scholarly criticism, that so often accompanies these textual works on human rights, undermines the author, the subject of the work, and any

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personal or professional interest of the reader. Every aspect of a film, organization, or textual work is under a critical microscope to ensure that it meets the criteria that scholars feel allows it to be a reputable voice in the field.

This is one of the most important things that Khor discusses, since we can only get so far in the fight for global human rights when literature, film, and organizations are being criticized by scholars and theorists who find fault in each. Critics claim that authors such as Ondaatje have a bias about the topic on which they are writing since they are from a particular area; while others claim that he is not “Sri-Lankan enough” to be an authority on the human rights in the country (Khor, 163). How is the fight for human rights in a global setting ever supposed to succeed or advance if the critics are never satisfied with those who are trying to bring exposure and coverage to the field? There are some who claim that there are “good” and “bad” bystanders who witness human rights tragedies and that the “bad” bystanders do not do enough and are complacent in the ongoing human rights disasters. What they fail to realize, and what Khor so wonderfully calls attention to, is that if some of the bystanders and witnesses to genocide and human rights monstrosities were “good” bystanders, i.e. active, then they might not have survived the events and been able to share their stories and draw positive awareness to the discourse on global human rights. In order to use the language and the visual rhetoric that is intrinsic to the discourse and have it be authentic, the writers and witnesses to human rights tragedies might need to be a “bad” bystander in order to live to share their stories with the rest of the world.

While there are some critics and issues within the language that we as scholars use to discuss global human rights, there is also a proposed “human rights hero/savior” that Khor mentions in the third chapter of the book. Not even the heroes and the saviors are immune to criticism though. In the “Introduction” she quotes from multiple scholars when she points out the dichotomy of such organizations as Doctors without Borders. Some view them as angels who are helping and doing much needed work to serve those in need. On the other side of the argument stand those who allege that “their [Doctors without Borders] good deeds exacerbate the hardship of the needy, making the needy depend on external aid, rather than enabling them to help themselves” (Khor, 9). Once again, instead of getting caught up in the argument on both sides, Khor instead decides to spend much of chapter three discussing the language of a speech given by James Orbinski, who was the President of MSF-International at the time when they won a Nobel Peace Prize for pioneering human rights-oriented humanitarianism (Khor, 96). By focusing on the language of the speech, Khor is able to show how the discourse and the speech transcend the critiques, and then these organizations are able to become “global power networks” (Khor, 107).

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With her analysis of the discourse of language throughout *Human Rights Discourses in a Global Network*, Lena Khor quite effectively shows the limitations to the global human rights field that is being exacerbated by the scholars who are quick to critique and are hurting the very cause they seek to draw attention to by never being satisfied with the literature, film, and organizations that deal with human rights. It is an important work of literature in the field, and one that is an exceptional contribution to the study of human rights, especially in the humanities.

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Catherine Leen and Niamh Thornton, eds. *International Perspectives on Chicana/o Studies*. New York: Routledge, 2014. 208p.

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Lee and Thornton's volume on Chicano/a studies provides a much needed conversation on the evolving nature of Chicano/a literature and culture within a transnational perspective. In this book, the editors and contributors provide us with various noted critics and theorists such as Ellen Mckracken, Francisco Lomelí and Maria Herrera-Sobek that make it clear that Chicano/a studies has crossed borders. This collection makes it evident that Chicano/a studies is increasingly awakening interest in comparative studies all across the world.

The book is divided into three parts. Part one titled, "Critical Paradigms: Continuities and Transitions" takes us directly to the study of Chicana culture, literary production and representation. The authors in this section, including the notable critic, Ellen Mckracken, give a history of the struggle and success in publications of U.S. Latino/a literature. From the now canonical writers such as Sandra Cisneros, Julia Alvarez, and Junot Diaz, to the successful half million dollar advance Alisa Valdez-Rodríguez received for her novel, Mckracken acknowledges the very important role of small presses in developing U.S. Latino/a literature. However, she believes that U.S. Latino/a literature has reached a new height and has to seek audiences that mainstream presses provide. Imelda Martín-Junquera and Mario T. García study the use of autobiography, memory and history in the works of Pat Mora and Mary Helen Ponce's work, respectively. In both cases, Martín-Junquero and García provide an analysis of the authors' use of bicultural, bilingual, historical, auto-ethnography and many other traditional thematic elements found in Chicana literature to explain the connections between food, the environment, and female space. The essays help us understand the authors'

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role in “translating” culture to the reader, thus inviting us to consider the subtitle of this collection, “This World is My Place.”

The essays found in Part two titled, “From the Regional to the Global,” study the often complicated understanding of national borders and globalization. However, Tatiana Voronchenko’s comparative approach of Chicano/a and Russian literature provides us with a keen international connection this edition represents. In her examination of American studies in Russia, Voronchenko finds that the similar geopolitical and geographic conditions of both groups, “is evident in the cultural production of the southern border region of the United States and is a salient feature of the cultural life of Russia, especially Siberia” (71). Even more, both Chicanos/as and Siberians are ethnic minorities, bilingual and bicultural. Throughout her essay, her careful exploration of the connection both groups share is notable in her thorough analysis of the works and motifs each group explores. For example, both groups use the sun motif and the virgin in their literature and cultural production. This shared element is clear in Voronchenko’s study of both literatures, and those of us that study and teach Chicano/a literature can engage more easily with Siberian literature. She concludes that Chicano/o studies in Trans-Baikal Siberia, “is significant in itself, but it also helps us to better understand contemporary U.S. literary discourse” (85); especially when we think of the similar challenges found in different parts of the world.

In this same section, Niamh Thornton, Nuala Finnegan, and Francisco Lomelí touch on cultural traditions, human rights concerns, and the production of artifacts as both fetishisms and a vindication of Mexican-American identities. Thornton studies the internationalization of *Quinceañeras*. She traces the young girl’s rite of passage, but also how it has slowly acquired the pressures of a consumer culture that is often in conflict with tradition. One of the most notable analyses in this essay is Thornton’s study of Julia Alvarez’s work on this subject. Thornton finds that Alvarez, “problematically associates the maintenance and authenticity of culture purely to the working class and denies other classes the right to practice tradition, because, for her, community can only be understood in working-class terms” (59), a position that has been contested by critics such as Norma Cantú and others. Finnegan re-visits the still unresolved murders of the women in Ciudad Juárez. In her study of two key novels about *femicidios*, she explores how each of the authors are personally invested in bringing attention to the murders by inserting semi-autobiographical glimpses and activism to continue to demand justice for these crimes. In the same way, the fact that Finnegan teaches and speaks of these events with an international perspective multiplies the need to hold accountable those who have continued to maintain a culture of fear in this border

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city. Lomelí traces the evolving image of the “Homies” as both a cultural artifact that has captured consumers, and also as an icon that demands to be “known as common folk instead of stereotypes” (127). This essay includes pictures of each of the archetypes he discusses, which adds to the analysis of this “multi-million dollar enterprise of entertainment” (127). All of the essays in this section contest a narrow view of locality, place and identity, and reveal the impact Chicano/a studies is making through the world.

