
REVIEWS

Reviews are published in alphabetical order according to the name of the author reviewed.

Elizabeth Alsop. *Making Conversation in Modernist Fiction*. The Ohio State UP, 2019. 187p.

JOY LANDEIRA
UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

What started in 1898 as British artist Francis Barraud's painting of his dead brother's terrier Nipper listening to a recording of his master's voice (which accounts for the painting's title) on a cylinder phonograph was soon copyrighted and transformed into The Gramophone Company Ltd.'s advertising mascot for its Camden, NJ, U.S.-affiliate, the Victor Talking Machine Company. I conjure this dog-at-the-Victrola image as I reflect upon *Making Conversation in Modernist Fiction* because it illustrates the coming of modernism's machine age and the central exercise of Elizabeth Alsop's study: "paying attention to *how* characters say as well as *what* they say" (161--my italics).

When we as readers incline our ears to a fictional character, are we listening to what they say just to follow the plot or character development? Do fictional characters even have their own voice, or are they only heeding and mimicking their master's--author's--ventriloquist's voice? By being attentive to *how* characters say, readers are attuned to how conversation is made, not just to what is said.

With this latest book in The Ohio State University Press "Theory and Interpretation of Narrative" series, Alsop evaluates what happens when authors and their creations "make conversation." Careful examination of specific literary works yields four categories: (1) consensual voice and fantasies of reciprocity in Henry James and Ernest Hemingway; (2) exceptional voice and the dream of autonomy in James Joyce and William Faulkner; (3) paradoxical voice and implausible speech in Faulkner and Virginia Woolf; and (4) choral voice of democratized talk in Woolf and Gertrude Stein. Together, these dialogues form Alsop's theory of a poetics of talk that distinguishes modernist literature from former periods and that traces a trajectory towards the "otherness" of postmodernism. Pause for a moment

to consider the characters that are all children of Henry James's imagination who, like their author, seek reciprocity and fitting in to a consensual, well-defined world in comparison to Stein's communal, choral identity "and its general movement away from what Fredric Jameson terms 'protagonicity' and toward 'polycentricity'" (131).

Also intertwines convincing textual analysis with erudite theoretical background and references. She successfully demonstrates James Phelan's stance that "conversation is always a form of narration," (2) and reaches beyond it to reconceive fictional dialogue "as a work of *poiesis* rather than *mimesis* . . . something not just 'imitated' but truly *made*" (3). Dialogue in modernist fiction, as she reveals, is not copycat talk, but is a poetic structure in its own right—purposely crafted, created, "made."

Stylistically Also constructs and "makes" her own arguments with elevated academic references, tone, and parlance. I would advise non-specialists in narratology to build a glossary of theoretical concepts and vocabulary--*ie*: "involuntary homology" (85) "inquires," "speech-tagging" (120)—and to read at a study—and steady—pace. Scholars will appreciate "making conversation" in modernist fiction and will welcome the challenge of pondering carefully wrought questions, answers, examples and discoveries.

C. T. Au. *The Hong Kong Modernism of Leung Ping-kwan*. Lexington Books, 2020. 202p.

HOWARD Y. F. CHOY
HONG KONG BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Considered a sequel to her *Modernist Aesthetics in Taiwanese Poetry Since the 1950s* (Leiden: Brill, 2008) and a synthesis of eight Chinese articles and an English chapter published between 2009 and 2017, Chung To Au's 區仲桃 *The Hong Kong Modernism of Leung Ping-kwan* studies the creative and critical writings--including poetry, fiction, travelogues and essays--of writer-scholar Leung Ping-kwan 梁秉鈞 (*nom de plume* Yasi/ Ye Si 也斯, 12 Mar. 1949-5 Jan. 2013) through the lens of modernism. Au's monograph is a new addition to earlier scholarship on Leung by Ackbar Abbas, Ikegami Sadako 池上貞子, John Minford, Leonard K. K. Chan 陳國球, Lo Kwai Cheung 羅貴祥, Rey Chow 周蕾, Wolfgang

Kubin and others.

In the first chapter of five, Au defines “Hong Kong modernism” by relating Leung’s modernist literature to Western modernisms as well as Chinese modernism of the 1940s, distinguishing it from Taiwanese modernism on the one hand and borrowing Peter Brooker’s idea of “altermodernism,” an alternative or variant postcolonial, multicultural modernism, on the other. Au discusses Hong Kong as a modern city and Hongkongers’ problematic Chinese identity, placing Ye Si on a par with two early Hong Kong modernists, Lau Yee Cheung 劉以鬯 (Liu Yichang, 1918-2018) and Ma Lang 馬朗 (1933-).

The following chapter further traces Leung’s modernism to the Chinese *shuqing* 抒情 ‘lyrical’ and *yongwu* 詠物 literary traditions. Starting from Leung’s critical essays on lyricism, Au argues that his “poems on objects” (*yongwu shi* 詩), particularly those on food, are less successful than his fiction in maintaining the correlation between humans and objects due to his optimistic, instead of sentimental, tone and his control over food in poetry. Based on an interview with the poet, the author understands that such objects enable him to express his idea, rather than inspire him to write poems. Yet this power relationship is complicated and changed in his fiction, where food embodies metaphorical meanings beyond its normal function. The reviewer finds that such subject/object binary opposition attributed to Leung’s poetic “failure” is too mechanical, untrue, and therefore unconvincing.

The third chapter focuses on Leung’s invention of the “extraordinary ordinary” under the subthemes of home, medicine, clothes and, again, food. The author suggests that the poet discovers his home in foreign places, such as the old houses of Freud, Kafka and Brecht in Vienna, Prague and Berlin, respectively. More interestingly, Ye Si’s modernism is related to medicine, mainly madness, as found in *Paper Cuts* (*Jianzhi* 剪紙 1977--while Au translated the title as *Paper Cuts*, I prefer Brian Holton’s rendition *Paper Cuts* [Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2015]). Au’s coined term “colonial dis-ease,” unfortunately, is not fully explained in the book. The issue of colonial identity is addressed allegorically in modern fashion, especially through an intertextual reading of Ye Si’s *Clothink* (*Yi xiang* 衣想, 1998) and Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Lastly, Leung’s poems on food and his novel *Postcolonial Affairs of Food and the Heart* (*Houzhimin*

shiwu yu aiqing 後殖民食物與愛情, 2009) are reexamined in relation to the formation of a fluid, hybrid Hong Kong identity. However, the importance of the Cantonese daily language in his writings is not mentioned at all.

Chapter four explores the writer's multiple perspectives developed from his travelogues and magical realist fiction in a global context. Au points out that Ye Si has gone beyond imperialism and colonialism in these two subgenres. He employs magical realism to describe mental illness and people's alienation to Hong Kong and meta-fictionalizes his "countertravel writings" by merging various forms of lyrical novel, prose, autobiography, criticism, odes, and even email from the standpoint of different types of travelers, including both the colonizer and the colonized.

In the concluding chapter, Au returns to the beginnings of modernism through translation. Leung's literary career started with reading masterpieces of world literature in translation, such as Shakespeare and Tolstoy. Then, in the early 1970s, he translated foreign literature into Chinese, including French *nouveaux romans* (new novels), American Beat Generation fiction, Latin American poetry (e.g., Pablo Neruda), and Eastern European works. Finally, in the 1990s, he translated his own poems into English with American poet Gordon T. Osing. The book ends by characterizing the poet's in-between-ness and celebrating his inclusiveness in the development of Hong Kong modernism.

There are indeed problems of translation, confusion between "novel" and "fiction," as well as numerous stylistic inconsistencies, such as the use of italics and upper/lowercase in pinyin Romanizations of Chinese terms, titles and proper nouns. Despite these, the book convincingly incorporates an array of relevant Western theories as well as local and global studies of Leung Ping-kwan. It would be more comprehensive if recent criticisms by international scholars—such as Andrea Riemenschmitter's "Beyond Gothic: Ye Si's Spectral Hong Kong and the Global Culture Crisis" (*Journal of Modern Literature in Chinese* 12.1 (2014): 108-56)—and the writer's multimedia art works in *Ye Si de Xianggang* 也斯的香港, and his 299 photos on the Hong Kong Memory website, were included. Last but not least, while Au discusses both colonialism and postcolonialism in Leung's pre- and post-handover writings and repeatedly employs the word "decolonization"

throughout the book, one wonders how the poet-fictionist also experimented with postmodernism and whether he was aware of Hong Kong's "recolonization" by mainland China when "Leung considered that existing colonial theories are not sufficient" (p. 134).

Bettina Bildhauer. *Medieval Things: Agency, Materiality, and Narratives of Objects in Medieval German Literature and Beyond*. Interventions: New Studies in Medieval Literature. Columbus, OH: The Ohio State UP, 2020, 223p.

ALBRECHT CLASSEN
UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Thing theory has arrived in Medieval Studies. The agency of objects, that is, material things, discussed in recent years by modern theorists, has now also been recognized by medievalists. Bettina Bildhauer demonstrates how medieval poets conveyed a sense of this agency in objects such as armor, clothes, jewelry, nets, coins, rings, and, maybe most importantly, the Grail (Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*) and the treasure, or hoard (*Nibelungenlied*). One central object, however, is curiously left out, the sword (and related weapons), disregarding here three brief remarks, although swords sort of sing, change colors, act on their own, and contribute essentially to the hero's qualities, as I argue in a forthcoming article ("Symbolic Significance of the Sword in the Hero's Hand," *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik*, 2020).

Bildhauer profiles the distinctiveness of her study by emphasizing that it deals with medieval examples in contrast to modern investigations of things, that it does not develop an interpretive model imposing itself on the texts, and that it moves away from the domineering Anglophone world by introducing medieval German literature seen through the lens of thing theory. Ironically, her attempt to transgress the traditional focus of literary analysis along national and linguistic lines by way of dealing with Middle High German narratives only leads right back to the very same national concept. Only if she had endeavored to combine her particular literary examples with those from across medieval Europe would she have lived up to her own claim in this regard. Fortunately, in the later section of the book she also engages briefly with some Arabic and Sanscrit texts to compare to

her German narratives, but only to highlight some similarities in motifs or themes.

The author correctly emphasizes the significant agency of things as medieval poets presented them in many different contexts, both heroic and courtly, and in early modern plays (Hans Sachs). She highlights, above all, the great significance of shining colors and lights, but it remains unclear why there would be a “non-fetishistic agency” (18) in the shine since those blazing objects do not do anything and have no ‘individuality,’ as swords or rings appear to have. Bildhauer examines Wirnt of Grafenberg’s *Wigalois* (ca. 1210) as one of the best examples for this fascination with shine or glamour; then she introduces *Herzog Ernst* (ms. B, ca. 1220, not 1210), and compares both works with similar cases in the Arabian *1001 Nights* (not: *101 Nights*) and Heinrich von dem Türlin’s *Die Crône* (ca. 1290). In each case, the analysis could have been deepened, especially because there are direct connections between the described objects and the protagonist’s behavior.

