REVIEWS

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

José María Balcells. ***Miguel Hernández y los poetas hispanoamericanos y otras páginas hernandistas.*** Biblioteca Hernandiana, 2020. 312p.

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Al leer el título de este último libro de José María Balcells podría parecer que nos encontramos ante uno más de los muchos volúmenes sobre el poeta oriolano. Ni mucho menos. Las trescientas páginas y los dieciséis capítulos—el capítulo final corresponde a la bibliografía hernandiana del propio autor del libro— compendian más de cincuenta años de investigación exhaustiva tanto de la obra como de la vida de Miguel Hernández. Balcells escribió su primer artículo sobre el oriolano en 1968 cuando contaba con tan solo veinticinco años de edad. Dos años después completaría su tesis de licenciatura sobre este mismo poeta. Muchos de los capítulos presentes fueron publicados con anterioridad, pero Balcells los ha ampliado con retoques y con implementaciones diversas. Ha revisado hasta el más mínimo detalle para poder agruparlos en el libro. Con todo, el autor añade cinco capítulos inéditos.

Tal y como el título anuncia, muchos de los capítulos se dedican a la conexión de Hernández con los poetas hispanoamericanos, sobre todo con los modernistas: Rubén Darío, Amado Nervo, Julio Herrera y Reissig constituyen algunos de ellos. Sin embargo, no faltan otros latinoamericanos más contemporáneos: Nicolás Guillén, Octavio Paz, César Vallejo —enmarcado en un período anterior, cronológicamente hablando, que el resto de los autores de este grupo—, Raúl Gómez Tuñón y Pablo Neruda, entre otros. Balcells va más allá e incluso incluye autores no pertenecientes a Latinoamérica insertando, por ejemplo, un capítulo excelente en el que establece relaciones literarias entre el oriolano y el estadounidense Walt Whitman.

El volumen comienza con José Asunción Silva. No obstante, no encuentra parecidos fehacientes entre este autor y Hernández, acaso tan solo una excepción, la casual de que ambos tuvieron en la casa paterna un canario que les cautivó y que les movía a reflexiones vitales.

Por la poca conexión entre los dos, Balcells abandona rápidamente a Silva para dedicarse a Darío. Hernández leyó la obra de Darío, y su lectura repercutirá en diversos poemas de la fase de su aprendizaje literario. Es más: no solo se valió de Darío en sus años de aprendizaje sino también en su plena madurez creadora, y no prescindiría de su fertilización temática y rítmica en los años bélicos.

El capítulo de Nicolás Guillén y de Octavio Paz se relaciona con la visita del poeta a la Unión Soviética en el otoño de 1937. Hernández fue comisionado por el Ministerio de Instrucción Pública republicano con el fin de asistir a las sesiones del V Festival de Teatro Soviético de Moscú. Suele asegurarse que en el viaje el poeta adquirió tanto una experiencia escénica como político-social, sobre la que nunca quiso pronunciarse. No manifestó pensamientos negativos, pero el silencio ha dado pie a la insinuación de que regresó a España decepcionado a causa del control al que fue sometido. De hecho, Octavio Paz habría sido una de las escasas personas a las que manifestase expresamente su punto de vista acerca de su experiencia en la Unión Soviética. Balcells termina este capítulo recordando la revolución que Hernández quiso para España. El oriolano aspiró a una revolución que, más que española, fuese hispánica: una revolución en la que el componente español se implementase y se enriqueciese con el aporte de los escritores hispanoamericanos.

César Vallejo no falta, pues él y Hernández fueron coetáneos, siendo cortas sus vidas —una muerte prematura que ambos presagiaron para sí mismos—, además de desvalidas en muchos momentos. También se asemejarían por su idiosincrasia ingenuista y por su decantación popular, de modo que el ruralismo hernandiano se correspondería con el indigenismo vallejiano, remitiendo ambos al mito russoniano del buen salvaje.