The last section in this book titled, “Visual Culture,” looks at how over the past decade, culture icons such as *La Virgen de Guadalupe*, low riders, *pachucos* and others have slowly made their way into the mainstream and international stage. Martini’s thorough analysis of Chicano art and iconography helps us see the “dialogical construction of justice in the borderlands” (148) as art that is reaching globalization with a critical lens. Critic Maria Herrera-Sobek explores the use of “aesthetic activism” by many Chicano/a artists. She finds that the use of barbed wire is a vivid reminder of the always vicarious and delicate condition of many Mexican immigrants to the United States, in particular those with undocumented status. The article includes images of the art being discussed, which provides a clearer sense of the political position of the artists and the pain and suffering of the people represented. Herrera-Sobek contends that, “upon viewing people strung along the border on steel spikes piercing human flesh in Chicano/a artwork, one is likely to never forget it, and hopefully this will lead to constructive action” (166). In this section, Catherine Leen, like Voronchenko in part two, provides us with a unique comparative analysis of the image of the *Virgen* in religious iconography in Irish and Chicano/a art. In her examination of three Chicana artists and two Irish female artists, she finds that they have worked to represent the image of the Virgin Mary as one that speaks to and for the condition of women under a heavily influenced and strict Catholic society. Chicana and Irish artists in each community have sought to disrupt the nationalistic image of the Virgin, which has often been used to subject women into submissive roles. Lee describes the incident in which Alma López’s art exhibit in Ireland was deemed blasphemous. Lee also points out the interest of the artists in both communities to incorporate the representation of textiles and items of clothing in their work. She concludes that these artists reinterpret, “the legacy of the Catholic church to forge a new identity that does not discard the past but incorporates it into a vision of a future where women can live their lives free of the rigid control of a patriarchal, oppressively religious society” (186).

The essays found in this volume pioneer a much needed insight into American studies around the world. With the increased interest in the study of U.S. Latino/a

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literature, and the internationalization of many U.S. Latino/a writers, this collection is a great complement to the recent anthologies such as *The Norton Anthology of Latino Literature* (2010), and *Latinola Literature in the Classroom: 21st Century Approaches* to set to come out in 2015. Although not every essay or author has a distinct international perspective, this collection is certainly a great addition to the study of Chicano/a works, and in particular, the role of Chicanas. Whether intentional or not, this edition has explored more heavily the works and contributions of Chicanas and offers a refreshing and renewed view of how Chicano/a's thematic interests and struggles are no longer a regional concern.

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John Mauk, Jayme Stayer, and Karen Mauk. *Think About It: Critical Skills for Academic Writing*. Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 2014; 324p.

ELENA FOULIS  
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

*Think About It: Critical Skills for Academic Writing*, is an almost pocket-sized book with excellent and practical insights into academic writing. Divided in three parts, this guide encourages writers—the targeted population being freshman or sophomore college students—to transition from the traditional five-paragraph essay, to a richer, more complex, and critical way to approach college writing.

Each chapter in part one address a specific step in the writing process and provides examples of the step being studied. The examples used throughout each of the chapters are short, and often include excerpts that illustrate and further advance the understanding of a process. Part one is the longest section of this book, and it teaches writers how to “learn the moves” of academic writing. With chapters that teach the writer how to seek complexity, apply a concept, justify a position, assess thinking, etc., part one offers plenty of opportunities to discuss, practice and build a critical essay.

The book uses accessible language with clear, descriptive and relatable examples that are easy to follow, while at the same time challenges writers to exercise the skills discussed in each section. Although each chapter has a guided exercise section that pushes students to think, talk and write about the topic, it leaves room for instructors to design exercises that apply more directly to the subject. Additionally, some of the chapters include information—in reference boxes in blue—that support and aid the writer in remembering how to cite, paraphrase, summarize, etc. These blue boxes, sprinkled throughout part one, offer concise explanations of basic mechanics and techniques every writer needs to remember.

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Part two, titled, “Read the moves,” offers longer and full-length essays designed to show the intellectual moves described in part one. In this section, the reference boxes direct the reader to look at each paragraph of the essay the author uses to examine specific processes from part one. For example, in Steve Krause’s essay, the writers point out that Krause, “denies the usual association between *technology* and *new*” in paragraph 3, “unpacks *literacy*, a broad term, and explains three of its traits” in paragraph 6-7, and “makes connections between Lindstrom’s and Socrates fears of technology” in paragraph 9 (194). This step-by-step approach to reading the moves from part one, serves as a model for the student’s own writing. Part three, titled, “Apply the moves,” provides writers with outlines for building their own essays, along three categories. These categories are: explanatory and descriptive projects, analytical projects, argumentative projects, and reflective projects. Each of the categories directs the writer to clarify a term or concept, explain things in their own words or draw from a vital source, for example. These outlines are helpful and flexible enough for writers to adapt to their own projects.

This book should not be merely a reference manual or a “recommended” book on a student’s syllabi. Because of the step-by-step approach to helping the writer achieve a well-organized, structured and critical essay, it merits being used along with other main texts. It does not include a chapter on mechanics, grammar or spelling, so instructors might need to include additional exercises or offer a list of common mistakes and how to avoid them.

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Joseph M. Ortiz (ed). *Shakespeare and the Culture of Romanticism*.  
Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. 294p.

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To claim that William Shakespeare is one of the most influential authors in literary history is almost a moot point. The Bard has been read worldwide for centuries, influencing many aspects of the arts and culture. Countless critical editions and essays have been published on his works, providing in-depth and fascinating critiques of his contributions to the English canon and the ways he has influenced culture as a whole. This text edited by Joseph M. Ortiz is no exception. *Shakespeare and the Culture of Romanticism* is a critical collection of essays which, in short, discuss the influence Shakespeare had on Romantic art, literature, culture, and society. These articles do much more than this, though. The reader does not just get a quick snapshot of how Shakespeare affected one aspect of culture but

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rather how that connection contributed to the greater Romantic Movement. Spanning across the whole of the time period, several Western nations, and disciplines, these articles weave a greater cultural understanding of what it meant to truly embrace the Bard as a grand contributor to Romanticism.

The most impressive aspect of this collection is the breadth of culture the articles cover. Chapters range from the influence of Shakespeare on Romantic literature such as Wordsworth, Smith, and Dickenson, to the reinterpretation of his dramatic works for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century audiences, to social understandings of gender and history through the staging of his plays. Not only does the reader understand how Shakespeare influenced these aspects but she or he is also provided with an understanding of what culture was during the Romantic era. A strong emphasis is placed on the aesthetic nature of Shakespeare's influence as well as the relationship between the performance and poetics of his plays. On the whole, these articles provide a cumulative understanding of Romantic culture and how culture in general is understood.

This is not to say, of course, that each essay could not stand on its own. Rather, each chapter provides its own unique take on the titular subject. Scholars in a multitude of disciplines could find use in at least one of the essays within the text. Ortiz categorizes the twelve chapters provided into four sections, presenting a different aspect of Romantic culture in each. Within these sections, the chapters illustrate new ideas about a diverse range of cultural artifacts and how Shakespeare's influence can be read into them. For instance, several of the essays discuss the use of Shakespeare in a manner to create authority for the artist, in particular female artists. Essays do not just reference the influences of Shakespeare on Romantic authors and works, but rather how these influences translate into a culture that could be defined as Romantic. The most appropriate way to describe the presentation is from Ann R. Hawkins's chapter, "Reconstructing the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery." Although referencing Boydell's Shakespearean art pieces, Ortiz's collection, too, can be seen "as a series of 'galleries,' of distinct moments in a complicated cycle of Shakespearean representation and consumption in the Romantic era" (Hawkins 210).

