
ning of modern Chinese poetry and continues to the present day, with poets of different time and space constructing the complexity of the modern lyrical subject. Despite their vastly different historical contexts, according to Manfredi, Li Jinfa and Ji Xian share a common thread of self-portrait as art in word and in painting, which presents “a picturing of the self that is virtually boundless” (60). For the Taiwanese poet Luo Qing, the self thrives in the guise of the modern literati who exploit “the rifts between differing media of expression” (90), especially the elasticity of the Chinese written character itself. Xiao Yu, another poet from Taiwan who is arguably the most experimental and the most challenging of all poets writing in Chinese today, takes the boundary-breaking function of the form of collage to a dazzling height in order to constantly reconfigure the self from its traces of disappearance.

The delight of Manfredi’s book lies both in his theoretical disentanglement of the Chinese poetic modernity from its various related or contrasting notions and in his penetrating reading of individual poets, which illuminates seemingly obscure and difficult verbal and visual texts. This is evident not only in the case of rarely read works by familiar poets, such as the four poets mentioned above, but also in his re-reading of many canonical pieces from contemporary Chinese Misty Poetry, which is the focus of the latter part of the book. For example, about the final stanza of Bei Dao’s famous poem “The Answer,” he writes: “Two things appear immediately in this stanza alone: first, the explicit reference to human eyes and the phenomenology of ‘seeing’; second, the Chinese character itself both as a mode of watching and as watcher, a conduit or portal that both facilitates and executes seeing across and through the vicissitudes of time and space” (148). Similarly, the “visual lens” of Manfredi’s eyes enables him to re-energize Gu Cheng’s often quoted short poem “A Generation” (“Darkness has given me dark eyes / I use them to search for light”): “Its power, though, is also related to the fact that it takes seeing itself as its focus; it dramatizes the act of viewing in a way that substantiates the lyrical presence, providing not something new to see but a new act of seeing” (149). A strong reading, it is said by Barbara Johnson, is one that propagates the moment of surprise. It is no doubt that Manfredi is a strong reader of modern Chinese poetry and readers of his readings will find enjoyment in the many surprises that he has brought to the book.

Claudia Mills, ed. *Ethics and Children’s Literature*. Burlington: Ashgate, 2014. 264p.

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Ethics and Children’s Literature, edited by Claudia Mills, is the insightful, recent addition to the critically acclaimed series Ashgate Studies in Childhood, 1700 to the Present. While most readers familiar with children’s literature might assume the moral and ethical components of the literature to be obvious, Mills has assembled a selection of essays that moves the consideration of ethical factors in children’s literature to fresh topics of analysis.

The opening section, “The Dilemma of Didacticism: Attempts to Shape Children as Moral Beings,” examines earlier texts and probes the efforts to instill morality through literature. In “Transmitting Ethics through Books of Golden Deeds for Children,” Claudia Nelson surveys several examples of Books of Golden Deeds, primarily from 1864 through the 1920s, and

explores the didactic morality of these often over-looked texts. Emma Adelaida Otheguy's "Sermonizing in New York: The Children's Magazines of Mary Mapes Dodge and José Martí" contrasts the anti-moralizing editorial position of Dodge with Martí's didactic preferences in the publication of their nineteenth-century children's magazines. Otheguy's perceptive analysis of the well-received works Martí publishes successfully argues for the inclusion of didactic style as a plausible format for children's literature. With particular focus on pioneering librarians such as Charlemae Rollins, Moira Hinderer's "Talking to Children about Race: Children's Literature in a Segregated Era, 1930-1945" next discusses the historically important efforts in the 1930s and 1940s to promote a literature providing positive and realistic black characters and countering the racial stereotypes present in other works.