Dejando de lado a los autores latinoamericanos relacionados con Hernández, cabe destacar el capítulo dedicado a Whitman. Uno de los más acertados del volumen. A muchos hernandistas les puede resultar inapropiado establecer una relación entre el estadounidense decimonónico Whitman y el español Hernández, pues vivieron en contextos distintos y distantes desde el punto de vista cronológico, y cuyas vidas respectivas tuvieron una trayectoria tan distinta: uno alcanzaría los setenta y tres años de edad; el otro no cumpliría ni los treinta y dos. Ambos participaron de muy diferente manera en sendas

guerras civiles y esos acontecimientos históricos marcarían sus vidas y sus obras. Whitman, pese a vivir en suelo estadounidense y no conocer España, escribió sobre la efímera Primera República en su poema "España (1873-1874)". Balcells no duda en la conexión de ambos y se opone a la hipótesis de José Luis Zerón Huguet, según la cual Hernández no habría llegado a oír hablar de Whitman. Una de las influencias más decisivas del bagaje literario hernandiano fue Darío y este se referiría al escritor estadounidense no solo en varios artículos sino también en unas composiciones poéticas que Hernández conocía, incluida la "Oda a Roosevelt". Por lo tanto, Hernández no pudo ignorar la existencia de Whitman porque supo de él leyendo a Darío.

América se olvida momentáneamente para pasar a otro extraordinario capítulo sobre temática oriental. El pretexto chino asoma por primera vez en la obra de Hernández de la mano del asunto arábigo, merced a dos menciones expresas que se insertan en el poema "Motivos de leyenda". De ahí, Balcells conecta China con un color muy significativo en este país asiático: el amarillo que significa fertilidad y que simboliza poder imperial. La conexión va más allá con el poema "El limón" que, a la vez, enlaza con el recuerdo de su huerto familiar.

Por último, cabe destacar el capítulo dedicado a Miguel de Unamuno y a la imagen de la vida humana contemplada como una corrida de toros. Esta imagen impregnará en Hernández su auto sacro *Quién te ha visto y quién te ve y sombra de lo que eras*, trasvasándose a su poema "CITACIÓN-fatal", composición elegíaca inspirada en la muerte de Ignacio Sánchez Mejías. Asimismo, y al igual que su "compañero del alma" Ramón Sijé, Hernández no debió sentirse demasiado cómodo ni respecto al cristianismo agonal de Unamuno ni sobre las demoledoras críticas de este no tanto a la República como forma de gobierno, sino a los sangrientos acontecimientos que tendrían lugar.

Miguel Hernández y los poetas hispanoamericanos y otras páginas hernandistas es un libro completísimo sobre Miguel Hernández y su relación con autores latinoamericanos, españoles e, incluso, de habla inglesa. No solo sobre estos autores y la influencia recíproca que han recibido, Balcells además incorpora capítulos de gran interés y creatividad sobre la vida y la obra del poeta. Por ejemplo, el undécimo capítulo aborda el análisis de una de las fotografías en la que aparece Miguel Hernández en Barcelona, un apunte ingenioso y original. El autor del volumen determina acertadamente donde se tomó esa

fotografía: en la plaza Cataluña de la Ciudad Condal. Este y todos los demás capítulos han sido rigurosamente documentados con análisis detallados y con una prosa perfectamente redactada. Felicito al autor, José María Balcells, por una aportación valiosísima al estudio de Miguel Hernández.

Ottmar Ette. ***Literatures of the World: Beyond World Literature***. Translated by Mark W. Person. Leiden: Koninklijke Brill, 2021. 469p.

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In a time when cultures, economies, and societies are in flux and within proximity, Ottmar Ette's *Literatures of the World* suitably sustains that throughout history the cartography of literature has been shaped by movement, different logics, and discontinuities.