The only flaws that can be found when considering this collection are the diversity of the articles in regards to Romantic society and the display of Romanticism as a whole, all-encompassing Western culture. The articles, as stated previously, provide an excellent understanding of the culture but only seem to present certain aspects of society, such as gender constructions and issues. The topic of socio-economics is hinted occasionally throughout but does not have a major role in the collection, save for a part in the final essay "A Written Warning"

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by Leigh Wetherall-Dickson. The collection also appears to present Romantic culture as a wide-sweeping, general concept. However, the various countries participating in the Romantic movement each had their own cultural identities and variations of Romanticism. If we are to understand Shakespeare's influence on Romantic culture without a specific context and instead look at Romanticism strictly from an aesthetic point-of-view—which seems to be the intention of the editor and chapter authors—the collection's mood is effective. This is one instance where the individual essay is more successful than the collection as a whole.

This collection at first glance may appear as yet another grouping of articles regarding Shakespeare's influence on culture and society during a specific time period. The text, however, provides much more than that. The Romantic mindset is defined and elaborated upon through the scope of Shakespearean inspiration. The reader is provided with a solid, well-rounded understanding of what eighteenth- and nineteenth-century citizens experienced within their cultures. Each article takes the time to illustrate what Romantic culture was and how Shakespeare could be read into those moments, creating a thread which connects these diverse essays. Any scholar wishing to study the impact Shakespeare had on Romantic culture and Romanticism would do well to invest in adding *Shakespeare and the Culture of Romanticism* to his or her library.

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Vivan Steemers. *Le (néo)colonialisme littéraire: Quatre romans africains face à l'institution littéraire parisienne (1950-1970)*. Paris: Karthala, 2012. 234p.

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Given the paucity of works treating francophone African literature and its relationship with French and international translation markets, Vivan Steemers's *Le (néo)colonialisme littéraire: Quatre romans africains face à l'institution littéraire parisienne (1950-1970)* presents a long-awaited critical exploration of francophone literary marketing in Paris during the mid-twentieth century. This work's methodological rigor, underwritten by lucid prose and rich historicizing engagements with secondary literature, illuminates the role that publishing houses and journalistic critiques had in the Metro-centric reception and readership of four francophone sub-Saharan novels appearing between 1950 and 1970: *L'Enfant noir* (Camara Laye, 1953); *Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba* (Mongo Beti, 1956); *Les Soleils des indépendances* (Ahmadou Kourouma, 1968); and *Le Devoir de violence* (Yambo Ouologuem, 1968). These years are particularly important in Steemers's

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study; as they represent different reception statuses of these four works, punctuated by shifting economic, sociopolitical, journalistic, and anti-colonialist forces over the course of the twenty years. Theoretical frameworks informed by Pierre Bourdieu's work on cultural production and book reception, by Gérard Genette's hermeneutics on paratext, and by Hans Robert Jauss's study on textual reception and production offer sustained explorations of these four primary texts in a larger context of postcolonial discourse.

Steemers places import on the Eurocentric definition of discours africaniste as a launching point to her analysis, which is itself divided into two sections. The first section details the non-favorable reception of Beti's *Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba*, given the work's heavy anticolonial themes and subsequent censorship in Cameroun. Beti's work stands in clear distinction to Laye's *L'Enfant noir*, a novel that idyllically portrays Africa and was favorably received by Parisian publishers. Citing editors of the publishing house responsible for *L'Enfant noir*'s positive regard, Steemers dovetails on critic Adele King's highly recognized work on Laye to affirm that several members of the French Union, as well as two Belgian journalists, play a significant role in the novel's reception. The political motivation behind these journalists or *conseillers littéraires* involves tailoring Laye's work specifically to an Occidental public to promote an idealized image of a colonized Africa. Financially supported by the French government, Laye sees a noteworthy journalistic coverage of her published work, which is subsequently crowned the Prix Charles Veillon.

The second section of Steemers's work treats *Les Soleils des indépendances* and *Le Devoir de violence*, as well as the ever-changing status of the French-African publishing landscape, in relation to African neocolonial politics during the 1960s. Kourouma's *Les Soleils des indépendances*, which projects a saturnine image of post-independent Africa, receives no offers for publication beyond that of the University of Montreal. The novel is later published in France with Seuil, receiving a semi-favorable journalistic review. As Steemers suggests, *Les Soleils des indépendances* is able to see the light of day thanks to a peripheral francophone nation's efforts to publicize this linguistically and stylistically innovative African text. Building on problematics posed by Christopher Miller, the analysis then considers Ouologuem's *Le Devoir de violence* and its connections with authenticity, ideological critiques, and known accusations of plagiarism.

Steemers's treatment of these four francophone African works' editorial and journalistic receptions is of deft quality. Having made excellent use of difficult to acquire archived material, Steemers's ability to assess the complex sociopolitical and economic climate in which each foundational work appears underscores the methodological erudition of *Le (néo)colonialisme littéraire*. This work's

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argumentation clearly acknowledges the extent to which Metro-centric receptivity in publishing contexts is largely predicated on diegetic representations of (anti) coloniality, of ideology, and on synchronic changes within the Parisian publishing infrastructure.

The notion central to Steemers's analysis — literary neocolonialism — remains an aspect that could have been further developed, although theoretical inquiry is seemingly beyond the scope of *Le (néo)colonialisme littéraire*'s analyses and meta-commentaries. Namely, to what extent could the institution of literary neocolonialism, when seen from the subaltern perspective, serve to conserve African subjectivity while challenging the colonialist rigidity of *discours africaniste*? To what extent do journalistic coverages operating under the aegis of literary neocoloniality act as politicized agents of Metrocentrism; and how does the African press square in this claim?

These remarks could only arise from the generative quality of Steemers's critical perspective. Scholars researching other francophone literatures, such as those in Franco-Oceanic and French-Canadian Studies, could greatly benefit from following Steemers's methodology and motivations to explore the postcolonial book and publishing histories within their respective fields.

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Jeet Thayil. *Narcopolis*. New York: Penguin Books, 2012. 288p.

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Depictions of India in western pop culture seemed to change little throughout the 20th century. Going back at least to Forster's *A Passage to India*, from a western point of view the inscrutability and mystical nature of the sub-continent are its defining traits. Often it is portrayed as a gateway to personal enlightenment, as its mystery is held up as a mirror in which Westerners can see the truth about themselves. The films *Outsourced* and *Eat, Pray, Love* are prime examples. Alternatively, many narratives told from an Indian perspective (yet still told to a western audience,) give romanticized views of the day to day life of the country (i.e., *Slumdog Millionaire*.) In contrast, *Narcopolis* gives us a story that is ringing with a genuineness lacking in many novels and films.