Chapter two introduces objects such as nets and other fabrics which carry significant meaning in Heinrich von Veldeke’s *Eneit* (ca. 1170), Der Stricker’s *Daniel von dem Blühenden Tal* (ca. 1240), Ulrich von Liechtenstein’s *Frauentienst* (ca. 1260), and Ulrich von dem Türlin’s *Willehalm* (ca. 1250/60). Bildhauer also examines examples from the *Kaiserchronik* and introduces comparable elements in the famous *Kalila and Dimna* tradition. Moreover, there are valuable comments about nets in *Books of Hours*, though the idea of “the thing” is then somewhat lost out of sight. The question would be when and how those nets gain a status of independence on their own, or whether they are nothing but tools in the hands of the human actors.

In the next chapter, Bildhauer focuses on narratives created as it-biographies, with coins, for instance, talking to a human being (Hans Sachs, 1494-1576), or a sacred robe, as in the Goliardic epic, *Orendel* (late twelfth century; hence, an odd chronology in the development of the argument). However, this robe does not function the same way as Sachs’s coin, whereas a comparison with Parzival’s red armor in Wolfram von Eschenbach’s eponymous romance or Siegfried’s invisibility cloak in the *Nibelungenlied* would have worked much better, especially because the robe does not take on an agency on its own.

In the fourth chapter, the author highlights the function of rings, as in the pre-courtly epic poems *Salman and Morolf* and in the

heroic epic poem *Ortnit*. Since rings matter so profoundly throughout medieval literature, the narrow focus on Middle High German literature represents a missed opportunity to go beyond the traditional national boundaries that the author herself laments.

The final chapter focuses on the Grail as an agent by itself in Wolfram's *Parzival* and on the hoard in the *Nibelungenlied*. At the end of the latter, Kriemhild asks Hagen to return that treasure, which is buried in the river Rhine, far away from the battleground in the land of the Huns. This brings to the light its highly symbolic function, not so much as a thing itself, as the author claims, but more as a symbol of dead Siegfried, and hence of the forces of the dwarfs, whose ruler he had become in his youth.

If agency of the hoard is not really established here, Bildhauer is on the right track regarding the Grail in Wolfram's narrative, which contains independent powers and interacts with the members of the Grail community, designating on its own Parzival as the rightful heir to Anfortas's throne. The thing thus communicates its potency and spiritual authority over people, proving to be the key to the door of utopia, and this already in the Middle Ages.

We might disagree with the author here and there, but the overall argument is convincing, and she builds excellent bridges between modern critical thing theory and the medieval and early modern German texts. I would not have translated all German titles into English, and a better chronological strategy would have been more effective. The volume concludes with a bibliography and an index.

Evgeny Dengub, Irina Dubinina and Jason Merrill, editors. *The Art of Teaching Russian: Research, Pedagogy, and Practice*. Georgetown UP, 2020. 476 p.

MARIA MIKOLCHAK
ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY

While building upon previous research, experience, and best practices of pedagogical methodologies and clearly demonstrating a continuum of approaches to teaching foreign languages, *The Art of Teaching Russian: Research, Pedagogy, and Practice* takes an important step forward in highlighting new developments. It positions teaching Russian language

and culture within the larger field of teaching Less Commonly Taught Languages (LCTL) and foreign languages in general, specifically addressing the revised 21st century ACTFL proficiency guidelines and the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages that now include Russian, thus creating a new framework for guiding instruction.

Not limited to Russian, it begins by addressing the state of the profession with chapters broadly analyzing the teaching of foreign languages that would interest any instructor. Following a broad introduction, including informative articles on faculty positions in Russian in American colleges and universities and Russian programs (unfortunately, not that many are left with the recent cuts in Humanities and in foreign language instruction in particular), the articles narrow down to the specifics of teaching Russian and address the new standards and innovative approaches. The volume's logical progression leads to topics that are more specific: curriculum and materials development; reconceptualization of grammar instruction; and the shift from Communicative Language Teaching, for years the gold standard, to transformative language learning and teaching. The curriculum and materials development section serves as a welcome invitation to encourage instructors to develop new Russian textbooks. It addresses the representation and diversity that clearly has been missing in Russian textbooks, since most are invariably limited to the white native speaker of Russian who lives in one of the big cities of Central Russia, to the exclusion of multiple other groups. The final two parts of the book focus on teaching culture and teaching and learning Russian with technology.

Most of the articles explore general language-acquisition issues and interest a broad range of language specialists. They discuss language pedagogy and include familiar themes: teaching with songs (Chapter 11), developing textbooks (Chapter 12), using extracurricular activities (Chapter 17), film (Chapter 9), developing intercultural competence (Chapter 15), oral history projects (Chapter 10), and addressing diversity (Chapter 13), among others. Some concrete examples that have to do directly with Russian language include using proverbs (with great examples), songs, films, and history. To an extent, some of these pedagogies seem almost too familiar to any instructor of a foreign language, who most likely has used all of the above-mentioned approaches in their classes. It begs the question why this book would be

introduced by its editors as a new step in the development of research and best practices in teaching Russian and why a language instructor would find it worthy of their time.

The answer to this question seems to be straightforward enough. In addition to familiar topics, the book raises many new issues: inadequate language proficiency of teaching assistants (TAs) (Chapter 4); use of Language Corpora (LC), a new field in Russian, with detailed examples and recommendations (Chapter 14); research on Russian programs in the US (Chapter 3), and data on faculty positions in Russian (Chapter 2), among many others. Even with the old and familiar topics of grammar, culture, etc., the authors incorporate new data and original research that, together with examples from the Russian language, would make the book an interesting and useful read for any Russian instructor.

Teaching Russian has not been as well-documented and researched as teaching more frequently taught languages in the US, such as Spanish, French or German. A new book as well as new textbooks have been long overdue. *The Art of Teaching Russian: Research, Pedagogy, and Practice* will clearly be filling the existing gap and hopefully creating a bridge to more data and research in the field as well as a development of more innovative teaching materials, including textbooks for different levels of proficiency and online programs with new technologically mediated teaching methods. The book should also facilitate the conversation about teaching and learning Russian among Russian instructors and promote further research in the field.

Robert K. Elder. *Hemingway in Comics*. Kent State UP, 2020. 274p.

WAYNE CATAN

BROPHY COLLEGE PREPARATORY

Hemingway in Comics discusses Ernest Hemingway's worldwide reach through the medium. The writer from Oak Park, IL appeared in 120 comics in myriad languages. It turns out that "comic book creators and Hemingway share a natural kinship. The comic book page demands an economy of words, much like Hemingway's less-is-more 'iceberg theory,' only in graphic form" (1). Therefore, artists, like Hemingway, urge readers to become part of the story.

Robert Elder's exhaustive research shows Hemingway combatting fascists with Wolverine, "leading a revolution in Purgatory in *The Life After*" (X), starring with Mickey Mouse, and at the center of a *Peanuts* strip. "In comics, the Nobel Prize winner is often treated with equal parts reverence, curiosity, and parody" (X). Although Hemingway read multiple newspapers daily, he did not write about or read the comics; he was doodler though, and he appeared as a character in his high school yearbook in 1917.

The study begins with a chapter about the famous Hemingway photo in which he dons a Christian Dior turtleneck sweater. The artist is Yousuf Karsh, a preeminent portrait photographer, who also conducted sittings with Albert Einstein, Winston Churchill, and authors Thomas Mann, Somerset Maugham, Pearl Buck, and Albert Camus. Elder believes it is an important photo: "For Superman, it's the giant S on his chest. For John Lennon, it's a New York City T-shirt. For Ernest Hemingway, it's a bulky turtleneck sweater" (1). This iconic photo was published in numerous publications including *Atlantic Monthly*. Additionally, the Karsh photo is featured on a 1989 US postal stamp. Elder's assertion about Hemingway donning the sweater bears fruit: in February of 2019 Jef Mallett's *Frazz* comic strip features a character in the sweater up to his eyeballs, stating "Check it out! It's an Ernest Hemingway sweater." In the next panel, the character states: "Kind of a bulky sweater for a writer considered minimalist ... who lived in Cuba. Then Frazz, a janitor in an elementary school, states, "Who am I talking to?" (2).

Hemingway's first appearance in a mainstream comic was in *Captain Marvel Adventures* (July 1950). Readers can barely see

Hemingway, featured on a panel, as Captain Marvel and President Harry Truman tour the Half-Century Fair of 1950, the same year that Charles Schulz's *Peanuts* premiered in seven newspapers. Hemingway makes only one appearance in *Peanuts* – August 28, 1984. In the strip, Lucy reads Snoopy a review: “Listen to this... It’s a review of your latest novel. Your writing has been compared to Faulkner and Hemingway. Unfavorably!” This is an impressive feat. At its height, *Peanuts* was printed in 2,600 newspapers in 75 countries and in 21 languages. Like Hemingway, Schultz regards himself as a “precisionist in the selection of words. It is a subject on which he stands his ground. ‘Nobody tells Hemingway [what words to use],’ says Schulz” (27).

Two rather funny spoofs appeared in 1955 and 1958. First, Hemingway is the subject of a caricature in “*Mad’s* first issue as a magazine, after 23 years as a comic book. ‘Pappa’ Heminghaw—finds himself in the jaws of a lion” (8). Then, in a rather funny parody in *Frantic*, a *Mad* knockoff, Cuban-born creator Ric Estrada writes a full-page story titled “The Old Man and the She,” by Ernest Heminghay. It begins “He was an old man who lived alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four years now without taking a wife” (9). When readers compare this spoof to Hemingway’s seminal and rhythmic first sentence of the Pulitzer winner— “He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish” – they will respect Estrada’s powers too.

Elder’s study also supports Hemingway’s continued worldwide reach. Cartoonists and graphic artists from many countries are fascinated with Hemingway’s stories and his persona, but artists in Italy, in particular, adore the author. “Since 1987, the comic digest *Topolino* (Mickey Mouse’s name in Italy) has published more than 10 stories that feature Hemingway as a character or are based on one of the author’s stories” (59). In addition, Frenchman Thierry Murat expounds on *The Old Man and the Sea* with his French-language graphic novel *Le Vieil Homme et La Mer*, and Argentinian illustrator Ricardo Heredia depicts Hemingway boxing against writer Julio Cortázar in the newspaper *La Gaceta*.

Hemingway in Comics proves, again, that Ernest Hemingway is a larger-than-life pop culture icon and author who is still very relevant. Scholars and professors can use *Hemingway in Comics* to illuminate his works (and his persona) to tell the Ernest Hemingway story in an atypical manner.

Mark B. Hamilton. *OYO: The Beautiful River*. Brunswick, ME: Shanti Arts, 2020. 75p.

JEFFERY MOSER

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN COLORADO and
AIMS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

First presented as a chapbook and a finalist for the Washington Prize in 2015, Mark Hamilton's environmental narrative, *OYO: The Beautiful River* was recently issued in October 2020 by Shanti Arts.