Originally published in German as *WeltFraktale: Webe durch die Literaturen der Welt* in 2017, the meticulous and deftly crafted translation to English by Mark Person conveys, in a clear and fluid manner, the philological and literary theory and practice of this book. Multidisciplinary in nature, *Literatures of the World* is valuable to diverse disciplines such as Comparative Literature, Literary Criticism, and International and Global Studies.

Framed within the four phases of globalization, as contemplated in Ette's previous book *TransArea: A Literary History of Globalization* (2016), it is also concerned with the patterns of cultural movement hitherto considered in his text *Literature on the Move* (2003). Within this context, Ette strikes the long-standing debate of the paradigm of world literatures (*Weltliteratur*) that emerge in opposition to localized national literatures, as discussed by Johan Wolfgang von Goethe. However, Ette takes a step forward and pursues a broader scope of Philology and Literatures that interact and circulate across time and mobile spaces "to redefine, on the trail of some of the great novelists, the places of humanity in the universe" (XIII).

Divided into five parts, the first two plow the theoretical path beyond national and world literature. The author traces criteria of literary criticism from great thinkers such as Wolfgang von Goethe, Erich Auerbach, David Damrosch, Pascale Casanova, and others.

However, while influential, these perspectives and standpoints derive from one logic, well-defined meridians of reference, and continuity. To illustrate this pattern, Ette examines Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*. In this foundational work about world literatures, although Auerbach looks at Philology from a national to a global perspective, and despite his exile in Istanbul after he leaves Germany during the dominance of the "Third Reich," his viewpoint is still restricted to a Western tradition. On the contrary, *Literatures of the World* accentuates and moves along diversity and underscores intertextuality to do justice to all literature. Thus, Ette's vision clearly dispels the dominant Occidental logic and contends that literatures emerge from a multiplicity of proveniences and languages in different epochs.

Ette proposes to consider the literature on our Earth through the lens of movement—historical parameters—rather than spatial-historical domains. He acknowledges the poetics of movement and the withdrawal from fixed meridians to attain "vectorization of all references" (68) that looks at the past, present, and future (prospective). Additionally, Ette advocates for the recognition of multilogical structures within the gap between national and world literature and even within texts. The diverse logics in "mobile relationality" (69) retrieve experiential knowledge (*ErlebensWissen*) and the knowledge for living (*LebensWissen*) from different perspectives simultaneously.

Ette invites us to look at the multiple languages in which canonical and non-canonical literary texts are written as part of the multi-connectivity and migratory spaces. These works also show the political and cultural dominances within their historical moment in a vectorial manner.

As we examine the various sections of the text, some works are recurrent in different chapters as they attend to the principles that constitute the literatures on our Earth. Part one analyzes the process of advancing national literatures to the paradigm of national literatures as delineated above within the works of Dante Alighieri, Virginia Woolf, Marcel Proust, and James Joyce, among others.

In part two, Ette deals with the Politics of knowledge, Travel Literature, and Carnival and Catastrophes. The author aptly points out the disputes on diversity and racist views that the discovery writings and, to a lesser extent, research travel accounts convey. Within scientific

expeditions, Alexander von Humboldt stands out with his "nomadic way of thinking" (121) in relation to scientific and cultural findings. Ette also focuses on various narratives that address the prevalent issue of the coexistence between nature and culture, such as *Catástrofes naturales* by Anna Kazumi Stahl. As well, in Patricio Lafcadio Tessima Carlos Hearn's works, New Orleans is presented as a city of migrations and catastrophes, and as such, apt for the carnivalesque.

Part three engages the reader in travel movements between "Occidentes–Orientes." The not so well-known, Roland Barthes's travel writings, mainly on Greece and Japan, support the archipelagic element of the literatures of the world and addresses the landscape of theory, with different logics, but no central view. Also, Ette identifies the city of Cairo as an urban space that evokes harmony among cultures from different points of the earth as described by Joannes Leo Africanus' works. In the East, the clay tablets in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* from ancient Mesopotamia show the trajectory of trans-Mediterranean migratory writing. In this sense, Ette identifies representative authors of transareal interconnection between Orient and Occident.