A graphic exploration of the drug scene in Bombay (later Mumbai,) Thayil's novel delves painfully into the murk of poverty and opium dens with a host of characters, each visceral, shocking, and believable. Given depth through flashbacks, direct description or difficult rumors, the novel imbues each of its players with the

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hopelessness and desperation of their individual addictions, whether to narcotics, money, sex, violence or self-destruction in general. As the characters descend into spirals of inevitable ruin, Thayil reveals to us which of them we are meant to connect with and which we are to feel are all too deserving of their tragic fates. However, the tone of the novel, that of a voice angered by its own impotence, makes it clear from the outset that all of the conclusions will be hopelessly similar.

In a particularly painful scene, a character describes a vision had while detoxing from heroin; that of a graphic rape of a child, which brings together filth, violence and evil. The narrator then vehemently declares “This is India.” (235.) It meshes into the national identity the defilement of the nation’s people, starting in childhood, as if to suggest that India itself is responsible for the horrific lives the characters find themselves trapped in. India itself, by way of expanding the opium and heroin industries, traded the lives of its citizens for profit. While never skirting the personal responsibility in addiction, Thayil manages to peel back a lot of the naive stereotypes concerning the sub-continent and makes a convincing narrative that India has left many of its people with escape into drugs and addiction as their best available life choice.

As a novel, *Narcopolis* is difficult. Its structure spreads across nearly thirty years of Bombay’s history, and while each character is vivid and alive, some, particularly Rumi (at first a seemingly unassuming character), are not apportioned time that accords with their impact on the story. All of them addicts, Rumi’s drug is violence, and his actions cause fearful nights for many in the Bombay drug world, yet his appearances are disproportionately few until the end of the novel. By its very nature, the sprawl of the text is intimidating and limiting in depth.

But perhaps that is instead a strength of the prose. Despite his limited actual presence, Rumi left an indelible impression on the narrative. Another, even smaller, character is one of the most telling of the structure of the country itself. Salim is a shop boy, and therefore much better off than many of the other faces we see, or so we are led to believe. He doesn’t have to sleep in the street, beg for food or drugs, or fight for any of his basic needs. Then we find out that the owner of the shop where he works rapes him regularly, and he is resigned to it for the most part. It harkens to the previously mentioned vision and underscores the thrust of the novel. India may seem mystical and exotic to us, but look a little closer and you will see what it does to its people. It exploits, defiles, destroys, and in the end leaves every one for dead. The narrative does not have much difficulty in giving us characters whose impact is lasting no matter how briefly we meet them. Thayil is able to do this through shock tactics, certainly, but they never seem insincere or forced. In most cases such a multitude of characters and the sheer length of time

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covered would be a detriment in such a short novel, but while it does make it sometimes less than engrossing, the meandering structure is fitting to the “junkie” genre in which this narrative can be firmly set.

Thayil’s novel is at times enjoyable and often engaging, but more than that it seems to have a mission; to give readers a clearer portrait of the actual India. That is, an affecting portrayal of the cost of India’s rapid growth, the toll that takes on the everyday people, and how it leaves so many of them behind. *Narcopolis* succeeds at this, and in the process leaves its readers with haunting images and indelible characters that they won’t forget, whether they want to or not.

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Louise Viljoen. *Ingrid Jonker: Poet under Apartheid*. Athens: Ohio UP, 2013. 166p.

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In her newest book, postmodern theorist and literary critic Louise Viljoen captures the embattled times and spaces of cultural bigotry, misogyny, racial violence, political turmoil, and national isolation that contradictorily taunted and spurred poet Ingrid Jonker’s (1933-65) lyrical genius, stormy personal life, and fascinating literary networks. Viljoen’s great accomplishment is that her book is indeed a scholarly guide, one that respects the autobiographical and biographical subject of Jonker (pronounced yän`ker), whose brief life and slender yet sensational body of social poetry guarantees the poet will be kept indefinable into perpetuity.

The book rides a popular wave of new editions and reprints of Jonker’s poems, along with a plethora of translations, documentaries, films, theatrical performances, and musical productions about Jonker’s life and poetry that have appeared rather regularly, and especially during the last 20 years. Viljoen’s presentation is informative and non-invasive, and the author argues that her study attempts to be one without “thievery, voyeurism, invasions and violation” but instead a careful lens upon the private evasions, public embraces, and poetic expressions of a singular, multi-faceted woman who was rejected by her father, her people, and her lovers (14). Among Jonker’s most autobiographical poems is “The Face of Love.” In it she opines, “There is no question of beginning / there is no question of possession / there is no question of death / face of my beloved / the face of love” (1-5).

Jonker’s life was encased in the darkest period of South Africa’s history, when whites ruled, and the system of racial segregation known as apartheid was

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institutionalized and set down by the state. Apartheid was imposed through legislation by the Afrikaaner-dominated National Party for 46 years, 1948-1994. Under apartheid, the rights of the black majority inhabitants in South Africa, the African continent's most cosmopolitan and industrialized nation at the time, were curtailed and white-minority rule reigned supreme. During the 1950s and 60s, a series of popular uprisings and protests was met with the banning of opposition and the imprisoning of anti-apartheid leaders, along with the segregation of residential areas, involving one of the largest mass removals of non-white people in modern history.

However, the essential focus of Viljoen's book is less about South African and postcolonial African history, politics, apartheid, and culture, and more about biography and social networks. In essence, the book is a careful reconstruction of Jonker's life and evaluation of her work, offering a very thorough and enlightening focus to inform curious readers, aspiring poets, and teachers. For university instructors, Viljoen has provided a scholarly text that will serve as an effective resource for teaching about creators of cultural meaning and one that recognizes the vital, living legacies which contemporary women poets provide, especially of women writing Africa.

Viljoen, an academic author, book reviewer, and poet in her own right, teaches at Stellenbosch University. In addition to this book, she also recently produced a lively study of Antjie Krog, another prominent contemporary South African poet, writer, and academic, best known for her book *Country of My Skull* (1998). Krog writes and translates Afrikaans literature and poetry in the style of Jonker and redefines the language of the "new" and racially-free South Africa, the very hopes and dreams that Jonker envisioned and set adrift in the wind long before Krog began composing her own poetry in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. As Viljoen's research interest lies in the field of Afrikaans literature and literary theory with a special focus on postmodernism, postcolonialism, gender, space and identity, her study, therefore, displays academic expertise in this prolonged and proficiently-drawn critical biography.

Nevertheless, Viljoen's task to "write Ingrid Jonker" factors in four great forces that complicated her study. The first comes from the poet's posthumous thrust into the limelight after Nelson Mandela quoted her poem, "*Die Kind wat doodgeskiet is deur soldate by Nyanga*" (The Child Who Was Shot Dead by Soldiers at Nyanga), in his inaugural speech on May 23, 1994. Second, after Jonker took her own life by walking into the sea at Three Anchor Bay in Cape Town on July 19, 1965, at the age of 31, she has become the substance of legend and rumor. It usually proves difficult for any critic to chronicle a star, especially when they are recast as mythical

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figure and shrouded in biographical mystery and cultural controversy. Third, chronicling Jonker requires drawing the picture of a poet whose personality was as unfixable as her poetry, and about whom a great deal of information is not yet available. Many of the people who knew Jonker personally are still alive, including family and relatives, including her sister Anna and daughter Simone, and former friends, even Jonker's former lover, novelist, and professor, André P. Brink, who admitted in an interview that Jonker never wanted to be captured or summarized. Fourth, writing about Jonker eventually leads to the reading and study of her poems, which, despite appearing to be deceptively simple, are, as Viljoen notes, "tightly constructed, dictated by an inner logic that combines a flowing musicality with inventive imagery, accurate word-play and emotional conviction" (148). Hence, Jonker's contribution to expanding the female tradition in Afrikaans poetry should not be underestimated. She wrote with candor, unpretentiousness, and perceptiveness that cannot always be attributed to many other major poets who wrote far more than she did and lived longer lives.