"OYO" and "O-Yo" are variant English names for the Ohio River and have their origins from the Iroquois "O-Y-O," meaning "the great river." When seventeenth-century French fur trader and explorer La Salle came upon the river in 1669, he called it *la belle rivière* or "the beautiful river."

Hamilton's narrative traverses the Ohio's beauty, natural scenic wonders, and its cultural and commercial impact to the nation. The anthology is based on his own solo personal experience navigating the River in a rowboat from its geographical beginning at the confluence of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers near Pittsburgh, then its northwesterly flow out of Pennsylvania, before heading southwesterly toward the Mississippi River. Its 981-mile course eventually ends at Cairo, Illinois.

Congruously, the Ohio's course is steeped in American history and literary lore, for the river first formed the southern border of the Northwest Ordinance of 1787, American's first territorial expansion beyond its original thirteen colonies, and later, as the southern border for the states of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. Cairo is the only choice that Twain's two endearing main characters Huck Finn and Jim have in traveling south in order to get to a free state and allow Jim to seek further passage on a steamboat up the Ohio River to the North and freedom. Hamilton's anthology capitalizes on this geographic and literary legacy.

As an initial defense of his poetry and the rationale for his singular journey, Hamilton launches his collection with a borrowed translation from Rainer Maria Rilke's *Ninth Elegy*: "Oh, not because happiness *exists*. . . . But because *truly* here is so much' because everything here apparently needs us, this fleeting world, which in some small way keeps calling to Us, the most fleeting of all." This informal

foreword is inspiring because it puts the reader on par with the poet as a special invitation to join in this rare navigational feat. What follows are over fifty poems, some short and some long, that relate the poet's experience with a River that is "strange" (9), "folds and contorts, pulls down and boils up" (11), and makes the rower "buck and shudder in the chilling spray / exhilarated by a rogue wave whooshing beneath / with its warning: 'Stay relaxed. Stay in rhythm / with the weather'" (13).

Readers become emotionally attached to the poet and the sights, sounds, and drama of his adventure, divided into two sections called "Spring" and "Summer," and no less engaging than Lord Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. It is as informative and reflective about nature and humans' duty to the environment as any number of books by American naturalist and survivalist Tom Brown, Jr. In his little dory, named *Pelican*, Hamilton glides between "pillars of crafted stone" (13) and "hidden voice" (15), encountering cities, factories, locks, dams, buoys, sandbars, islands, river towns, beaches, creeks, wooded banks, barges, first-timers and old-timers fishing, swimmers, tourists, trash, tangled branches, hundreds of other natural and unnatural objects, fish, insects, birds, wildlife, diverse weather, conflicts, dangers, pleasantries, and even a floating corpse. "It's too incredible to be real. But the legs, the bulbous heel, / the creases of skin at the arch, my eyes widening into a body / with arms outstretched, feet tapping sadly in the driftwood. / I should report it" (51).

Hamilton's poetry moves like the poet-oarsman himself, at times reflective when he is "moving on reflections to an early morning breeze" that makes him feel "good to sweat and row" (53), and another day when he departs and river experts advise "Stay safe" (32). Readers cannot help but be moved and cling to the poet and his words, hoping that he protects himself and his silent passenger, the reader: "Downriver, the up-city of Cincinnati collides into wakes, / builds up and topples over with powerboats on washboard / poundings as I jab at the jagged yellow waves adjusting / each stroke to changing depths" (32).

Days and pages later in another poem, the poet-rower recounts his observations from halfway down Diamond Island, ten miles west of Henderson, Kentucky: "My hands hold pain in crescent finger bones / scavenging like crabs melted into flesh around the oars / but strengthen past pain with the lengthening of wake / —a seepy-eyed sunrise running fast in daggered light, the source of all my red silence"

(63). In this way, Hamilton's collection holds the interest of readers by reporting, teaching, and entertaining.

This poetry is spellbound because it is deeply disturbing and moving, like points along the Ohio River and the river itself, and like the poet's intimate reflections on the river's past, present, and uncertain future. In one poem near the end of the collection, titled "Last One Through," Hamilton reports on going through the locks at Old Dam 52, and hints at a larger theme and purpose for his work. His personal account is meant to exceed beyond the altering depth and width of the Ohio in order to seek, investigate, and sustain the worthiness of poetry in our contemporary musings. For in this way, all of us might come to know the importance of poetry in a time of crisis:

I'm stepped down
awash in the friendly
hound dog pace
toward Fort Massac
where Lewis and Clark
recruited men, all able
and hearty, willing to imagine
a difference by the going.

....

If only history were that pliable. (69)

Thus, Hamilton's poetry is a specialist's guide for living with literature as necessary and soulful company in our journey. In "A Levee Town," his lyrics serve as a most intimate and trusted voice of direction and hope:

When I return to the dory, there's a paper sack
full of fresh tomatoes. Just as you think you know,
the answer finds you out.
I sweep into the easy arms of a mile-wide river,
a pack of dogs jogging along on the gun metal beach
beneath the broad shoulders of a power station.
The map shows a navigable depth, so I line up
parallel to the old dam's guide wall, rowing for steerage. (70)

Elisabeth Kendall and Yehia A. Mohamed. *Diplomacy Arabic: An Essential Vocabulary*. Georgetown UP, 2020. 96p.

MOULOUD SIBER

MOULOUD MAMMERI UNIVERSITY OF TIZI-OUZOU

An Arabic-English dictionary, *Diplomatic Arabic: An Essential Vocabulary* encompasses most of the specific vocabulary used in diplomatic communication. Each entry begins with Arabic followed by its English translation. In their introduction, the authors acknowledge the growing, even urgent, need for publishing this type of material and follow it with a brief overview of its ten chapters, which are “internally ordered according to semantic field”(1).

The first chapter, labeled “General,” introduces a list of the principal vocabulary used in diplomacy. Some of these include diplomacy, the international order, principle/ doctrine, colonialism, Arab World, The Middle East. This general listing continues in “Concepts and Practices,” which is mostly theoretical. It deals with terminology commonly used in political science and philosophy: populism, neo-liberalism, Marxism, racism, utopianism, and others. The authors return to these chapters by dividing the words and expressions among the following chapters based on their lexical fields.

“Diplomatic Service and Protocol” breaks away from theory and enumerates terminology mostly connected to diplomatic practice like diplomatic corps, ambassador, chief of protocol, form of address, diplomatic invitation. The “Organizations” chapter lists lexis endemic to inter/national and regional diplomatic organizations and entities and includes generic words like institution, organ, agency. As well, there are more specific terms like United Nations Organization, World Bank, United Nations Children’s Fund, Amnesty International, European Union.

The fifth chapter is devoted to vocabulary that connects diplomacy to “Elections and Government”. It embodies a list of terms and phrases pertaining to government and the electoral process, including election, referendum, candidate, absolute majority,

Parliament. This chapter mostly relates to internal political affairs of countries. The sixth, however, is directly linked to a major objective of diplomacy, namely holding “Negotiations” among countries. It includes an informed list of words and expressions that describe negotiation as a major practice in diplomacy. Among these are negotiations, building consensus, consultation, mediation.

“Treaties and Agreements” is allocated to the end-result of negotiations, namely reaching agreements and signing treaties and includes: agreement/ treaty, declaration, commercial treaty, Free Trade Agreement, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Geneva Convention. The seventh chapter, “Conflict Resolution and Defense,” deals with another result of the diplomatic practice related to implementing peace within and among conflicting countries. It begins with the semantic of field of conflict with vocabulary like armed conflict, war crime, genocide, prisoner of war and moves to terms associated with their resolution like conflict mediation, dispute settlement, disarmament/ demilitarization, peace keeping forces and so on.

The last two, “Civil Society and Human Rights” and “Globalization and Economic Development” embody vocabulary related to a world where people enjoy fundamental human rights and economic prosperity or suffer the absence thereof. The lexis of the former is related to standards of civility and human rights like civil society, non-profit, volunteerism, human rights, United Nations Human Rights Programme, in contrast to their opposites, like human rights violations and crimes against humanity. “Globalization and Economic Development” includes globalization, global village, free market economy and their counter-parts like anti-globalization, cultural relativism along with words that describe world economic growth. At the end of *Diplomacy Arabic*, the authors include an Index in English of most of the entries to facilitate its use.

The ten chapters offer an exhaustive list of words and expressions commonly used in diplomacy. The audience is not limited

to people who work in this area and “students [and scholars] of international affairs” (1). Reporters, human rights activists, business people, and others, whose practices are closely connected to the Arab-speaking world, can also use it. Since the entries start with Arabic and the Index is in English, Diplomacy Arabic is accessible to both English speakers using or learning Arabic and Arabic speakers using or learning English. It is devoted to communication contexts where relations are negotiated and agreements are reached, so it can help its users to avoid getting “lost in translation”.

David Lawton, editor. *The Norton Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales*. Norton, 2020. 627p.

PETER FIELDS

MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

David Lawton’s Norton edition of *The Canterbury Tales* is the ideal teaching choice for Chaucer. Once upon a time, I required my students to use the scholarly *Riverside Chaucer* whose explication was always the most masterful: e.g., tracking the Wife of Bath’s Prologue line by line with Jerome’s *Against Jovinian* (yes, to die for). Then my evolution took me to Kolve and Olson’s Norton edition of *Fifteen Tales* and *General Prologue*. However, after perusing Lawton’s edition (distilled from his 2019 complete Norton Chaucer), I am ready to evolve again if only so I can include as much of “The Parson’s Tale” as possible. Of course, Kolve and Olson were way ahead of me. They added more of “The Parson’s Tale” along with “The Man of Law’s Tale” to give us the Norton *Seventeen Tales* (2018). However, Lawton’s subtle (but powerful) point of view has converted me to his conviction: if we are reading stories *with* Chaucer, then we need not less but more of Chaucer to understand his interest in these texts.

Everything in the introduction serves dual purposes: not only

an overview of Chaucer's life and times but also an implicit overview of *The Canterbury Tales*, offering themes to which Lawton will return in the prefaces (and footnotes) for the 10 parts of the *Tales*. The genius of these recurring themes is to help us appreciate the value of lesser-known tales and make a case for them. Who are the big winners in these sweepstakes? For me, I was especially taken with "The Second Nun's Prologue and Tale," which incorporates (not unlike "The Prioress's Prologue and Tale") Marianism from St. Bernard and Dante's *Paradiso*, and adds to it explication of St. Cecilia's name. The Second Nun manages to resist the blood libel of the Prioress but still deliver on a devotional spirituality jarringly steeped in violence (something Lawton also notes in "The Man of Law's Tale"). Here we find a religious eroticism just a little longer (but more adult) than the Prioress's fetish for infantile simplicity at a mother's breast. The fetish for the Second Nun centers on a jealous angel's possession of Cecilia's body. Male converts to her cult enter a kind of mystic multiple marriage, tantalized by an immersive sensorium of sights, sounds, and scents unavailable to the non-believer.