Part four discusses one of the most meaningful significances of literature for Ette: life. He masterfully considers the German word *Leben* (life) in relation to literature as a means to living in life and survival. Centered on Honoré de Balzac's *La Comédie Humaine*, among others, Ette unfolds the inherent nature of literature that shares its experiential knowledge from various geocultural areas and multiple standpoints. Literature and the experience of reading extend to everyday life and the future, and as "a means of living" in Barthes' writing, literature favors life force as he confronts his mother's death. Connected to life is unrest (*Unruhe*) "as a driving force" (297) which is revealed as part of Humboldt's life and writings by Mario Vargas Llosa. Their texts move between continents as the readers also hurdle between different worlds. Ette finds poetry as representative of archipelagic-fractal aesthetics. The tradition of coexistence is exemplified in Shijing, and movement across languages is depicted in the lyric poems by F.A. Oliver.

Part five illuminates the diversity and convivence of knowledge in America (the Americas) and TransAndean studies. Authors such as José Martí and Alejo Carpentier appear beyond the local and regional space and follow a "transhistorical and transcultural line of tradition"

(392). According to Ette, the Inca Garcilaso's "I" position and his knowledge of living move across continents and languages. Likewise, Ette underlines literatures without a fixed abode. For example, Daniel Alarcón's work depicts "literary ways of life that may well become influential, perhaps even crucial, for the 21st century" (73).

Although a concluding chapter is absent, *Literatures of the World* stands out as a remarkable, insightful compendium about the complex, yet fluid interconnection between the Literatures of our Earth. Its discourse breaks the mold of the limitations of national and world literatures and puts forward literature as a field with no specific origins or ends that has survived and will endure in the future.

Cristina Feijóo. ***La hora del silencio.*** Buenos Aires: Astier Libros, 2022. 208p.

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Cristina Feijóo's most recent novel, *La hora del silencio*, is as intricate, oneiric, and haunting as the classic work to which it openly pays homage, Juan Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo*. The gendered retelling—set within the claustrophobic confines of Villa Devoto, a women's prison with striking parallels to Comala—takes place during Argentina's last military dictatorship. The protagonist, Leonora, is a political prisoner who embarks on a journey of self-discovery not unlike her literary predecessor, Juan Preciado. In so doing, Leonora reveals cunning survival strategies to combat the harsh conditions of political imprisonment even as she unveils myriad complexities of the leftist movement from an intensely personal perspective. Narrated primarily in first person and in present tense through the protagonist's prison diary, *La hora del silencio* is simultaneously intimate and immersive. What's more, the protagonist's persistent efforts to "put [her]self together" (50) mirror the active role required of readers who must similarly work to integrate the novel's disparate narrative fragments.

Leonora consciously and overtly channels Damiana Cisneros in order to access her own (back)story, understand her identity, find a sense of purpose and belonging, and ultimately accept her fate. As she confides in her journal, "La vieja Damiana era sabia y con ella hicimos

un pacto: yo contaría mi historia usando su voz y ella contaría historias entramadas con la mía" (11). The graceful ease with which Leonora performs this and other literary assimilations and ventriloquisms becomes plausible given Feijóo's lyrical prose and linguistic agility. The storyline, which incorporates multiple voices and perspectives in addition to distinct registers, unfolds in overlapping loops. Proliferating embedded tales and secondary characters simultaneously echo and shed light upon the protagonist's plight. The result is a highly stylized, complex narrative that can be likened to a tapestry or mosaic. As the novel advances, carefully building to a dramatic conclusion, the protagonist achieves greater self-understanding and eventually finds her own voice. Readers gradually draw closer to Leonora herself, increasingly privy to the internal workings of her conniving mind.