Offering a more familiar focus, "Ethical Themes in Classic and Contemporary Texts" critically examines and often challenges the ethical questions and thematic issues raised in a range of established young adult and children's texts. In "Discernment and the Moral Life in *Prince Caspian* and the Later *Narnia Chronicles*," Emanuelle Burton deftly moves the discussion of C. S. Lewis's major works away from his role as a Christian apologist and considers the moral and ethical components of his novels separately. Burton effectively demonstrates how the growth in moral discernment of Lewis's characters offers a humanistic model for young readers to follow. Mary Jeanette Moran's "Making a Difference: Ethical Recognition through Otherness in Madeleine L'Engle's Fiction" examines L'Engle's major texts with both an ethical commentary and a feminist critique. Diverging from any Christian interpretive context, Moran examines the various manifestations of "otherness" in the texts and establishes that L'Engle favors disrupting the "antagonistic self-other dynamic" and values an empathy with otherness (87). Niall Nance-Carroll investigates A. A. Milne's application of Mikhail Bakhtin's prosaic ethics, an assertion that small, daily decisions are more personally defining than consideration of greater ethical questions. In "A Prosaics of the Hundred Acre Wood: Ethics in A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* and *The House at Pooh Corner*," Nance-Carroll explores and dismisses several criticisms of Milne's use of prosaic ethics and maintains his argument that Milne follows Bakhtin's view that one's moral obligation to act appropriately forms the basis of ethical behavior. Jani L. Barker's "Virtuous Transgressors, Not Moral Saints: Protagonists in Contemporary Children's Literature" next opens a topic especially relevant to contemporary children's and young adult literature. Although the concept of the "virtuous transgressor" has a long literary tradition, Barker examines the contemporary texts of Louis Sachar's *Holes* and J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter series within the context of several earlier twentieth-century texts. Barker differentiates between the "moral exemplar" and "sanctimonious model children" and argues that texts with virtuous transgressors both reinforce moral standards such as love and also investigate "troubling aspects of the status quo" (121). Although "Model Children, Little Rebels, and Moral Transgressors: Virtuous Childhood Images in Taiwanese Juvenile Fiction in the 1960s" initially appears slightly incongruous with the other selections, it offers a global perspective of the "good child" or "good student" model. Andrea Mei-Ying Wu's discussion of moral transgression exonerated by either good intent or strong principles identifies character types and ethical situations emergent in contemporary English and American texts.

"Ethical Criticism of Children's Literature" nicely complements the preceding section and expands the critical discourse from specific literary works to broader issues of characterization and topic selection. Lisa Rowe Fraustino's "The Rights and Wrongs of Anthropomorphism in Picture Books" insightfully challenges common perceptions regarding the anthropomorphic

portrayals often found in children's books. Incorporating a comprehensive investigation of numerous critical texts and theories regarding anthropomorphism, she explores the ethical consequences of employing either realistic or metaphoric animal depictions. Faustino finally reviews the current spectrum of anthropomorphic applications and calls for clarity in both presentation and context. Centering on the ethical considerations involved with defining heroic and ethical behavior in combat, Suzanne Rahn's "Lewis, Tolkien, and the Ethics of Imaginary Wars" begins with her discussion of *jus in bello* (a just way to conduct war) and *jus ad bellum* (a just decision to wage war). Citing early evidence from Jean de Brunhoff's *The Travels of Babar* and George MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin*, Rahn connects the ideas of war presented in these works to the more extensive treatment of the topic in the widely read and influential works of C. S. Lewis (Narnia series) and J. R. R. Tolkien (*The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*). Closing this section, Claudia Mills' "Heeding Rousseau's Advice: Some Ethical Reservations about Addressing Prejudice through Children's Literature" explores Rousseau's uneasiness with the dilemma that specifically didactic stories might, in fact, actually create the opposite results of those desired. Mills argues for reader awareness that texts attempting "to combat problematic attitudes already on the wane . . . run the risk of delaying rather than advancing societal enlightenment" (192).