Another big winner is "The Monk's Tale," not only the brief sections on Samson, Hercules, Nebuchadnezzar, and Belshazzar, but also the longer account of Zenobia, which could have been a roller-coaster of a tale all by itself. The sections on Nero, Julius Caesar, and Croesus are thumbnail portraits of graphic violence. If students have patiently absorbed "The General Prologue" and "The Knight's Tale," the monk's compendium of tragic celebrity will feel like a gothic romp. These thumbnail portraits in violent shock-and-awe complement, and set off, the more philosophical inclinations of "The Wife of Bath" and "The Nun's Priest." The sense of guilty excess in all the stories leads nicely to perhaps the biggest winner in Lawton, "The Parson's Tale": "The tension between play and penance, which runs though *The Canterbury Tales* from the opening of the General Prologue, here reaches the point of climatic rupture" (500). The Parson's penitential discourse is delightfully spiced with vivid strokes of grotesque description like the "superfluitee of clothing" which the wearer unwittingly soils, "trailing in the dong and in the mire" (lines 20-21; p. 524) versus the "horrible disordinate scantnesse of clothing" (32: p. 524), best illustrated by overly-revealing male hose that "shewen the shap and the boce of hir [their] horrible swollen membres" (36-7; p. 524). Lawton keeps pace,

confirming we heard the Pardoner correctly.

To be sure, Lawton is faithful to Chaucer's sources, the most frequent of which seems to be the *Roman de la rose*. Lawton, in fact, closely monitors Chaucer's reading of a text, flagging it for recurring motifs (e.g., like sexual assault), reminding us of controversies about Chaucer (including documented but sometimes contradictory rape charges). Notable, for instance, is when Chaucer's translation veers off, pointedly departing from his source, as when he graciously gives the female rape victim in "The Tale of Melibee" a name—Sophie (for wisdom)—and then amplifies expressions of contrition and sincere repentance on the part of the perpetrators. Reading with Lawton's Chaucer acquaints us with a translator who may be seeking redemption.

Rafael Malpartida Tirado. *Recepción y canon de la literatura española en el cine*. Editorial Síntesis, 2018, pp. 204.

JUAN GARCÍA-CARDONA

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS

La relación entre literatura y cine se ha visto tradicionalmente asociada a una superioridad artística de la primera frente a la segunda. Estas diferencias se traducen en una disparidad en la historia de la recepción y la concepción del canon del texto literario y del filmico, cuestión sobre la que orbita la presente recopilación de artículos dividida en cuatro áreas temáticas. Durante la primera parte, Malpartida Tirado reflexiona sobre los principales conceptos relevantes a la recepción y el canon, además de plantear preguntas que, lejos del academicismo filosófico y pomposo que en ocasiones caracteriza este medio, proponen dilemas accesibles a cualquier investigador —incluso no especializado en la materia. En los últimos párrafos, resume uno de los principales preceptos por los que se guía en la construcción del monográfico: “en relación con la idea de un canon de adaptaciones, tasar méritos y deméritos en cada caso particular, sin partir *a priori* de lo que pueden o no conseguir la literatura y el cine, tal vez deba constituir nuestro principal objetivo” (50).

La segunda área está dedica a la narrativa, y consta de tres artículos. Morillo Herrero parangona en su trabajo el subgénero de

la ciencia ficción apocalíptica en el ámbito fílmico y en el literario mediante la recepción de la “crítica popular” y, además, abanderada una reivindicación del género apocalíptico mediante los ejemplos de dos adaptaciones al celuloide: *Fin y Extinction*. Sorprende la elocuencia de esta crítica, que, lejos de conformar opiniones pobres y superficiales, enriquecen el trabajo con argumentos lúcidos. El segundo artículo se centra en la recepción de la novela *La pasión turca* (Antonio Gala) y de su adaptación al terreno fílmico (Vicente Aranda), para la que toma como perspectiva la transposición del erotismo de un medio a otro y hace uso de la “crítica popular”. A lo largo de este, Herrera Moreno reflexiona sobre las convenciones de ambos medios e indaga en las limitaciones de un arte respecto al otro en una suerte de obstáculos que el director debe sobrepasar. Por último, Cuéllar Alejandro aborda la dirección contraria en el proceso de adaptación: del cine a la literatura. Para ello, utiliza la novela *Alaric de Marnac*, obra de Jacinto Molina —bajo su seudónimo actoral Paul Naschy— basada en algunas películas de su época dorada como guionista y actor. Frente a esta concepción de un arte superior al otro, Cuéllar Alejandro plantea ambas actividades como complementarias.

La tercera parte pone en la mesa las relaciones y las dificultades entre el cine y el teatro. Pérez Rubio lleva a cabo una labor de contextualización extremadamente exhaustiva de las adaptaciones teatrales durante la transición, basada en un equilibrio idóneo de marco histórico y movimiento artístico, sin llegar a convertirlo en una crónica historiográfica. Sin embargo, la cantidad torrencial de autores que se enumera, entre ellos escritores, directores, actores, y críticos de prensa, dificulta en ocasiones el proceso de lectura del texto. En el trabajo posterior, España Arjona traza un recorrido desde una perspectiva canónica de la dramaturgia de Lope de Vega, para lo que toma como foco las consecuencias en la recepción y las ventas de *El perro del hortelano* tras su adaptación cinematográfica (Pilar Miró, 1996); no obstante, se muestra cauteloso al hablar de estos datos, y señala la necesidad de estudiar otros factores que pudieran contribuir al incremento en la demanda literaria. Por último, reflexiona acerca de la utilización de esta comedia como material pedagógico en la educación secundaria desde un prisma tardocapitalista.

La última parte contempla relación entre poesía y cinematografía. Bagué Quílez analiza los trasvases en ambas direcciones: la aportación

de la poesía al cine y viceversa. El artículo gira sobre la “poética de la adicción”, y para su desarrollo estudia la obra de los poetas Aníbal Núñez y Javier Egea, además del filme *Arrebato* de Iván Zulueta (1979). La disposición de la crítica es todo un acierto: se resume el número de días en cartel, la taquilla, y las críticas que recibió *Arrebato*, además de su trayecto en salas y en festivales de cine. Para finalizar, Quesada Sánchez trata el mito de los Panero a través de *El desencanto* y *Después de tantos años*, filmes protagonizados por los miembros de esta familia. El investigador plantea la siguiente pregunta: “¿se modifica el canon con el que hemos apreciado vidas y obras de los Panero, tras sus intervenciones cinematográficas?” (185). La estructura se divide principalmente en la familia Panero antes y después del cine, caracterizada por una abundante —y en algunos casos excesiva— aportación biográfica de cada uno de los miembros.

El monográfico coordinado por Malpartida Tirado contribuye de forma notable al estudio de los trasvases entre literatura y cine, además de abarcar la adaptación cinematográfica, donde la relación de desigualdad entre ambos campos artísticos se aprecia más expresamente. Al valorar o estudiar la obra literaria y la adaptada, generalmente se observa en su recepción y crítica una prevalencia cualitativa del texto original, que se ve sometido a un proceso de devaluación que culmina en el producto filmico. Ya desde la presentación se aclara la perspectiva desde la que se aborda esta cuestión, la obra original se categoriza como un “venero de ideas” para su adaptación: “literatura y cine se nutren mutuamente en la historia de su recepción” (11). La presente compilación incluye una serie de artículos que bien indagan y profundizan en tales conceptos, o bien se centran en el análisis de obras concretas, y adopta unas bases innovadoras que con seguridad quedarán arraigadas en el estudio de literatura y cine, y de ambos combinados.

Paul Manfredi and Christopher Lupke, editors. *Chinese Poetic Modernisms*. Leiden: Brill, 2019. 403p.

C. T. AU

THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

There is a saying that a good book has no ending, and *Chinese Poetic Modernisms* definitely falls under this category. This long-awaited ambitious project undertakes “the daunting task of examining Chinese poetic modernisms in different periods and locales” (7). Most of those ambitions are, in the end, fulfilled.

The concept of Chinese modernisms has long been indistinctly present. In books focusing on modern Chinese literature, more often than not Taiwanese modernism, Hong Kong modernism, and Macanese modernism are treated separately from that of mainland China. The editors pledge to bring the concept to light through fourteen essays, divided into four sections that help delineate varied trajectories of modernist poetic trends.

By following the book’s logical structure, readers first become familiar with the major features of Chinese modernism that emerged mainly during the republican period. For example, Lan Dizhi’s essay provides a comprehensive overview of the development of Chinese modernist poetry. The discussion revolves around the literary arts journal *Xiandai*, tracing its roots back to Li Jinfa and his contemporaries in the 1920s and tracking the trend’s evolution through the 1940s (the Nine Leaves school, *Jiuyepai*) and identifying modernist characteristics such as “anti-lyricism,” “anti-improvisation,” and “anti-logical” (29). Modernist poets were eager to “advocate ‘modern feeling’ and ‘pure poetry’” (32). Lan sheds light on two more characteristics embedded in Chinese modernisms from the outset. For one thing, modernist poets were under the influence of various Western sources, though in a complicated manner; for another, classical Chinese poetry played a significant role in their works. Contributors explore these intricate relationships. To name only a few Western influences: Li Jinfa was influenced by French Symbolism, Dai Wangshu by Spanish modernism (Lan 21-37), Feng Zhi by Rainer Maria Rilke (Geraldine Fiss 38-56), Yuan Kejia by T. S. Eliot (Yanhong Zhu 57-81), and Wen Yiduo’s little poems by Shakespearean sonnets (Dian Li 82-106). Lan concludes that, as far as “acquisition of literary elements from both Chinese and

Western traditions” is concerned, these poets adopted a comparative literature approach which allowed them to absorb “the strengths and carefully eschewing the weaknesses of each tradition” (37). Lan’s views, to various extents, are echoed by other contributors, not only in this section, but also elsewhere in the book.

Expanding upon the apparent comprehensiveness of Lan’s account of the first and third moments, the emergence of the *Xiandai* modernist group and the Nine Leaves school, Michelle Yeh’s, Chen Fangming’s (132-52), and Ruan Meihui’s (153-80) discussions widen the geographic range and time frame, focusing on, but not limited to, postwar Taiwanese modernist poetry. Yeh identifies “six distinct moments when modernism is embraced as a literary paradigm” (108). While the formation of Le Moulin Poetry Society (Fengche Shishe) (1935-1936), which advocated Surrealism, is considered the second moment of modernism, the Modernist school (Xiandaipai) and the Epoch Poetry Society (Chuangshiji Shishe) arose in the 1950s as the fourth moment. Ruan’s and Chen’s essays, respectively, help elaborate these two moments. The fifth moment refers to the Modernist movement in Hong Kong in 1956, when Ma Lang published the journal *Wenyi Xincbao* (*New Trends in Literature and Arts*). Finally, the modernist poetry that emerged in post-Mao China is considered the sixth moment. Interestingly enough, Yeh’s major concern does not lie in any one of these moments. By examining Xia Yu’s poetry, Yeh seems to imply that there is one more moment—a seventh—in Chinese modernisms, which suggests that modernism is still an active force from the 1980s onward in Taiwan (111).