As the above might suggest, *La hora del silencio* defies simple generic classification. Like Rulfo, Feijóo situates her novel beyond the realm of traditional or linear time for "el tiempo es un perro que se muerde la cola" (66) while simultaneously exploring liminal spaces and interior states. Boundaries such as those that delineate consciousness and dreams, the corporeal and the ethereal, life and death remain porous. At times characters inhabit "sueños vivos" (64), which can include meeting fictional characters from other literary works, having out-of-body experiences, fusing or melding with each other, and struggling to distinguish between what is inside or outside of the prison walls or even one's physical body. In short, the masterful work questions the very nature of reality and sanity, while exhibiting traits of both the fantastic and magical realism.

At the same time, *La hora del silencio* represents historical fiction at its finest. Not coincidentally, the cover art showcases a photograph by Daniel Berbedés from the *Parque de la memoria*—a commemorative public space honoring the victims of state terrorism and dedicated to "remembrance, homage, testimony and reflection." To this end, the novel offers detailed portrayals of the day-to-day hardships that political prisoners endured for years: from strict food rations to cruel punishments, from traumatic searches and seizures to the torments of solitary confinement. A particularly harrowing episode recalls the Masacre del Pabellón 7 when on March 14, 1978 over sixty prisoners died due to police repression and the brutality of prison personnel, specifically from fires, smoke inhalation, being beaten, or from gunshot

wounds. Feijóo artfully conveys the chaos, fear, and uncertainty by dramatically yet realistically narrating the unfolding scene through auditory rather than visual witnessing, given the need to take cover as well as direct orders to stay away from the windows or be shot. Another traumatic event features the political prisoners' collective sense of urgency, frustration, helplessness, and rage when they are unable to get medical attention for a compañera who dies unnecessarily from an asthma attack. Notably, the protagonist's experiences often directly reflect the biography of the author herself. In narrating lived prison experiences, Feijóo incorporates portions of actual letters written or received by fellow detainees. Additionally, readers of Feijóo's prior works [including *En celdas diferentes* (1992), *Memorias del río inmóvil* (2001, Premio Clarín), *La casa operativa* (2007), and *Afuera* (2008)] will appreciate instances of self-reference and the reappearance of particular characters, settings, and episodes that likewise testify to conditions of political imprisonment at Villa Devoto.

Importantly, *La hora del silencio* highlights the community created by these women in adverse conditions. Feijóo calls attention to a multiplicity of interpersonal relationships forged within the prison together with the tensions that arise with forced convivencia. Leonora's journal describes individual acts of courageous self-sacrifice as well as organized systems of support, despite distinct ideological formation and commitment. These women, with wide-ranging levels of political militancy from divergent leftist groups, further commingle with gender-bending common prisoners as well as prison guards and administrators. As such, Leonora's fictional diary depicts myriad forms of communication. Direct exchanges via the spoken and written word coexist with more subtle conveyances including corporeal gestures, eye contact, and physical touch. Collective demonstrations and protests take place alongside clandestine, prohibited exchanges and interactions. Significantly, the prisoners' adeptness with various forms of correspondence mirrors the narrator-protagonist's uncanny ability to simulate and reproduce multiple literary voices and styles.

In this way, Feijóo's novel can be understood as a meditation on the nature of kinship and devotion—familial, political, and amorous. But what truly sets this work apart is how Leonora's impassioned tale of unrequited love makes visible an otherwise silenced or taboo reality of political imprisonment: deep affections and shared intimacies

between women. The title, which literally indicates a period of time for a quiet respite from the prison's relentless noise and clamor (allowing Leonora to read, ruminate, and write), further points to societal silence with respect to female homoeroticism. As the author has pointed out in interviews, same-sex relationships were not merely stigmatized but were in fact criminalized and pathologized as recently as the 1990s. Feijóo not only presents the complexities of such relationships—whether platonic, strategic, or amorous—as one more component of the social fabric, but does so with tenderness, compassion, and dignity.