The final section, "Ethical Responses to Children's Literature: Identification, Recognition, Adaptation, Conversation," further expands the discussion of ethics and children's literature into several areas beyond a specific textual analysis. Leona W. Fisher criticizes the limitations of Bakhtin's subordination of character and plot to discourse in "The Ethics of Reading Narrative Voice: An Anti-Bakhtinian View." She promotes teaching children to understand narrative structure and to recognize the story's ethical dimensions that affect both the characters and the readers. In "Prizing Social Justice: The Jane Addams Children's Book Award," Ramona Caponegro examines the political influences and publishing ramifications associated with literary awards, especially the Jane Addams Children's Book Award for social justice. She discusses the marginalization of this award due largely to its possible connection with controversial social issues, points out its ethical importance, and argues for the reading public's support. Considering *The Hunger Games* series, Martha Rainbolt's "Katniss Everdeen's Emerging Moral Consciousness in *The Hunger Games*" investigates the portrayal of Katniss's moral development in the first novel and contrasts it to its portrayal in the first film production. Rainbolt argues that the fictional representation more clearly depicts Katniss's emerging moral awareness and ethical complexity while the cinematic representation reduces her sensibility to a limiting political awareness and motivation. Finally, Sara Goering examines pedagogical practice, especially the discussion of serious ethical topics with young children, in "Using Children's Literature as a Spark for Ethical Discussion: Stories that Deal with Death." Goering disputes several conventional beliefs that seek to protect children from emotionally charged topics like death and argues that young children's awareness and natural curiosity make discussion of such topics possible. She goes on to assert that educators and parents do a disservice if they fail to address children's concerns in these matters.

In *Ethics and Children's Literature*, Claudia Mills has assembled a selection of perceptive and critically important essays that expand the current discussion of ethical issues present in children's and young adult literature. Notably, the distinguished range of issues addressed in the collection advocates for further critical examination of several related ethical matters such as, for example, those connected with the environment, the Latino culture, or the LGBTQ

communities. Certainly, as the essays in the collection investigate varied ethical beliefs and challenge long-held popular moral assumptions, there are those who will disagree with all or part of any analysis. It is, however, the often-challenging nature of the collection that makes it an important addition to the current critical discussion of children's literature.

Juan-Carlos Moreno and José-Luis Mendívil-Giró. *On Biology, History and Culture in Human Language: A Critical Overview*. Sheffield, UK: Equinox, 2014. 181 p.

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Any book that begins with Dante has to be good. Juan-Carlos Moreno and José-Luis Mendívil-Giró refer to Dante's distinction between vernacular and literary languages. In his practice as a writer, of course, Dante ironically used literary Latin to praise the vernacular in his *De Vulgari Eloquentia* but the vernacular to rival the Homeric Greek and the Virgilian Latin in his *Commedia*. Moreno and Mendívil-Giró do not mention this irony but use the Dante reference to establish the fundamental difference between natural language (NL) and cultivated language (CL), which underlies their main argument (that the Chomskyan Minimalist Program is the right way to do theoretical linguistics) at a much more abstract level.

The authors continually contrast what they call the current "two great 'paradigms' of language research" (44). First, the *biolinguistic paradigm* is based on Chomsky's assumption of a Universal Grammar (UG), the paradigm the authors embrace. Second, the *functional-cognitive paradigm* does not necessarily deny "the human capacity for language" (40) but understands this capacity as part of more general cognitive systems, rather than as a specifically "linguistic" system. The "big picture" contrast is *natural* versus *cultural*. But looking at the specifics discussed, I sensed a relatively fine distinction between the two paradigms that seem to share a good deal of common ground so that future research may promise a better answer than a theoretical decision at the current time. However, Moreno and Mendívil-Giró argue that the two paradigms are different enough in terms of how each views language so that their respective research programs are significantly different. And this difference hinges on the distinction between NL and CL.

First, the linguistic competence that each child acquires without explicit instruction is that individual child's (and, later, adult's) *I-language*, which is contingent on Universal Grammar. Second, a NL is understood as "a population" of I-languages (7). Third, a CL (such as any written language) is "the product of certain partial elaborations of" a NL; as a result of its explicit rules, a CL is not acquired but learned (9). A CL, therefore, is always an *E-language*, that is, an external manifestation of "certain linguistic behaviors ... during the performance of our" NL (17) in a cultural, social context. NLs evolve in a non-teleological (Darwinian) way while CLs evolve in a teleological (Lamarckian) way.

This distinction results in other distinctions, for example, that of *language evolution* versus *language change*. Language evolution, which occurred on an almost geological timescale probably about 100,000 years ago, refers to the emergence of the *faculty of language* (FL as part of UG), which is specific to *homo sapiens sapiens* and "is shared by all humans, across the species"