At the outset, Chinese modernisms are an outgrowth of comparative studies. The fact that Dai Wangshu had translated Paul Van Tieghem’s *On Comparative Literature* (1931) reminds us of the significance of the mutual relationships of different literatures. To varying degrees, most contributors in sections 1 and 2 have embraced the concept of “influence study.” The emphasis in section 3, however, lies elsewhere; factual connection between literatures is no longer the focal point. Contributors are more interested in parallels in themes or linguistic possibilities: exile (Nikky Lin 181-208), national myth (Christopher Lupke 209-34), and measure words (Lisa Lai-ming Wong 235-60). Lupke’s essay in particular draws the reader’s attention to “one of the conundrums of modern Chinese literary studies” (207), which

exhibits an uncanny resemblance to the crux of comparative literature in the 1950s—to compare or not to compare? Lupke identifies a similar predicament (suffering from national identity crisis, for instance) that William Butler Yeats, Wu Xinghua, Luo Fu, and Xiao Kaiyu share with each other. These poets, despite their different backgrounds, all resorted to their traditions—myths, legends, and history—for writing inspiration. The research methodologies employed by Lupke, in fact, echo those of a parallel study advocated by comparatist Henry H. H. Remak in the 1960s, and resonate with Susan Bassnett’s innovative approach of “comparing the literatures of the British Isles.” Contributors in section 4, however, enhance the research strategy of parallel study to a further extent.

Four contributors in section 4 help delineate the sixth moment—the post-Mao era. To follow the thread of a series of discussions on Chinese modernisms, contributors explore new territory in this last section. These four papers, simply put, are dedicated to examine the interdisciplinary relationships between literature and computational studies (Nick Admussen 261-82), media (Jacob Edmond 283-303), architecture (Lucas Klein 304-35), and painting (Paul Manfredi 336-64). Issues in relation to Chinese modernisms are addressed to varying degrees: location, singularity or plurality of the concept of Chinese modernism(s), medium, and a list of binary oppositions, namely, “tradition/modernity, local/foreign, modernist/realist, ‘pure art’ didactic or functional art” (337). Manfredi perceives that we are trapped in an infinite loop of binary oppositions as far as the discussion of modernisms in China is concerned. He proposes to focus on abstract art (abstract expressionism), which has its root in both Chinese and Western cultures stretching from ancient times to the modern era. By using poet-artists such as Xu Demin and Yang Xiaobin and their literary works as well as virtual arts as examples, Manfredi argues most cogently for a paradigm shift of Chinese modernism(s). However, not without self-contradiction, he reflects upon the proposed new paradigm at the end of his essay (and the volume) by questioning to what extent modernist poetry can eschew reality.

A good book should not only be informative, but also thought provoking. For example, the discussions in both sections 1 and 2 lead readers to ask questions regarding Hong Kong modernism and Macanese modernism. Section 3 helps develop a research question

directly inspired by a comparative literature approach: is there such a thing as comparative Chinese modernisms? A follow-up question would be: what are the differences and similarities between Chinese modernism (during the republican period and post-Mao era), Taiwanese modernism (under Japanese occupation, in the 1950s and 1960s, and from the late 1970s onward), Hong Kong modernism (from the 1950s onward), and Macanese modernism (in the late 1980s and early 1990s)? Finally, the last section suggests we situate Chinese modernisms within a global context. The following legitimate questions therefore arise: What are (Western) modernisms? What are the similarities and differences between them? As mentioned at the beginning of this review—a good book has no ending—and I look forward to the next volume and more to come.

Armando Palacio Valdés. *La alegría del capitán Ribot* (1899). Tomo XI. Madrid: Librería general de Victoriano Suárez, 1920. Project Gutenberg Open Access. [Invited retrospective review essay].

GUSTAVO PÉREZ FIRMAT
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

More than a Hispanist's "bucket list," this commentary is a "book shelf" list, since my bucket contains books. Not the ones I'd like to read or write, but those I'd like to write about. Now in the *tercera edad* of my academic life, I've been writing about books or authors whose company I have prized, that I have read over and over, but that have not been relevant to my research or my teaching. Writing about them is a way of memorializing our acquaintance, tying the knot of readerly affection. The list is not long, mostly limited to works generally within my competence, modern Spanish or Spanish American literature, and many of my favorites fall outside this field. So far, I've taken about half a dozen items out of the bucket. I have a few more left. Next up is *La alegría del capitán Ribot* (1899), one of Armando Palacio Valdés's most widely read novels, whose popularity lead to its prompt appearance in English the next year and century as *The Joy of Captain Ribot* (1900).

I acknowledge that my temperament makes my task a bit harder. In literature, as in life, I shy away from complexity, ambiguity, tension, suspense – some of the features of literary works that give

scholars pasture to feed on. Instead, I favor intelligent sentimentality. To Unamuno's *El Cristo de Velázquez*, I prefer his *Teresa*. To Neruda's "Alturas de Machu Picchu," I prefer "Poema 20." One of the Cuban poets formerly in my bucket, José Ángel Buesa, was said to write for cooks and chauffeurs. Another, Dulce María Loynaz, likened her poems to ripples of water glinting in the moonlight. When it comes to fiction, my inclinations run along the same soft lines: Pereda, not Pérez Galdós; Valera, not Pardo Bazán. And Palacio Valdés. The Victorian novelist Wilkie Collins's recipe for writing fiction was simple: Make them laugh, make them cry, make them wait. I would add a fourth imperative: Make me happy. My poets and novelists do. Some will conclude that my bucket is full of treacle. Sure, but their treacle is my treat.

If I am to trust my gap-stricken journals, I first read *La alegría del capitán Ribot* in the summer of 2010 while on vacation in Duck, a resort town on the outer banks of North Carolina. That was a difficult summer, and Palacio Valdés helped me get through it. Since then I've reread it many times. I'm not sure how many because recently I've been reading it on Kindle and my highlights are not dated (or if they are, I don't know how to locate them). With every reading, the Captain's *alegría* rubs off on me once again. Some of Palacio Valdés's novels bear ironic or misleading titles: *El idilio de un enfermo* is hardly an idyll. The title of *La alegría del capitán Ribot* means what it says.

My problem is this: I love this novel, I want to record my gratitude to its author, but I don't know what to say about it. Not because it has been the object of abundant critical commentary, it hasn't. Like much of Palacio Valdés's fiction, *La alegría del capitán Ribot* is viewed with gentle condescension. Some scholars have labelled it a *novela rosa*, the kiss of death for serious fiction. A few years ago, I wrote about another of his rose-scented works in my bucket, *Sinfonía pastoral* (1931). Written in his late seventies, no one had ever taken it seriously, an incentive for me to do so. I would like to do the same with *La alegría del capitán Ribot*. My rule of thumb: If I like it, it can't be all bad.

For *Sinfonía pastoral*, published at the turbulent dawn of Spain's Second Republic, I had an obvious hook: untimeliness. With the help of Edward Said, my hook was an instance of what he calls "late style," following Adorno. This is what I'm missing for *La alegría del capitán Ribot*, a hook, a bright idea. In the past, the bright idea has usually

preceded the impulse to write. For the most part, I've written about literary works that I found interesting because I had interesting things to say about them. Initially they were books or authors I read in college or graduate school. Later, books or authors I assigned for my courses. Since I began my career as a peninsularist, I ended up writing about Zorrilla, Valle Inclán, Laforet, Martín Santos. Sometimes one text led to another, as did the insights. Except when I've written about popular music or TV shows, the insight always came first. Lately, as I've been crossing items off my list, it's been the other way around. So far, so good. But *La alegría del capitán Ribot* has me stumped. I'm like a student who is assigned an essay and doesn't know what to say. What does he do? He resorts to plot summary.

No sooner has Julián Ribot, the protagonist and narrator, docked his merchant steamer in Gijón than his thoughts turn to *callos*, his favorite dish, an insuperable version of which is served in a dock-side establishment. As he is about to leave the ship, a fire breaks out on board. The fire extinguished, he finally sits down before a steaming, aromatic plate of tripe. Just then, he hears screams for help. He rushes out and discovers a large, elderly woman flailing in the water. He jumps in and pulls her out. No tripe for him, but as compensation he meets the woman's daughter, Cristina, who can't thank him enough.

You can guess what happens next: Ribot falls in love with Cristina, who hints by her behavior that she is not indifferent to him. The difficulty: not only is she married, but he and Cristina's husband, Martí, have become fast friends. His loyalty to Martí takes precedence over his love for Cristina and Ribot sets out to sea again. Meanwhile, Martí's unscrupulous business partner is leading Martí to ruin so that he can blackmail Cristina into having an affair. She ignores the threats, so the coffeehouse Darwinist desists. After Martí passes away from consumption, Ribot comes to the rescue again, this time paying off Cristina's debts. But the story doesn't end the way one might expect: the handsome ship's captain and the young attractive widow don't marry. They live happily ever after, but only as celibate friends. Ribot's *alegría* arises from remaining near Cristina without dishonoring the memory of her late husband.

This summary makes me wonder why I like the novel so much. It's not the plot, with its hackneyed twists and turns, but Ribot's voice, its genial warmth, which my summary fails to capture. No matter. To

write-off the novel, I have to come up with something substantial to say, so I've been doing what critics do: spending several weeks reading everything I can about and around it. I've unearthed a few small nuggets. The first one I found in the prologue to the English translation, where Sylvester Baxter quotes a personal letter from Palacio Valdés in which the Spaniard asserts that it is "a protest from the depths against the eternal adultery of the French novel." This makes sense. Before her husband's death, Cristina resists the advances of both potential lovers. After his death, she persuades Ribot that their marriage would encourage others to conclude that they had been lovers during her husband's lifetime.

Palacio Valdés's statement is not surprising, for in the prologue to the first edition of *La hermana San Sulpicio* (1889), he had already expressed his aversion to adultery in novels apropos of the French naturalists and their Spanish imitators. It may be that critics have not noticed his intention in *La alegría del capitán Ribot* because, whatever he may declare elsewhere, his works are rife with scenes or suggestions of adultery. He inveighs against a literary cliché that he did not hesitate to employ. The paradox is intriguing, and it's plausible to look upon *La alegría del capitán Ribot* as the anti-adultery novel that closes a century full of adultery novels, but I don't see how to hang on this hook anything other than the sentences I've just written.