Viljoen acknowledges that Jonker's short life and literary oeuvre, which could collect all of her writings in one compact volume, appear out of proportion to the attention that has been devoted to her. Jonker published only two volumes of poetry in her lifetime, and left only a few short stories, a one-act play called *'n Seun na my hart* (A son after my own heart) and a handful of other texts. Aside from the various collections of correspondence between Jonker and her writer-lovers, other artistic friends, and publishers, she also produced one volume of poems that was published posthumously. Jonker is a lot like the romantic John Keats, both main literary figures in their respective eras. Their lives were cut short, and their works were not generally received during their lifetime, yet their reputations grew after their untimely deaths.

Jonker's turbulent life began in childhood. She was materially deprived and became more destitute in adolescence. Her feminine beauty, sexual ambivalence, and Bohemian lifestyle as a young woman led to impassioned and sorted relationships with other artists and writers, including older men who served as mentors and publishing overseers, graduate students who were several years younger than Jonker herself, and admiring women who found in the poet a certain model of self-fashioning and social pacesetting that challenged and broke conventional boundaries of female behavior and set new heights for women's rights and sexual freedoms, at least for women in the urban areas and circles of the avant-garde in South Africa. Jonker possessed almost everything that should have made her literary ascendancy as a white Afrikaner easy in her lifetime, except she was unable to secure acceptance by her wealthy and powerful, politically-connected

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father, Abraham. He oversaw South Africa's censorship laws for the ruling National Party, and denounced her as his daughter before Parliament. She was Christian (specifically Roman Catholic), intense, beautiful, and aspiring. Ironically, Jonker used all of these to conscientiously reject her white-minority ruling class that made her father prominent and instead chose to pursue a vibrant, alternative lifestyle. She transposed her twin loves for writing and philosophy of global awakening into poems of yearning for domestic, cultural and literary substitutes.

Her first volume of poetry was *Na die Somer* (After the Summer). This was a collection of Afrikaans poems and produced while she was only 13 and was kept unpublished. As a youth, she developed a life-long correspondence with D. J. Opperman whose poetry she greatly admired. Opperman was one of South Africa's most important poets and literary artists, as well as a Professor of Afrikaans literature (as Viljoen is), at the University of Stellenbosch, 1960-79. Opperman read drafts of Jonker's early work and encouraged her with her craft. She developed a great affinity for the poetry of Dylan Thomas, to whom she dedicated the poem "25 December 1959," and she read and promoted the plays of Eugene O'Neill. She also favored the carefree anarchist and ultra-realist writings of Dutch poets such as the avant-garde Remco Campert and Jules Deelder, the latter of whom was a performance poet who mimicked antiquated cultures.

At times Jonker's lyrics reveal anxiety, rage, and remorse yet welcome diversity, civil liberties, and the poet's hopes for one common, civil, harmonious, and more-worldly South Africa. Her first volume of poems, *Ontvulging* (Escape), was published in June 1956. As Viljoen notes, the work attracted attention by important critics of the time but the reviews emphasized adolescent "youthfulness" and thematic "slimness" (35). With looks that could pass as Marilyn Monroe's twin and possessing an innate nature for questing like Jack Kerouac held, Jonker's life and art were invigorated with a sense to disallow society's prescribed aims or predominant cultural values that interfered with truth, especially when she knew her government's ideals were wrong.

To Jonker, life and poetry, even if seemingly aimless, demanded truth and history has since proven she was on the right side. With every obstacle she encountered in writing and romance, Jonker clung to her central passion of composing poetry, and, while she was always in need of income and true love, she never stopped searching for the next "perfect employer" to tap her translating and publishing skills and hold at bay the myriad of emotional distresses and woeful relations in her private life.

After Jonker's marriage in 1956 to Pieter Venter, a writer 15 years her senior, more trouble set in. Her romantic bliss morphed into extra-marital relationships

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with other poets and writers, notably South African writers Jack Cope and Brink. Brink was already married, too, and Jonker became pregnant by him, or Cope, or even perhaps, from the novelist, poet and translator of Molière and Shakespeare into Afrikaans, Uys Krige – but by someone. She underwent an abortion, which was a crime in South Africa at the time. It was the very kind of incident her mother went through and caused her parents to divorce decades before. Jonker and Venter separated, and then, the filial and economic challenges of being a young mother and single parent of her only child and daughter, Simone, born in 1957, took center stage.

In 1963, Ingrid published *Rook en Oker* (Smoke and Ochre), a collection of poems praised by most South African writers, poets and critics. The more conservative white South African public received the collection coolly, and Ingrid became known as one of the radical members of *Die Sestigters* (The Sixties) – a group that included Brink, the South African writer and painter Breyten Breytenbach, the dissident author and playwright Bartho Smit, and others who were challenging the conservative Afrikaans literary norms at the time. *Rook en Oker* won the *Afrikaanse Pers-Boekhandel Prys* (Afrikaans Press-Booksellers Literary Prize), and Jonker used the £1000 prize money to travel to Europe. She went to London, Paris, and Amsterdam and also, spent a month touring Spain with Brink. The international experience would prove to be disastrous, though. Brink decided against leaving his wife for Jonker and returned to South Africa. Feeling abandoned and deprived once again, Ingrid followed shortly and arrived back in her home country. Emotional highs and lows, financial struggles, and successive episodes of mental fatigue and nervous breakdowns, ultimately wound to the poet committing suicide by drowning in the summer of 1965.

Because of her acquired status posthumously as a literary icon and a modern symbol of martyred femininity, Jonker is often labeled as “South Africa’s Sylvia Plath” or the “South African Anne Gray Harvey Sexton.” In time, Jonker’s political affiliation as the daughter of one of her nation’s most forceful politicians, paired with her radical lifestyle and rise in literary stature, made her a popular target by the media. Viljoen concludes, “In the end one comes to the realization that trying to reconstruct Ingrid Jonker’s personality is like piecing together a multiplicity of mirror-like shards, gathered from a variety of sources that reflect and bounce off each other” (150). Certainly, Jonker’s art and beliefs made her an outsider to some yet an endearing heroine for many others, especially after her death. With her striking beauty and cutting-edge confrontations, she left a literary path of tri-partite resistance to racism, state-sponsored violence, and censorship. Her causes were living fully, making relations as transparent as they needed to be,

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and pursuing happiness for a better country and world. Sadly, Jonker never saw any of those aims reconciled to her poetic vision.

In one of her last poems, a work of 29 lines and dedicated to her sister Anna, Jonker reiterates the apparent conclusions she drew about life, love, and death, while the poem also echoes her hopes for the birth, growth and improvement of her native South Africa:

Loose I have my own independence  
from graves from treacherous friends  
the hearth I have comforted glares at me  
my parents have broken themselves off from my death  
the worms stir against my mother, my father  
is clasping his hand which feathers loose against the sky (1-7)

Viljoen's book is well-written and will make a wonderful harbinger in classrooms and salons.

