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erotic allusions between Pavel's teacher Angela Barbulesca and the young man, but then a horrible murder occurs, the secret police appear on the stage, political and military developments enter the picture, and we are plunged into an abyss of personal and public problems. The translation reads smoothly, though I would criticize that "Transylvania" is not to be rendered as "Transmontania." Altogether, *The Madonna on the Moon. A Novel* is quite promising since the author demonstrates an impressive narrative ability which appeals to many different audiences, as the numerous translations into French, Italian, Spanish, Polish, Dutch, and other languages indicate, and this English translation also confirms.

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Olga Bezhanova. *Growing Up in an Inhospitable World: Female Bildungsroman in Spain*. Tempe: V Premio de Crítica Victoria Urbano, 2014. 228p.

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Olga Bezhanova skillfully breaks with prevailing assumptions about female Bildungsroman to identify and define trends in contemporary female novels of formation in Spain. Through her analysis of some of the most representative female Bildungsromane over three eras (late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Franco's dictatorship, and the post Franco era), she explores connections among female novels of formation, history, and Spain's social context.

The main challenge Bezhanova faces is critical expectations for how Bildungsroman should be defined. She points out that critical debate hinders this genre from progressing. Antiquated concepts about the Bildungsroman genre prevent the inclusion of more novels which could enrich the genre and broaden our perspective in defining novels of formation. Most fascinating about this book is the way she debunks traditional views of novels of formation to highlight the "impressive capacity [of the Bildungsroman genre] to transform and to adapt to changing historical, social, and cultural norms" (13). Bezhanova proves that Bildungsroman is not static and formulaic, but rather a genre that can evolve and even draw from other genres. She successfully synthesizes the evolution of theoretical perspectives and the female Bildungsroman genre in Spain. In addition to its chronological structure, the arrangement of chapters challenges critical assumptions, explores relevant thematic and stylistic features in detail, and studies relationships to previous or future Bildungsromane. Her analysis of Fernán Caballero's *Las dos Gracias*, Pilar Sinués' *La vida íntima*, and Concha Espina's *La rosa de los vientos* in the first chapter demonstrates that, despite critics' expectations, female novels of formation in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries acknowledge the importance of women's growth, offering some possibilities through which women could develop in a rigid patriarchal system. This section allows for a better understanding of the position that women occupied in society and their limited options in developing and protecting their rights.

Bezhanova goes on to examine how their initial desire to advance in life became unattainable during Franco's dictatorship. The importance of the Bildungsromane discussed in this section derives from the creation of a common space in which female writers could discuss and voice their concerns during a time when their characters were forced to stunt their growth and regress to a metaphorical state of eternal childhood. Her analysis of Rosa Chacel's *Memorias de Leticia Valle*, Teresa Barbero's *El último verano en el espejo*, Ana Moix's *Julia*,

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and Esther Tusquets' *El mismo mar de todos los veranos*, Bezhanova offers valuable insight into the inner workings of the minds of the writers and their female characters when repression and the patriarchal system were at their height in the Franco era. In fact, the circularity of these novels and the characters' motivation to stunt their growth and infantilize themselves were key to understanding most of the female novels of development written in the subsequent decades.

The final three chapters illuminate Bildungsromane written after Franco's dictatorship, not only because they represent her main contribution to the discussion of female novels of formation, but also for the cultural and social implications that go beyond literary analysis. The author identifies and defines three trends in the latter part of the twentieth century: the circular Bildungsroman, the reminiscent Bildungsroman, and the collective Bildungsroman. Her analysis diverges from the simplistic views of liberty that female novels of formation were expected to portray after Franco's death. She argues that contemporary female Bildungsromane have not completely abandoned the conventions and themes of the previous decades.

The analysis of the circular Bildungsroman delves more deeply into novels by female writers of the time to reveal an underlying social problem—"the realization that traditional gender roles have changed" (143)—as well as the struggle of some women to adapt and cope with this new situation and, consequently, their decision to willingly stunt their own growth. Almudena Grandes' *Las edades de Lulú* and Espido Freire's *Irlanda* show that some novels still follow the circular pattern of the previous decades and explains how they not only include but also work with most of the conventions of the circular tradition. By classifying these two novels as Bildungsromane, Bezhanova attempts to enrich our understanding of female novels of formation and rectify some related misinterpretations.