As I was going through the plots—yes, I confess I relied on summaries (don't you?)—I got another inkling of an idea. I noticed that the plot of *El señorito Octavio*, Palacio Valdés's debut novel, anticipates that of *La alegría del capitán Ribot*. Both feature two suitors—one noble, one ignoble—who compete for the favors of a married woman. In the earlier work, the result is a truculent denouement, while in the later one virtue wins out. For his *Obras completas* of 1896, he extensively revised *El señorito Octavio*, excising about a fourth of it and rewriting the remaining sections—the only work in the collection to which he made such major changes. This suggested that in the couple of years leading up to *La alegría del capitán Ribot*, the two-lover plot had been on his mind. Hoping that I was onto something, I read *La alegría del capitán Ribot* yet again.

Since I didn't have access to a library (the pandemia effect), I bought a used copy of volume 12 of the 1923 *Obras completas* on the web that had belonged to the Marymount College library. Inside the

back cover, the sleeve with a pink library card contained the names of the eight students (rather, seven, since one name appears twice) who had checked it out before the library began using barcodes, a malign invention that destroys the experience of community with identifiable people. Fortunately, even without names, used books preserve the tracks of previous readers in telephone numbers, addresses, class schedules, a note on the margin that says, “irony!” No less personalizing are the underlinings and highlights, especially when they occur where least expected. What made this particular reader stop at what seems a flyover passage? Highlighting is a minor genre of autobiography. Show me your highlights and I’ll tell you who you are. Most revealing, however, is when a former reader, my *semblable* in literary tastes, has forgotten something between the pages: a ticket stub, a coffee-stained index card, a black-and-white photograph. Then I feel like a paleontologist who reconstructs a dinosaur from a piece of bone.

As it happened, my copy of *La alegría del capitán Ribot* contained none of these: no names, marginalia, underlinings, slips of paper. The only marks were a pair of wavy blue lines, flourish-like, made by a flair or fountain pen. The first occurred at the end of chapter XI, the other at the end of XIV. When I saw the first one, I thought it was inadvertent. Taking notes, someone ran the nub of the pen across the bottom of the last page of the chapter. But when I came upon the other one, I began to think that the flourishes meant something. Chapter XI ends with Ribot’s mistaken belief that Cristina and Martí’s business partner are lovers; chapter XIV, with Martí’s mistaken belief that Ribot and Cristina are lovers. Maybe the reader who made the flourishes (I couldn’t match the ink to that of any of the names on the library card) was pointing me in a fruitful direction, since in *El señorito Octavio* the husband makes a similar error, but with catastrophic consequences (he kills his wife, mistakes the wrong man for her lover, and kills him too).

I could argue, then, that *La alegría del capitán Ribot* represents the definitive rewriting of the earlier novel. Unhappy with *El señorito Octavio* even after extensive revisions, Palacio Valdés took the same plot idea and developed it differently. To flesh out this insight I would need to read *El señorito Octavio*, which I am not keen on doing (especially now that I know how the novel ends), even though I have an old Niagara University Library copy that I also purchased on the web. In addition,

I'd have to look further into how Palacio Valdés's religious convictions (a lifelong free-thinker, he converted to Catholicism in the late 1890s) inflected his later fiction. Even if I forced myself to do the necessary spadework, the result would be an essay about how an author rewrites himself, not the most original of conceptions. In fact, this was my take on *Sinfonía pastoral*: the novel as an untimely rewriting of *El idilio de un enfermo*. Then I would also be rewriting myself, something that I am even less interested in doing.

I thought to try one last thing. Ever since a professor wrote on one of my term papers, "too much quotation, too little exegesis," I've been a guilt-ridden quoter, but I will disable my conscience for the moment and reproduce the opening paragraph of the novel:

En Málaga no los guisan mal; en Vigo, todavía mejor; en Bilbao los he comido en más de una ocasión primorosamente aliñados. Pero nada tienen que ver estos ni otros que me han servido en los diferentes puntos donde suelo hacer escala con los que guisa la señora Ramona en cierta tienda de vinos y comidas llamada "El Cometa," situada en el muelle de Gijón. Por eso cuando esta inteligentísima mujer averigua que el "Urano" ha entrado en el puerto, ya está preparando sus cacerolas para recibirme. Suelo ir solo por la noche, como un ser egoísta y voluptuoso que soy; me ponen la mesa en un rincón de la trastienda, y allí, a mis anchas, gozo placeres inefables y he pillado más de una indigestión.

Ribot stirs the reader's interest by not naming his favorite dish. After teasing us with a string of pronouns (*los, los, estos, otros, los*), Ribot has the dish materialize as the mysterious delicacy inside señora Ramona's pans, which will produce delight and dyspepsia. It's not until the end of the next paragraph, when he describes being diverted by the fire, that the enigma is solved. Deferral works on two levels: just as Ribot has to postpone indulging his appetite for tripe, the reader has to wait to discover the name of the dish. Make them wait, said Wilkie Collins, and Palacio Valdés does. What makes this more than a clever trick is that the motif of deferral recurs throughout the novel. Not only does Cristina put off her suitors, but her husband's business schemes (among them, making artificial rocks) do not come to fruition. The

culminating instance appears at the end: the nuptials that the reader anticipates, and that the conventions of the form require, are put on hold forever.

This is my best idea so far, but if it has legs, I'm not sharp-eyed enough to see them. It's possible that I could read up on narratology (groan) and stretch the insight about deferral into a 5000-word essay. In a different time and place, I probably would have done so. I suspect, however, that the short-form version I've just given already contains what would be valuable in such an essay. I've now mined all of my nuggets without coming up with one to whose elaboration I'm willing to devote weeks or months. Instead of a knot of readerly affection, all I have are loose ends.

O Captain, my Captain. It seems that my desire for consummation, like yours, will go unsatisfied. But unlike you, I'm not in the mood to compose an ode to joy about it. This makes me wonder whether your joy is as genuine as it seems. You admit that you are "egotistical and voluptuous." Would someone like you behave like you? Sybarite to saint? A new idea occurs to me: maybe you're *not* happy at all, maybe the novel is twice a fiction. You brag in the last chapter: "Soy el artista de mi dicha." This is supposed to mean that your happiness lies in having acted selflessly. Maybe it really means that you, as the artist of both your *dicha* and your story, have concocted the story of your *dicha*. In truth you are miserable. Every minute in Cristina's company is agony, for your craving for her is incomparably stronger than your craving for *callos*. That's why you pepper your story with the word *alegría* or its variants (97 iterations, according to my Kindle). Who are you trying to convince? You say that you didn't pressure Cristina. Maybe you didn't and maybe you did. But you pressure us. That genial tone of yours, which I like so much, had me fooled. (Wayne Booth, where were you when I needed you?) Had I understood what you were up to, I would not have given you a second look. But then I would have missed all those hours of happiness—however illusive.

I'm reminded that in the first chapter of *Don Quijote*, the mad knight tries on an old suit of armor. Not having a proper helmet, he improvises one from pieces of pasteboard. To test its strength, he smacks it twice with his sword. The helmet falls apart. After putting it back together, he is sane enough not to test it again. Perhaps I should read this incident as a cautionary tale about the books in my bucket.

Continue to enjoy them, but let them be. Better benign neglect than indecent exposure, though if Ribot's *alegría* is indeed feigned, it's only my gullibility that's being exposed. At the same time, I remember Ruskin's great maxim that our work should be the praise of what we love. I believe this, even though I haven't always lived by it, and I'd like to think that to pay attention, to regard, is in itself a form of praise, irrespective of the results. If so, neither the Captain nor his creator have reason to object to my equivocal homage.

Brooke Rollins. *The Ethics of Persuasion: Derrida's Rhetorical Legacies*. Ohio State UP, 2020. 230p.

LEE CHANCEY OLSEN
THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, RENO

In *The Ethics of Persuasion: Derrida's Rhetorical Legacies*, Brooke Rollins reads the classical rhetorical tradition against Jacques Derrida's ethics of otherness, and vice versa, to illustrate that the tradition, while oriented toward persuasive utilitarianism, carries considerable ethical weight and illuminates the transformative capacity of address and response. To put this differently, *Ethics of Persuasion* argues that the rhetorical tradition, often studied for and defined by its instrumentalist aspects, is shot through with ethical implications and imperatives. Also, as Rollins demonstrates, Derrida's ethico-philosophy is "powerfully rhetorical" (2), but not typically considered as such. The book will benefit scholars of rhetoric, pedagogy, ethics, and deconstruction—the last of these has been defined by Derrida, as Rollins notes, "as a turn towards the other" (26)—and it will serve well in graduate seminars on these topics.

Rollins explicates usefully how Derrida's oeuvre extends earlier philosophers and theorists—Emmanuel Levinas's ethics of otherness and J. L. Austin's theories on speech acts and performativity, for example—in its formulation of an aporetic ethics of radical alterity in which subjects are interrupted, disturbed, and altered through encounters with and responses to others. The first chapter elucidates what Rollins calls Derrida's rhetorical ethics; the last chapter analyzes Derrida's eulogistic texts through this ethic-rhetorical lens. The other body chapters illustrate how various Derridean concepts—alterity, vulnerability, immunity, addressability and responsibility, hospitality, hostage, haunting, for example—allow new readings of classical rhetoric. The author examines specifically Gorgias, Lysias,

Isocrates, Plato, and earlier conceptions of persuasion and pedagogy, productively extending important critical, rhetorical, and pedagogical work by Michelle Ballif, Simon Critchley, Diane Davis, David Depew and Takis Poulakos, Debra Hawhee, H. I. Marrou, Natasha Seegert, Victor Vitanza, Jeffrey Walker, Lynn Worsham, and many others.

As will be apparent to readers familiar with the work of Ballif, Critchley, Davis, and others, *Ethics of Persuasion* engages a broader, ongoing effort—sometimes identified as “the ethical turn”—to reclaim critical theory generally, and deconstruction specifically, from accusations of ethico-political detachment, relativism, excessive focus on textuality, and so on, in this case using Derrida to illustrate at once how his work is deeply ethical and how it illuminates the ethical dimensions of the aforementioned rhetoricians. But Rollins also helps to change the narrative by suggesting that other scholars of language have, in their extensive attention to persuasion, overlooked certain ethical, political, and ontological elements in the longer tradition. The author posits that scholars ought to attend more closely to issues of ethics, relationality, alterity, and subjectivity, especially as concerns knowledge production, discourse, and pedagogy because “each contributes to our thinking of what it means to address another [and] the ethical potential that underlies this address” (15).

As a plea for a more ethical approach to persuasion and pedagogy, *The Ethics of Persuasion* feels especially timely, considering several recent disruptions to our collective lives. How many of us planned for a pandemic that would disrupt our lives, classrooms, and pedagogy, and increase our shared precarity? Scholars and instructors of rhetoric and ethics may be most interested in the fourth chapter, “Isocrates’s Promise,” which presents Isocrates—not Plato—as the true predecessor of the contemporary humanities. Rollins argues for a differently articulated legacy for Isocrates, one that incorporates an ethics of alterity, a more nuanced notion of unknowable futures, and a more complex approach to *kairos*. These points seem particularly apt, considering the uncertainties caused by Covid-19, climate change, and ongoing political economic violence worldwide—and considering our ongoing responsibility as scholars and educators to help others prepare for unknowable futures even as the humanities face budget cuts (or “austerity measures”), the ongoing neoliberalization of the academy, and so on.