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Valerie Weaver-Zercher. *Thrill of the Chaste: The Allure of Amish Romance Novels*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP: 2013. 315p.

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In spite of the fact that many or most literary scholars may be prone to dismiss the subject matter of *Thrill of the Chaste: The Allure of Amish Romance Novels*, Weaver-Zercher has made a significant contribution to the field with a very comprehensive and scholarly approach to the “bonnet fiction” phenomenon of the 21st century. The author posits that the shocking demand for so-called “bonnet books” is in part a response from evangelical Christian readership to what Gilles Lipovetsky has called the “hypermodernity” and “hypersexualization” of modern society (xv; 10). Weaver-Zercher also relies on Rosenblatt’s “reader-response theory” and the application of that theory by Radway in her examination of the functions of romance novels to present an analysis of “the uses of Amish fiction” (18). This book is about the ways in which Amish romance novels are used by the readership and by the authors themselves who are not Amish but are evangelical Christians.

One of the best things that Weaver-Zercher’s book does is to focus on the aspect of commodification in regards to the Amish romance and the publishing industry. The author exposes the non-innocence of the industry in its soliciting, via agents, novels in rapid succession from authors who may or may not have considered writing in the genre before. In view of the fact that the vast majority of

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the authors are not nor have they been Amish themselves but are self-proclaimed evangelical Christians, Weaver-Zercher takes the time to explain the difference between evangelicals and Anabaptists (both Amish and Mennonite are categorized as Anabaptists). This theological explanation is essential to understanding the author's keen interest and criticism of the commodification of both the genre and of the Amish. The author aligns the Amish romance novel craze to the general increase in Amish tourism, particularly in Pennsylvania, calling the novels "textual carriages" for non-Amish folks who may not be able to actually visit in person Amish communities (132). These "textual carriages" allow the readers to experience the Amish life-style, as well as it is represented in the texts (and the author does examine authenticity issues).

For an evangelical readership as well as an Amish readership, although the latter is significantly smaller than the former, the author seems to pinpoint three basic characteristics of Amish romance novels that appeal: 1) they do not contain "overt sexuality"--they are a "clean" read in a "hypersexualized" world, 2) they have predictable happy endings, and 3) they have a devotional message. Although Mennonite herself, Weaver-Zercher does not shrink from criticizing the cultural flaws of the genre. There is a chapter dedicated to dealing with representations of women in the novels, often offering conflicting images of women caught between traditional and progressive roles. There is a chapter dedicated to accuracy in the novels in regards to Amish practice, especially the practice of shunning. Weaver-Zercher brilliantly emphasizes the absence of race and ethnic differences in the novels that are written about and for an overwhelmingly white community, the novels themselves being what the author calls and expression of "cultural anxiety" on the part of the evangelical readership and authorship (227).

*Thrill of the Chaste* is of interest to anyone working with reader-response theories, the uses and functions of popular literature, and the commodification of culture and cultural products. Weaver-Zercher's book is importantly about the history and evolution of the genre; however, the most significant contribution that the book makes is its examination and evaluation of the publishing industry that is both meeting and creating demand for the genre.

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Courtney Weikle-Mills. *Imaginary Citizens: Child Readers and the Limits of American Independence, 1640-1868*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2013. 280p.

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*Imaginary Citizens: Child Readers and the Limits of American Independence, 1640-1868* is Courtney Weikle-Mills's extensive historical examination of the social perceptions and associations connected to the complex relationship of the child and the citizen. She explores the social attitudes shaping children's reading habits as well as the texts available to children as indicators that define the idea of an American citizen. Weikle-Mills's rich investigation of connections between child readers and political empowerment significantly contributes to both the study of children's literature and the study of American social and political history.

Weikle-Mills identifies the discrepancy between portraying children as citizens within literature and excluding them from actual political participation as the basis for "imaginary citizens." She asserts: "imaginary citizens [are] individuals who could not exercise civil rights but who figured heavily in literary depictions of citizenship and were often invited to view themselves as citizens despite their limited political franchise" (4). Throughout her text, Weikle-Mills examines how the works of religious, social, and political philosophers such as Cotton Mather, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Ralph Waldo Emerson have affected the perception of both child and citizen. Her criticism similarly incorporates a range of contemporary insights from social critics such as Jean Paul Sartre, Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, and Homi K. Bhabha. Through the varied and frequently contrasting political and social ideas that emerge from her impressive compilation of original sources and scholarly criticism, Weikle-Mills emphasizes her point that the definitions of "childhood" and "citizenship" historically lack clarity and consistency although they may certainly depict an era.

The colonial Puritan focus of Chapter 1 centers on the rarely discussed issues affecting children's inclusion in the body of the congregation. Weikle-Mills points out how this affiliation was especially dependent on a child's individual ability to read and interpret the Bible and that church membership was essential to community participation and the individual's eventual political status as a citizen. With several references to over-looked texts, Weikle-Mills examines how leaders like Cotton Mather and Jonathan Edwards encouraged independent reading for children. However, she also looks into the Puritan community's uneasy tension between encouraging an independent reader and demanding obedience to a

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patriarchal authority that she reads as a permanent and destabilizing conundrum of the child-citizen connection.

The developing revolutionary focus of thought in eighteenth-century America, specifically the opposing ideas of independence and obedience, centers the discussion of Chapter 2. Notably, Weikle-Mills addresses the ambiguity and anxiety surrounding the perception of children and the choices available to them within a Lockean social contract: the belief in natural, individual rights challenges the need for parental authority to govern the child. She investigates how the popular revolutionary metaphor of the colonists as maturing children throwing off the oppression of an overly repressive parent (the King) becomes problematic in a society concerned with creating a model encouraging children's compliance. With particular emphasis on Locke's *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), especially the idea that the child's relationship to the government parallels the child's obedience to the parent, Weikle-Mills identifies the concept of "affectionate citizenship" as Locke's strategy to align the terms of citizen and child. Significantly, in light of this association, Weikle-Mills notes that Locke deserves credit for a shift in children's literature "from books that were meant only to teach to those that were meant to gain the child's love" (75). She also expands her application to contemporary society: "entertaining children's books [are] a crucial link underlying modern political theory . . . children's books could act as a bridge between the present and the absent, the immanent and representative, enacting the child reader's gradual initiation into love for things that existed primarily as abstractions, such as the law and the nation" (75). Making particular use of John Newbery's *The History of Little Goody Two Shoes* and Sarah Fielding's *The Governess*, Weikle-Mills generates a valuable exploration of numerous children's books that reveal a sense of "affectionate citizenship" and encourage hegemonic loyalty.

Weikle-Mills next explores late eighteenth and early nineteenth-century fears about social and political stability that generated a popular movement to restrain unrealistic fantasies of freedom found in children's literature and possibly held by children and other disenfranchised groups. She argues in Chapter 3 that a dominant theme of the era's children's literature portrays the dangers of subversive, uniformed readings typical of children and society's need "to reestablish citizenship as a rational adult activity" (28). She identifies the popular coming-of-age story as one particularly suited to tales of youthful error and maturing wisdom, and incorporates illustrative texts such as Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette* (1797), Tabitha Gilman Tenney's *Female Quixotism* (1801), and Washington Irving's parodic example, *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* Although Weikle-Mills works to keep distinctions clear, the competing and, at times, conflicting ideas in

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this section further reinforce her assertion that ambiguity and contradiction are inescapable for the concepts of both “child” and “citizen.”