In the end, *La hora del silencio* is a beautifully written, suspenseful tale that speaks to the conditions of political imprisonment and the importance of personal and collective memory. At the same time, the novel serves as an homage to Latin American literature and, by extension, the very act of storytelling itself. Above all else, Feijóo's remarkable work exists as an extended love letter to an impassioned generation in a particular historical moment. In keeping with her protagonist, Feijóo successfully channels the unique vibes of 1960s Argentina, recreating and paying respect to shared intellectual and cultural formation together with a collective optimism for a new and better future. Much as Leonora discovers herself through dialogues with the past and an all-consuming love, Cristina Feijóo likewise attains an exceptional level of creative self-expression in what may be her most profound literary work to date. Already receiving critical recognition and being awarded Segundo Premio Munincipal Eduardo Mallea (Buenos Aires) as well as being a finalist for both the Premio Iberoamericano Verbum de novela (Spain) and the Concurso Internacional de Contacto Latino (United States), *La hora del silencio* is destined to be a masterpiece in Argentina's post-dictatorial literary canon.

José O. Fernández. ***Against Marginalization: Convergences in Black and Latinx Literatures***. Ohio State UP, 2022. 213p.

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José O. Fernández begins by stating, "contemporary authors from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds have gained visibility and recognition in university curricula, at major publishing houses, and

amongst the literary establishment" (1). However, this has not always been the case in the American Literary canon. *Against Marginalization* contextualizes Black and Latinx literatures beginning in the colonial era and highlights other historical points of note, from 19th Century exiles calling for independence, to activists of the 1960s Civil Rights Movements writing change, to creatives documenting urban decline in today's inner cities.

Fernández juxtaposes Black and Latinx literary traditions by focusing comparatively on the creation, publication, and reading of certain texts. He explains that it is important "to call attention to the shared commonalities and struggles that allow early Black and Spanish-language texts to emerge from their position of marginality vis-à-vis a white-dominated and English-speaking literary tradition" (28). For example, Chapter 1 considers the poetry of Phillis Wheatley, a former slave and writer in colonial Boston, and Gaspar Pérez de Villagrá, a Spanish conquistador on the Don Juan Oñate expedition. Villagrá's *Historia de la Nueva México* (1598) "documents the presence of Spanish-language writing about a territory that would become part of the US; however, it is also a text valuable for its aesthetic and artistic elements, which had remained overlooked in American literary studies" (33). Fernández acknowledges that reconceptualizing writings by Spanish explorers is complex because, "these early texts engage with the conquest of indigenous people" and, in particular, with Villagrá, the Pueblo people within New Mexico (34).

Chapter 2 considers Black and Mexican American theater traditions that had been excluded from mainstream theater venues and critical discussions until the 1960s when the Civil Rights Movement drew attention to struggles of social justice. Historically based theater acts as a catalyst for change in both Amiri Baraka and Luis Váldez's plays. Váldez's grassroots theater "Teatro Campesino" grew out of his studies at San José State University and as a response to the 1965 Delano, California grape strike (60). His pieces such as *Bandido!*, *The Shrunken Head of Pancho Villa*, and *Zoot Suit* create social criticism within the dialogue so that his audience questions issues of race, ethnicity, justice, and Chicanx nationalism within the United States.

Chapter 3 expands upon Black and Latinx social protest writing by looking at subtext within narratives. It analyzes both James Baldwin's *Tell Me How Long* and Rudolfo Anaya's *Bless Me, Ultima* as

novels whose protagonists emerge as a young artists of color within a marginalized community, while incorporating the subtext of soldiers of color returning home after World War II (82). It particularly notes Anaya's inclusion of "the effects of the mobilization period in Mexican American communities in the Southwest and the psychological effects of the war and the lack of institutional support for Mexican American veterans as they returned to civilian life" (83) and calls attention to Black and Latinx shared histories of social marginalization and how this positionality affects the way that US history is taught and told.