Extending the Isocratic tradition, Rollins champions a powerfully ethical, diverse, and self-validating vision of the humanities

that defies the conservative version espoused by, among others, William J. Bennett in *The Book of Virtues* (1993)—that is, a reactionary, elitist, xenophobic version that is increasingly incongruent with a rapidly changing world. Rollins calls for a (re)conceptualization of education, again, in the tradition of Isocrates, that sees “learning as the quintessential risk-taking activity,” one premised on self-transforming encounters with alterity. As the author argues, “the purpose of his pedagogical design (precarious though it may be) is to provide a training in and a preparation for this ultimately incalculable experience” (135).

Many readers may be left wanting more real-world connections and analyses—Rollins does note some pertinent real-world issues, such as the resurgence of right-wing, white-supremacist violence in the U.S.—and more ideas on how to implement scholarship and pedagogies that are deeply ethical. Overall, the value of the book lies in its lucid explication of Derrida’s ethics of alterity and its useful (re) readings of classical rhetoric.

Elizabeth Scala. *The Canterbury Tales Handbook*. Norton, 2020. 297p.

PETER FIELDS

MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Elizabeth Scala knows that she does not have the luxury of scale. A handbook becomes a problem if it competes with its subject for the student’s reading time. Her technique is to anticipate a disconnect between Chaucer and the modern reader and then to leap into the breach with a provisional explanation that moves the reader forward. The only slow place is dwelling momentarily on the General Prologue, taking advantage of the first 18 lines to introduce a model for explication. Especially well-done is how Scala seems to take on too much, making a point, for instance, of explaining the *demande d’amour* in “The Knight’s Tale.” What first seems like a needless excursus emerges as a great opportunity to acknowledge the difficulty the modern young person might have entering into the motives and emotions of courtly love as in the case of Arcite’s bittersweet dilemma of regretful freedom. Suddenly released upon the wide world, Arcite frets the loss of that prison window he once shared with his fellow knight Palamon because it afforded an unencumbered view of Emelye, the idol of their hearts.

The Knight's own language presumes that the skeptical reader must be won over if only by flattery: "But almost as though he knows that his audience is made up of potentially resisting readers, the Knight preemptively turns it into a group of lovers—courtly, aristocratic, gentle lovers—subtly persuading us to play the *demande's* game" (47).

Such is Scala's *modus operandi* of first highlighting a pitfall for modern students, then hinting that the astute and playful Chaucer is *simpatico* with modern sensibility. Interestingly, she does not feel the need to apologize for Chaucer's bawdy fabliaux like "The Miller's Tale," "The Reeve's Tale," "The Friar's Tale," and "The Summoner's Tale." Here the teacher can sit back and give Scala the wheel as she acquaints students with double-entendre like "quainte." Scala builds momentum right up to "The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale," where she makes a perfect compromise between examining the far-ranging implications of Chaucer's most important speaker and keeping the reader moving along. The concision of Scala's also does well with the motif of marriage-as-torture-of-women in "The Clerk's Tale" and "The Merchant's Tale." She makes an exceptionally compelling case for "The Man-of-Law's Tale" as genre-bending "secular hagiography," all the while staying breezy with her prose.

Scala reconnoiters as of "The Squire's Tale," shifting from modern resistance to a more esoteric consideration of whether language can express the speaker's meaning. The Squire for instance seems conscious of the limitations of language to express the inexpressible. By surrendering to limitation, he enters another level of sensibility and wonder. The hinge of the book is the chapter on "The Franklin's Tale," a story that depends on the tension between marriage and courtly love and comes to a rather hip conclusion to the marriage debate: "The answer that the Franklin offers is that no one should have mastery (which we might define as control over another person or being), and everyone should have sovereignty (or control over themselves)" (179). However, "The Physician's Tale," whose story of a father who wins his daughter's permission to cut off her head (to avoid her marriage to a corrupt judge), would logically seem to present Scala a high hurdle for casting Chaucer as a hero of personal freedom. But Scala stands up for the story and reveals her previous strategy for reconciling the resistant modern reader: "But rather than suggest that the story is some kind of intentional failure (on Chaucer's part or the Physician's), we might see

the tale as provocatively experimental” (182).

Another great explanation is her take on the Pardoner’s subterfuge, which strategically blurs “[...] the distinction between forgiveness *a poena* (from the pain of punishment) and forgiveness *a culpa* (from guilt of one’s actions or intent)” (189). Her larger purpose is to explain the theology of debt, which underlies “The Wife of Bath’s Prologue” and “The Shipman’s Tale” (and maybe the entirety of Chaucer). Similarly, for the “Nun’s Priest’s Tale,” Scala does with dream interpretation what she did with the *demande d’amour*: make short (but clear) work of it. She is especially good with blood libel in “The Prioress’s Tale,” then catches us off-guard by comparing The Monk’s catalogue of portraits in blood and gore as categorically akin to the violence of the Prioress, both of whom traffic in the “fiction of divergence” (230), Chaucer’s disruption of audience expectation. Scala assigns similar disruption to “The Second Nun’s Tale,” but also acknowledges the story is not a clean fit. The Second Nun sounds strikingly masculine, which of course (from another point of view) may make her (or him, or in between) the most perfect fit for Chaucerian divergence. Finally, Scalas reveals an incongruous impatience with “The Manciple’s Tale,” which she lambasts as a “story of linguistic failure” which cannot “get out of its own way” (263). However, despite occasional *non sequiturs* and her rather abbreviated discussion of “The Parson’s Tale,” Scala’s handbook serves its purpose well and would triangulate perfectly with the students and teachers of Chaucer.

Lisa Tyler, editor. *Wharton, Hemingway, and the Advent of Modernism*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana SU Press, 2019. 269p.

WAYNE CATAN

BROPHY COLLEGE PREPARATORY

In *Wharton, Hemingway, and the Advent of Modernism* editor Lisa Tyler presents twelve essays from top scholars who argue the case for Edith Wharton’s place in the modernist canon . . . alongside Ernest Hemingway. Wharton and Hemingway were, according to Tyler, more similar than readers would believe: both lived as expats in Paris, both spent time in Italy and Africa “and wrote about those experiences in their fiction and nonfiction” (1). Both won the Pulitzer Prize and

had mutual friends, including F. Scott Fitzgerald and Sinclair Lewis. However, they never met, a decision made by Wharton. Because I cannot write about every piece in the volume, I highlight three essays, which I believe confirm the fact that Edith Wharton is a modernist writer.

First, Peter Hays in “Hemingway and Wharton Both Modernists” uses his list of modernist traits to declare Wharton a modernist. He explicates passages from *Ethan Frome* (1911) and *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) to state his case. He claims *Frome* allows reader participation, it is fragmented, experimental, and anti-romantic, all traits of modernism. Specifically, *Frome* is “fragmented by its frame-tale format” (23), and it is experimental because Wharton, for the first time, incorporates “an unreliable first-person narrator” (23) and its “thwarted romance (if there was one) between Mattie and Ethan” (24) is anti-romantic.

Hays writes that Hemingway’s style at the time in 1926 was experimental. Hemingway wrote in “short, clipped sentences, with little direct clue as to the narrator’s feelings, except for such passages as where Jake declares his love for Brett” (20). *The Sun Also Rises* is “fragmented, consisting of Jake’s incomplete accounts of events in Paris, Pamplona” (21) and other cities, and “it is anti-romantic in its harsh depiction of those who endured the war” (21). Hays’s discovery of modernist traits in *Ethan Frome* is convincing, and his explanation and comparison to *The Sun Also Rises* makes a strong case for Wharton.

Next, Ellen Andrews Knodt posits that modernism possibly started with *The House of Mirth*, an unusual choice “given that the First World War is the oft-used defining moment of modernism,” (29) but she believes that *Mirth*, released in 1905, responds to “changing economics and gender relationships,” (29) setting the stage for Hemingway and his counterparts. Although the two authors possess different writing styles, Knodt identifies “three main links” in *Mirth* and *The Sun Also Rises* that deem both novels modern: insider-outsider status, taboo subjects, and ambiguity.

Knodt states that *Mirth*’s protagonist Lily Bart was forced into insider-outsider status “having been born and raised in a wealthy family which loses its money through business losses and death of the father” (33). Jake Barnes in *Sun* is an insider because he is part of an expat group in France and he “can view them close up” (34); however,

Jake, a journalist, is not independently wealthy—like some of his expat friends—making him an outsider too. Knodt also argues that Wharton writes about taboo subjects in *Mirth*. Her characters have affairs, and Gus Trenor expects sexual favors from Lily. The expats in *Sun* drink to excess and Lady Brett has multiple lovers. The ambiguous endings in both novels befit a modernist label—Lily’s deathbed scene and Jake rescuing Lady Brett at Botin’s.

In “Dawn and Decline: Contrasting Spaces in Wharton’s ‘False Dawn’ and Hemingway’s ‘A Very Short Story,’” Sirpa Salenius discusses the fact that an author can use literary space in many ways, not just in exposition to establish setting. She argues that it can be “connected with psychological states of fictional characters” (110).

Salenius writes that Wharton’s “False Dawn” and Hemingway’s “A Very Short Story” are similar in that aspect: both use Italy and the United States “two different geographical locations . . . that mirror and contrast each other in morals, emotions, ideals, and worldviews” (110). Both stories begin in “open, outdoor spaces” (110). Hemingway’s “A Very Short Story” begins with nurse Luz and the injured soldier (Nick Adams I believe) on the roof of a hospital “One hot evening in Padua.” The story then progresses with Luz sitting on the bed. Salenius believes that the roof is “close to the sky, which implies psychological and physical domination . . . [and] the sexual connotations are present in the heat of the night but also in introducing Luz sitting on a bed” (124). In *False Dawn*, the opening scene takes place on the verandah of Halston Raycie’s country house in High Point. Characters stood on “a height above the Sound” (114) gaining a clear view of the water, symbolizing Mr. Raycie’s wealth and high status in society. Salenius also evaluates the significance of the town’s name—High Point—and how it further establishes Raycie as a prominent member of high society.

This in-depth examination provides a strong case for Wharton’s place in the modernist canon. Scholars will find it invaluable, and I am already using it in my “The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway” class.

W. Michelle Wang. *Eternalized Fragments: Reclaiming Aesthetics in Contemporary World Fiction*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 2020. 217p.