Weikle-Mills next explores how early nineteenth-century industrial expansion and economic turmoil, including the financial crises of 1819 and 1837, generate new influences defining American citizenship. She points out that the growing American capitalist culture contributes to a conflict between the willingness to sacrifice personal goals for the country’s good and a belief in unrestricted personal growth with an emphasis on profit, a tendency she terms “profit incentive” (132). She notes how authors merge the concept of monetary profit with social profit in primers and “lottery books” and how they encourage reading with a promise of reward (152). Weikle-Mills also examines sentimental works such as Susan Warner’s *The Wide, Wide World* (1850) that address the era’s capitalist values and connect economic and moral identity as factors determining citizenship.

*Imaginary Citizens* concludes with an examination of “Natural Citizenship” and the Fourteenth Amendment’s “declaration of the citizenship of all through the citizenship of children” (29). Expanding her earlier discussion of Locke’s views, Weikle-Mills investigates the concept of “natural rights” as Rousseau and Emerson have applied the concept to both “child” and “citizen.” Referencing Samuel Goodrich’s *The Young American* (1842) and Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Grandfather’s Chair* (1840) and *A Wonder Book for Boys and Girls* (1851), Weikle-Mills highlights a recurring dilemma of the time – recognizing children’s importance as citizens but then seeking to avoid the social chaos many believed might result from the automatic inclusion of children as citizens (172). Additionally, the concept of “natural” human rights that both Rousseau and Emerson propose generates another disruptive issue between imagined rights and a repressed reality for women and slaves. Although the Fourteenth Amendment ended slavery and clarified the participants in American citizenship, Weikle-Mills points out that the amendment did not extend suffrage with citizenship, thereby retaining the childlike status of “imaginary citizens.” She also gives her study contemporary relevance with a call for further political action, arguing that the relationship of childhood and citizenship remains unresolved as seen in contemporary debates over civil rights, immigration, and “anchor babies” (206).

Weikle-Mills’s *Imaginary Citizens* makes an insightful and significant contribution to the historical and political relevance of American children’s literature. Although she omits some influential and widely read European and American texts in her extensive study, she achieves a scholarly and detailed analysis with an impressive research base of original and secondary works. Yet, despite the fact that the text makes significant contemporary social connections, one also has

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to note the absence of at least a summary comment regarding the contributions to this topic from children's literature from 1868 to the present. Nevertheless, Weikle-Mills's *Imaginary Citizens* presents an important and persuasive reading of a variety of texts, reveals the inter-related and often contradictory perceptions of citizenship and children, and significantly connects with current civil rights issues such as those concerning immigrant children.

Robyn Wiegman. *Object Lessons*. Durham: Duke UP, 2012. 398p.

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Robyn Wiegman's *Object Lessons* is an expansive study of the way identity knowledges are shaped by the academy. The book engages by asking us to dwell in not only what we do as researchers and scholars but why and how we do what we do. Early in her introduction, Wiegman writes, "identity knowledges' are so mired in ongoing social and institutional relations that their analytic capacities are inseparable from the projections, attachments, and affects that propel them" (8). Taking on major identity knowledge categories, Women's Studies, Queer Studies, Ethnic Studies, Whiteness Studies, and American Studies, Wiegman sets out on a journey that explores corresponding objects within those categories, such as gender, antinormativity, antiracist whiteness, internationalization, and intersectionality. She poses an inspiring challenge: "Let's not pretend then that objects of study matter only because of what we want from them, or that what we want from them is adequate to the ways in which they inhabit and transform how we grasp the world. The issue at stake is more simple, if confounding: What am I without them?" (8). It is this query that makes Wiegman's work stand out. The project is honest, albeit occasionally uneven, in its attempts to show and embrace the complexities around what she calls the field imaginary, how we invest our own identities into our objects of study, and the ways in which we can rethink our critical practices. While not in the least polemical in its tone, in fact, utterly the opposite, the book persists in challenging our assumptions about the identity categories within which we work and live. It is Wiegman's self-reflexive writing style that pushes us into the ebbs and flows of her own critical process and methodology. At times, we feel we are in too deep; we crave a clear-cut statement, a carefully fixed argument, but that is exactly what Wiegman asks us to resist--just as the objects under her scrutiny continually evade, resist, and slip out from under her grasp.

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Wiegman's work offers an important contribution to feminist scholarship as it grapples with the terms that have come to be associated with it, such as failure and affect. Chapter one, and one of the strongest and most lucid chapters, "Doing Justice with Objects: Or, the 'Progress' of Gender" traces the development of the category of women, which Wiegman asserts fails to remain "conceptually coherent and universally referential to all women" (38), into that of gender. By focusing on the "object transference" of the category "women" to that of "gender," Wiegman establishes clearly the problematics of her project--that the commitments and investments we want to make through our political desires to doing justice for objects such as women or gender often conflict with and fall prey to the very nature of our critical practice. In a footnote, Wiegman catalogues a selection of college and university departments who have in the recent past changed division names from Women's Studies to Gender Studies, Gender and Women's Studies, Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies, Feminist Studies, Comparative Women's Studies, and so on. As a microcosm, the list exposes the disgruntled state in which the academy finds itself within its own institutionalizing practices. Throughout the book, Wiegman follows feminist theory's recent investments in the affect of failure, and this first chapter elucidates it beautifully.

An exploration of the correlative to the problems with feminism as an institution, chapter two "Telling Time" makes a rather compelling, if heated, exploration of queer divergence from feminist narratives. The bulk of the chapter is devoted to response to Janet/Ian Halley's "Queer Theory by Men," which Wiegman reads as a gendered performance and uses as a case study for identifying the (terrifying and severe) problems with "taking a break" from feminism, removing its political strengths, ultimately, rejecting it in favor of queer theory that, she asserts, exists in a wholly different temporality. Divergence, Wiegman concludes in this chapter, does not mean undoing or opposing the other but as part of the greater community formation of identitarian attachments (128-30).

Chapters three and four focus on the identity knowledges of Whiteness Studies and American Studies respectively. Both are intriguing and discomfiting as respectively they crack open highly charged objects of study, antiracism (What does it mean to study whiteness and how can such a study avoid racism?) and global noncomplicity (What does it mean to disavow American exceptionalism?). Chapter four in particular offers a fascinating meditation on the scholarly practice of refusing identification with universalizing narratives, a practice that began as a "tactic for revisionary work in disciplines that . . . occluded both the specificity and the diversity of the human subject in gendered, racial, sexual, and economic terms" (216) and has now become the norm for the way we do things, thereby

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reinforcing and making concrete the very values we reject.

Chapter five journeys into legal territories through which Wiegman analyzes intersectionality as it works through incongruent categories—feminist theory, popular film, and family law cases. Using the frame of “kinship,” she uses this meandering chapter to show how “intersectionality as a critical practice is motivated by love” (250). Overall, for me, it is the least accessible chapter in the book, but strives nonetheless to posit difficult and crucial questions.