Chapter 4 sheds light on how authors of color fought to be recognized in mainstream intellectual and cultural debates, highlighting Ralph Ellison, author of *Invisible Man,* and Richard Rodríguez, who gained notoriety through his nonfiction *Days of Obligation* and *Brown*, as well as his autobiography, *Hunger of Memory*. Latinx scholars have criticized Rodríguez for his controversial and negative opinions on bilingual education and affirmative action (104), yet it is important to show a multiplicity of opinions and perspectives.

Chapter 5 documents works by authors of color that give voice to communities of color whose livelihoods demonstrated the challenges of fieldhand work. Alice Walker's lesser-known novel *The Third Life of Grange Copeland* and Helena María Viramontes's *Under the Feet of Jesus* are both "art-novels" (127) that aesthetically depict sharecroppers and migrant workers' plights encountering overt ethnic prejudice, labor rights discrimination, and environmental racism, all told through a rite of passage story.

The last chapter explores how authors of color represent the struggles and challenges of Black and Latinx people in urban spaces. Specifically looking at Edward P. Jone's *Lost in the City,* chronicling the gritty realism of Washington, DC, and Junot Díaz's collection of short stories, *Drown,* which "portrays characters of color affected by social and economic marginalization in urban areas of New Jersey, New York City, and the Dominican Republic" (152).

Overall, *Against Marginalization* points out that within the American literary world some Black and Latinx creatives have gained visibility, whereas many others are still relegated to the shadows. Social activism and Critical Race Theory have turned this tide, yet much more recognition needs to be achieved.

Blair Hoxby, editor. ***Shadows of the Enlightenment: Tragic Drama during Europe's Age of Reason***. Ohio State UP, 2022. 328p.

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Stanford professor Blair Hoxby's newest editorial production is a multi-author volume that considers the theory and practice of tragedy produced during Europe's Age of Reason, that intellectual and philosophical period promulgated during the late-seventeenth century and early- to mid-eighteenth century.

Hoxby has an impressive record of research and publishing about European literature and culture. This text continues his theoretical approach to refigure and reassess traditional views about tragedy's power, versification, and imparts from classical beginnings during the Enlightenment, between 1685 and 1815, and beyond. For any student of history and literature, it is worth remembering that plays written and performed in the late-seventeenth century and after were post-Shakespeare's lifetime, post-Civil War, and post-Interregnum for England. With the public staging of plays licensed to reopen in 1660 after eighteen years of closure, not only did English theatre undergo a restoration, but so did England and the whole British Isles on an expansive socio-political scale, leading up to the Act of Union, which went into effect in the spring of 1707. The act created the Kingdom of Great Britain.

Right on these heels followed political restoration and reform afoot in Europe, too, resulting in changes and adjustments. With Napoleon Bonaparte's dethronement in 1814, most of Europe was challenged to determine a new path forward. Events like another French Revolution or Russian conquest occurring again suddenly seemed to be impossibilities. The boundaries of European countries were renegotiated and seemingly settled, and the United States was well on its way to dominating Western ideals about democracy and sovereignty, while Imperial England's colonial grasp around the globe began to wane and fade.

So it was, in many ways, that literature and culture during the late seventeenth-century and early- to mid-eighteenth century found itself in the crosshairs of optimism and pessimism. This is a particular prong that Hoxby stresses about tragedy, arguing in the introduction

that tragedy found itself at a "crossroads of the Enlightenment and the Counter-Enlightenment" (1). In other words, tragedies of the time were caught between the expectations of doom and gloom of classical Greek and Roman tragedy traditions and the "optimism, reason, and a faith in human progress and productivity" still regarded today as the majority assessment that scholars associate with the Enlightenment. Hence, for Hoxby, and others who have contributed to this volume, the tragedy of this time must be seen to "teeter on the brink of paradox" (1).