The reminiscent Bildungsroman, and especially the collective Bildungsroman, depict the changes in women's development after the Franco era in very innovative ways. Yet, "there is continuity to female Bildungsroman that persists in spite of all the innovations and transformations that the genre undergoes" (10). In the former category, she explores how female writers incorporate elements of the male novel of formation, as well as how they set the action in the recent past to rewrite the history of women's growth without the constraints of the past. Therefore, her analysis of Marina Mayoral's *Recóndita armoína* and Josefina Aldecoa's *Mujeres de negro* reveals how female writers and their characters attempt to break from tradition and begin anew without the influence of the patriarchy. However, the author points out that the absence of obstacles to the protagonists' growth is detrimental to the dramatic and literary value of these female novels of formation.

The critical discussion of the collective Bildungsroman presents an insightful glance into the genre by setting the foundation for reexamining and adequately defining the present and future of Bildungsromane written by women in Spain. Through her analysis of Care Santos' *Okeupada* and Susana Fortes' *Tiernos y traidores*, Bezhanova explains the revolutionary contributions of these Bildungsromane and their departures from the most traditional conventions of the genre. In these female novels of formation, the women characters' development resembles that of men, but women are more active than men and occupy the central positions in the collective narrative of the story. However, Santos and Fortes' novels "do not manage to suppress the existence of gender discrimination" (176). The author suggests that the current interest and success for many writers and readers of female novels of formation derive from the struggle to eliminate the remaining traces of the patriarchal system and achieve complete equality between men

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and women. Ultimately, *Growing Up in an Inhospitable World* provides a significant contribution to scholarship in an undefined genre and its relationships with the social, cultural, and historical elements of Spain. Those who wish to deepen their knowledge of the evolution of women's growth in patriarchal societies will find great value in Bezhanova's work.

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Albrecht Classen. *Sonora: harte Klänge/Harsh Words*. Novo maesto, Slovenia: Arte publisher, 2015.

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Dr. Albrecht Classen, a prolific poet with global sensibility and keen insights into the human condition, has added to his extensive oeuvre and to his renown as University Distinguished Professor of German Studies in Tucson, Arizona with his latest bilingual-facing-page volume of (self-translated) poetry. As a long-time reader of Classen's poetry, both published and unpublished, to say I admire his talent would be an understatement. Indeed, the sole criticism I can make of this latest volume is that he did not offer me the chance to translate his poems, for as a literary translator, I would relish the challenge and the delight of rendering Classen's poetry into English. And as a fellow Arizonan (albeit one living in the mountains rather than the desert) I view his dual role as expat German and long-established Arizonan as one that adds piquancy and depth to his chosen subjects, as do his black and white photographs of landscapes and architectural features that accompany and expand the impact of this hardcover, 7 1/2 x 5 inch 227 page volume—truly one for a bibliophile's collection. Translators will find a treat herein as well, for the English not infrequently gives closer focus to the intent behind the German words and thus will prompt bilingual readers to examine their own choice of words between the two languages (such as in the choice of dale for *Tal*).

Dedicated to the desert that he has called home for over a quarter century, the volume's dual challenge is met: self-translation does not disappoint, but rather, closely follows meter, rhyme and syllable count—no small feat. In addition, the use of idioms between both languages is both precise and fitting. The primary subject matter—Nature, desert, flora and fauna—is as accurate as only a soon-to-be-thirty-year resident of Arizona can depict. Ably conveying that experience is not a given, however; Classen competently portrays his surroundings in an evocative and heartfelt manner. He also addresses folklore, politics and personality in a way that evokes and educates without being pedantic. It is a captivating, even mesmerizing, read, yet refreshes in its sometimes confrontational stance. When I interviewed him by email regarding his approach and his muse, Classen stated he is always on the search for the right word that must resonate and must offer the key to a deeper understanding—at the same time being “romantisch und doch postmodern.” Rather than entertaining the notion of a muse, Classen points to himself as what he sees as “a medium of my poems that happen of their own accord and merely have to be written down and polished.” He professes a “deep joy of the poetic word that reflects [the] self,” —an explanation for why his poems are written in German and translated in to English, not written initially in English. Classen's hope is that what he views as “the pearls” of poems emerge from within the soul to then change the world. Their structure arises organically in what he describes as a musically freely-moving writing process in which the inner sound determines both rhythm and meter.