Within the concluding chapter, Wiegman releases completely into the problem that started the project in the first place and is clearly back in territory that feels good for her—a critique of the “discursive labor” of Queer Studies (306). Those who read the book cover to cover will hopefully find great pleasure in this final chapter as it urges habitation in critique, a suspension between the “anxiety and assurance that so powerfully sustains it” (343) and that is necessary for changing the world in which we live. Reading *Object Lessons* requires letting go of one’s own logical strains of thought and relinquishing oneself to Wiegman’s beautiful and somewhat vulnerable ways of thinking. That said, the book is carefully crafted, meticulously researched, and citationally elegant. Lastly, Wiegman’s footnotes should not be skipped. Within them, you will find a treasure trove.

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Michelle Woods. *Kafka Translated: How Translators Have Shaped Our Reading of Kafka*. New York: Bloomsbury, 2014. 293p.

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A long time ago, I heard the quip that most of our students believe Franz Kafka to be an English-language writer. The reason is clear: Every literary anthology seems to include his perplexing, haunting, and profoundly human stories—especially the shorter ones. Even a longer time ago, as a graduate student, I once heard a fellow student’s presentation that depended on connecting the meanings of “penal” and “penis”; it was not a bad interpretation of Kafka’s “Penal Colony,” but the presenter was oblivious to the fact that the sexual connotations played out in a specific way because the text was a translation. And translation is about choices that influence a reader’s understanding, as Michelle Woods insists on in a liberating way.

It is liberating because, in her book *Kafka Translated*, Woods repeatedly demonstrates that thinking about translation choices is a great deal more productive than focusing on alleged translation mistakes. As a result, a book about the way in

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which translations have shaped our understanding of Kafka is more than welcome, especially a book like Michelle Woods's *Kafka Translated* that not only differentiates among specific translations (focusing on the work of four translators) but also explores "translation" in a wider sense of what a narrator, an author, or a film director does. Woods's fascinating book is much too complex to be fully discussed in a brief review; therefore, I will concentrate on her discussion of language-to-language (as opposed to text-to-movie) translations in order to highlight two core concepts—the translation effect and an author's personal style—that are not only central to Woods's investigation but to any solid understanding of translation.

To refocus the scholarly discourse from translator bashing (for alleged mistakes), Woods turns to theorizing about translation choices. Of course, translation mistakes happen, but treating every "strange" translation as a mistake is a dead-end for translation theory because this approach usually ignores the contexts and causes of the "mistake." In addition, at the level of the translations that Woods is considering, it is most likely that any seemingly "strange" translation is a conscious choice that deserves critical attention rather than schoolmasterly correction. In short, the turn that Woods proposes and practices is much needed for us to increase our understanding of the translation process. Woods uses the core concept of the "translator-effect" (she credits Luise von Flotow for coining the term): it includes asking "what effect their [that is, the translators'] background has, their relationship to the English language as much as to the source language, what draws them to translating certain authors" (79-80), as well as other questions. Woods's research on these questions leads to interesting answers that span the entire spectrum from personal to literary and to political aspects of translation.

The reasons for individual translators to be "hooked" on Kafka are highly personal. For example, Milena Jesenská "saw herself as Gregor Samsa" (29). Incorporating Kafka's famous observation about the force of literature, Mark Harman says, "translating *The Castle* was like an axe for the frozen sea within me" (qtd. 82). Woods approaches political aspects of translation when she tries to redirect critical attention to the undervalued work of two female translators. Milena Jesenská, the very first translator of Kafka's stories (from German into Czech), is defended by Woods both against the "Milena myth" (which reduces Jesenská's life and work to the story of her brief affair with Kafka) and against having been forgotten as a result of world politics: her own journalistic work in Prague was cut short after the Nazi invasion (she was arrested and deported, and she died in Ravensbrück concentration camp), and after the war, her achievements as Kafka's translator were silenced when Kafka's work was banned in her then-Communist native Czechoslovakia. Woods also attempts to reevaluate Willa Muir's

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contribution to not only translating Kafka and but actually introducing him to the English-speaking world with which “the Muirs” (Willa and her husband Edwin Muir) have been credited. Both of Scottish descent, Willa and Edwin Muir had a complex relationship with the majority English culture, and Willa Muir, as a feminist and Modernist author herself, chafed at being caught in the murkier area of everyday politics of patriarchal society, which made her feel obliged to publicly downplay her major role in the translation project and let the fame “as ‘THE’ translator” (Muir, qtd. 44) go to her husband.

The second core concept—an author’s personal style—looks innocently “literary”; however, it makes, like all other concepts, only sense in the context of the entirety of concepts, such as the previously discussed translator effect. Kafka’s personal style is characterized by repetition, length (of both sentences and paragraphs), and idiosyncratic punctuation, which all build up textual momentum and help create humor. Woods examines the expectation translators may have felt (either on the side of their perceived reading public or of the very real publishers) to render Kafka’s personal style in “proper English,” that is, to normalize or “domesticate” his Modernist prose. What strikes me as strange is the paradox that this expectation indeed regulates translations in the social institution of literature in English-speaking countries and that these are the same countries whose prose writers (such as James Joyce and William Faulkner to name just two) have pioneered Modernism. I suggest the following thought experiment: Imagine for a moment that James Joyce would have playfully tried to pass (as, for example, Voltaire did with his *Candide*) his *Ulysses* as a text that he had translated from the German of some obscure German author—What would the publishers and reviewers have said about the presumed translator’s grasp of German and his own language?

Thought experiment aside, translation as a social institution is a very real phenomenon with its authors, translators, editors, publishers, booksellers, readers, reviewers, and so on. And it is a very complex phenomenon as well. The Muirs’s translation is often faulted for being an effort to “English” the works of Kafka. Again, Woods takes great pains to steer clear of translator bashing; indeed, she counters the standard criticism of the Muirs having no Modernist sensitivity with the simple observation that Willa Muir was a Modernist novelist herself; therefore, Woods reasons that any traditional and non-Modernist element in their translation would have to be accounted for as a deliberate choice. In light of the demands of translation as a social institution (or more crudely, the market place and assumptions about what sells and what does not), Woods points to the difference between “initial translation” and “retranslation.” On the one hand, the

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Muir is a good example for “initial translators who are trying to ‘get a foot in the door’ for a foreign author—a process that often means domesticating them to the target audience’s tastes” (89). The Muirs are good examples in the sense that they succeeded in making Kafka popular in English. If the domestication failed to win an English-reading audience over to an author, it would make it much harder to argue for a second look at that author. On the other hand, given Kafka’s popularity, such a second look is possible, and a retranslator of a now “classic” text may “give more of a flavor of the original” (89). There is no doubt that such a retranslation might include “foreignizing” elements (in relation to “proper” English), which Woods defends against being misunderstood as “a nod to current literary taste, rather than to Kafka’s intent” (Damrosch, qtd. 88) and against being criticized for actually not domesticating the text, such as the fact that “Harman wishes to convey the abruptness and the idiosyncrasies of Kafka’s style without ‘improving’ it” (Alter, qtd. 92).

On this note: Woods could not have improved much in her book. There are always little details (for example, a thematic index could have been included in addition to the index of names), but *Kafka Translated* is a great achievement. The specificity of Woods’s core concepts and their clear and consistent application to translations in a narrow and wide sense make *Kafka Translated* a major contribution to the field of translation studies.