LUCIEN DARJEUN MEADOWS
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

In *Eternalized Fragments*, the ninth publication of Ohio State UP's Cognitive Approaches to Culture Series, W. Michelle Wang brings the literary theory of aesthetics into robust conversation with the cognitive science theories of neuroaesthetics and evolutionary psychology through an examination of world long-form fiction across the post-World War II period. Wang locates three central themes, or aesthetic modes, to postwar fiction: the aesthetics (1) of play, (2) of the literary sublime, and (3) of muted beauty. Clearly structured, Wang organizes her text into two chapters on the aesthetics of play, two on the literary sublime, and one on muted beauty. She includes an introduction that offers a primer on neuro/aesthetic theory and her approach in language that feels accessible to audiences from advanced undergraduates to faculty, with a closing coda on continuing to expand possibilities for theorizing postwar fiction.

Wang's book joins Cognitive Approaches to Culture Series publications including *Shaming into Brown: Somatic Transactions of Race in Latina/o Literature* by Stephanie Fetta (2018), winner of the 2019 MLA Prize in United States Latina and Latino and Chicana and Chicano Literary and Cultural Studies, and *Literatures of Liberation: Non-European Universalisms and Democratic Progress* by Mukti Lakhi Mangharam (2017). Together, these texts bring literary studies and cognitive sciences into a dialogue that enhances scholars' understandings of, as Ohio State UP describes, "the social and political consequences of cognitive cultural study." As such, Wang dedicates space in her introduction and across the book to discuss the fraught contemporary relationship with aesthetics and the "anti-aesthetic emphasis" (2) of creative and critical work in the twentieth century, where concepts such as beauty and the sublime can feel detached at best from the postmodern "brokenness of human experience" and "radical skepticism" (127).

Yet, while some scholars might argue that literature of juxtaposition and disjuncture — such as postwar world fiction — might not be an apt subject for studies of aesthetics, with its focus on the beautiful and pleasing, even the sublime, Wang convincingly

argues that paradox generates pleasure and play. These postwar fiction writers “invite readers to participate in their always unfinished acts of meaning-making” (163), an essential energizing activity in the long-term cyclical renewal of aesthetic paradigms. She activates her methodology through an experiential cognitive science approach into Schiller’s and Kant’s definitions of beauty and the sublime, invoking and revising their theorizations of the sublime along with those from Burke, Hegel, Longinus, and Lyotard. Wang posits that, in addition to the three aesthetic modes of postwar fiction described above, such fiction is concerned with three drives toward information: (1) the sense-drive, or the open-ended, sensuous, and imaginative impulse; (2) the form-drive, or the orderly, rational, and pattern recognition-driven impulse; and (3) the moral-drive, or the impulse toward unity and congruence in how one should live. Wang discusses all three drives in virtually every chapter, for these three drives, like the three aesthetic modes, often blur and overlap in the fractured genre of postwar fiction.

Opening with an epigraph from, and closing with a coda on, Gabriel García Márquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967), a novel Wang credits to her text’s “genesis” in 2008 (ix), Wang invokes García Márquez’s novel as a touchstone across her analysis of “texts that straddle the borders of aesthetic modes” (14). Wang features two such texts in each of her five chapters: Jennifer Egan’s *A Visit from the Goon Squad* (2010), Italo Calvino’s *The Castle of Crossed Destinies* (1969) and *Invisible Cities* (1972), Flann O’Brien’s *At Swim-Two-Birds* (1939) and *The Third Policeman* (1939-40/1967), Alasdair Gray’s *Lanark: A Life in Four Books* (1981), Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* (1997), Cormac McCarthy’s *Blood Meridian* (1985), Jeanette Winterson’s *Written on the Body* (1992), and Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go* (2005). This is a diverse list of works, ranging from the 1930s through the 2010s and including female writers and characters, queer writers and characters, and writers and characters of color.

Wang’s focal texts include British, Indian, Irish, Italian, Latin American, Scottish, and United States fiction, with numerous works discussed as they appear in translation. While this list embodies “such heterogeneity” (11), as Wang rightfully notes, some readers might wish for a representation of world literatures that centered (white) Eurowestern perspectives a bit less, featured more Asian and South American selections, included even just one African text, or selected a

BIPOC author for one (of her two) United States inclusions. Likewise, with several works appearing in translation, one might be curious how the aesthetic practice of reading (and writing) in translation reverberates in Wang's theoretical frameworks, particularly those engaging beauty and form. Even so, the heterogeneity of Wang's focal texts and authors generates a playful proliferation. For example, included United States writer Jennifer Egan is a fourth-generation Irish person whose featured novel occurs in the United States, Italy, and Kenya.

When considering classroom uses, an ambitious professor of a graduate seminar might assign Wang's book and all eleven novels she discusses. Most professors, however, would assign select chapters and their corresponding novels. Indeed, one of the most pleasurable and generative aspects of Wang's book is her deft handling of often surprising novel pairings. For example, Wang's chapter on the aesthetic mode of muted beauty brings Winterson's and Ishiguro's dissimilar novels into dialogue by contrasting Winterson's "voluptuous linguistic pleasures" with Ishiguro's "eloquence of muted allusions" (146) through prosody, plot, character, and more. *Eternalized Fragments*, Wang's first single-author book publication, is a resource for scholars across disciplines—literature, psychology, philosophy, history, and political theory, among others—and a model on how to effectively structure a book for PhD candidates and early-career faculty. Given the richness and clarity of her scholarship, many readers will be excited to follow what is already a productive and rigorous career.

Janek Wasserman. *The Marginal Revolutionaries: How Austrian Economists Fought the War of Ideas*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2019. 368p.

DANIEL C. VILLANUEVA
CULTURAL VISTAS

“We are all Austrians now,” Rep. Ron Paul famously claimed after his third-place finish in the 2012 Iowa Republican caucuses. Janek Wasserman relates this anecdote to illustrate how under the radar, yet quite influential, the free-market Austrian School has remained since its founding. His comprehensive yet concise work expertly details its intellectual origins and evolution over the intervening century as it split into competing branches and centers of influence. He also convincingly demonstrates the mechanism of the “appropriation of the idea of the Austrian School for ideological and political purposes” (273) in more recent decades as the School’s intellectual lodestars passed from the scene but the desire for sociopolitical relevance and influence remained.

Wasserman first made his mark in Austrian Studies in 2017 with the publication of *Black Vienna: The Radical Right in the Red City, 1918-1938*. That lengthy analysis of the far-right antagonists of Austromarxist “Red” Viennese filled an important lacuna in interdisciplinary English-language fin-de-siècle research. *Marginal Revolutionaries* does the same over a longer stretch of Austrian intellectual history by first stressing diverse aspects of the societal environment in which what we know today as Austrian economics came to fruition. For while its founding is generally acknowledged to be 1871, the year in which Carl Menger’s *Principles of Economics* and its theory of marginal utility was published, the School thereafter always had several intellectual leaders who were often at odds with each other as to the School’s prescription for public policy and how broad its interdisciplinary nature should reach.

The first two chapters broadly contextualize the genesis of the Austrian school in prewar Vienna’s “Founder’s Period”—the last great bourgeois flourishing from the 1870s through the turn of the century. From there it chronicles the rise of the School’s free-market opposition to Austromarxism and the height of the School’s domestic influence in the late Habsburg and interwar period. The third and fourth chapters illustrate the effects of the Nazi rise to power on the

School's free-market approach, the exile of the School's leading lights abroad, and the resultant rethinking of the methods by which academic and political influence could be gained in the service of free-market economics elsewhere in free Europe and the New World. Chapters Five and Six discuss the growing influence of social science and humanities disciplines on the School as it found new funding sources, foundations, and favor in the Anglophone world, and how this moved the School away from its Central European origins and theoretical concerns. The last chapter—perhaps most relevant to the majority of readers, and thus too brief—outlines the contemporary legacy of the Austrian School, including its appropriation by the Alt-Right.

Wasserman's meticulous research and narrative bring us several important insights. Among the most useful is the repeated demonstration—with different examples over its 125-year history—that the Austrian School must be seen foremost not as a bounded methodology of economic theorizing, but rather as an evolving, contradictory, and multidisciplinary movement seeking influence differently in changing sociopolitical contexts. Paraphrasing Voltaire, Wasserman makes a strong case that the object of analysis is neither properly "...Austrian, nor a school nor economics" (6). Another important aspect is that the longevity and influence of the Austrian School has often been due not to the free interplay of the *laissez-faire* marketplace of ideas that Austrian proponents claim is the iron law of authentic success. Rather, its longevity is likely due to a well-coordinated infrastructure of foundations and private donors with a personal stake in specific policy outcomes. Finally, Wasserman's careful archival research also sheds new light on the personalities of key Austrian School figures, showing that public and vitriolic feuds carried on within the School masked a generally supportive environment in the mission of advancing free-market ideology. Perhaps the best example is evidence that two bitter rivals in public, Ludwig von Mises and Joseph Schumpeter, encouraged each other privately to speak out in opposition to wartime economic planning even as they hotly contested each other's policy prescriptions.

Wasserman takes great pains to marry topical comprehensiveness with textual brevity—a necessity when tracing the arc of intellectual ripples from Menger, Böhm-Bawerk, and Wieser via Hayek, Mises, and Schumpeter to Austrian School scholarship today from, say, the Mises

Institute and Mercatus Center. This makes the work valuable for a general academic audience, but also hits richer notes that specialists can appreciate. Because the School's most significant reference point is economic theory, Wasserman helpfully includes synopses of theories undergirding each expression of Austrian economics referenced. The extensive bibliography and endnotes are useful for advanced undergraduate classes in German and Austrian Studies as well as graduate seminars in most social science and humanities disciplines. Additionally, the tracing of the origins of funding sources to promote the Austrian School in the academy and public sphere will be useful to campus faculty where Austrian think tanks, endowed chairs, and institutes have taken root. As so many names and institutes find mention, however, one suggestion for improvement would be to include short sketches of Austrian School protagonists in an appendix. Many names are briefly glossed and either never returned to or with considerable distance between passages.

The subtitle of Wasserman's book indicates his intention not to depict "what the Austrian school *is* or what it *believed*," but "what it *did*" (9). Rightly so, since where it can be presented as a coherent economic approach, the School is more of an academic curiosity than a scholarly influence in most economic departments today. He notes, though, that Austrian School ideas are definitely influential in other academic fields, public policy, and politics on both sides of the Atlantic. Throughout his book he approvingly notes and corroborates the contention of European historian Tony Judt that "we must think the twentieth century through the Austrian School" (16). By tracing this influence in many sectors outside the classical economic field in which most of the seminal pre- and postwar Austrian economists operated, *Marginal Revolutionaries* charts many potential paths for social and political science research on contemporary right-wing and libertarian ideologies, literature, and social movements—to say nothing of leaders from Pinochet, Reagan, Thatcher, and the Czech Republic's Vaclav Klaus to today's Alt-Right and libertarian parties. It is thus also a useful guide to the battle lines of this skirmish with its roots in Arnold Zweig's "World of Yesterday" in Imperial Vienna. It is, finally, also an erudite and well-researched strategy brief for those who wish to understand the development, evolution, and energetic transmission of Austrian School ideology to today's college campuses and the wider public sphere.