In this accord, the essays affirm that the scope of tragedy written and performed during this time was both expansive and transitional. It should not be easily categorized as stale or a non-controversial accoutrement to the period, nor a genre that was subjugated to something less and not as entertaining, edgy, or discursive as its counterpart of comedy that rose in popularity among the masses during the Restoration. Instead, tragedy of this time must be newly seen and understood as "dynamic" and "paradoxical," experimenting and juggling classical, early modern, romantic, and emerging modern ideals and expectations about the genre.

In addition to Hoxby, scholars contributing to this worthwhile academic collection include: Alex Eric Hernandez, Logan J. Connors, James Harriman-Smith, Russ Leo, Cecile Dudouyt, Adrian Daub, Stefan Tilg, Larry F. Norman, Joseph Harris, and Joshua Billings. Their essays are categorized into three relevant sections: Part 1-- Ancient Forms, Modern Affects; Part II – Philosophy, Religion, and the Institutions of Tragedy, and Part III – Ancients, Moderns, and the Historical Turn.

Hoxby's own essay, "Joanna Baillie, the Gothic Bard, and Her Tragedies of Fear," concludes the first section. The Scottish poet and dramatist's books of verse and plays reveal her extensive study and critical appreciation of Shakespeare, especially the Bard's proficiency in the passions. Baillie's (1762-1851) tragedy of fear, *Orra*, is set "in the context of the critical reinvention of Shakespeare as a primitive genius whose mastery of the passion of fear and terror depended on the Gothic heritage and the gloomy and superstitious disposition of the English people" (101). For Baillie's melodrama, *The Dream*, Hoxby argues that the playwright "strives for the perfect union of religious ideas and enthusiastic passions that the English critic John Dennis associated with primitive and sublime poetry such as Shakespeare's"

(101). The play collects Baillie's gothic meditations on fear and guilt and her ascertainments about mystery, intrigue, and ghoulishness derived from the power of dreams.

In contrast, in chapter 10, Joseph Harris offers a uniquely theoretical perspective on the bourgeois tragedy form that developed in eighteenth-century Europe, another fruit of the Enlightenment. In "The Aesthetics of Torture: Diderot's Theater of Cruelty," Harris advances a believable assertion that the French philosopher, art critic, and writer Denis Diderot (1713-1784) imagined an "awesome power" for drama – "its capacity to be a 'theater of cruelty'."(237). Likely neither practiced or performed as such during the Age of Reason, Diderot's vision serves as a forerunner to radical twentieth-century theater, comparing Diderot's ideals of tragedy to Antonin Artaud, the early-nineteenth century French poet, dramatist, actor, director, and essayist of avant-garde theater. It is in Artaud's raw, surreal, and transgressive works of the 1920s and '30s that Harris sees the similarity to Diderot's perceptions of the theatre-going audience as spectators and the power of theater to compel them to want to see brutality onstage. Thus, Harris suggests a suitable framework to comprehend the expansiveness, experimentation, and conflation of classical, eighteenth-century, comparative, and modern literary traditions upon tragedy during the Age of Reason, a period of transition when politeness, happiness, and fraternization comingled with ideals about liberty, progress, the pursuit of scientific knowledge, and church and state.

University faculty, students, and scholars across many fields will find Hoxby's work an immeasurable compilation of critical expertise and specialization about the Enlightenment and particularly, Enlightenment tragedy. The 37-page bibliography following the essays is a treasure, too, and adds to this resourceful and remarkable text by eleven contributing authors, including its editor.

Melody Yunzi Li and Robert T. Tally Jr., editors. ***Affective Geographies and Narratives of Chinese Diaspora.*** Palgrave Macmillan, 2022. 171p.

Tingting Hu
University of South Carolina

Affective Geographies and Narratives of Chinese Diaspora examines the Chinese diaspora, one of the world's largest migration phenomena. Bringing in the perspective of affect to probe the problem, it offers diverse ways of interpreting or complicating "Chineseness" as mainly entangled with "homeness" and illuminates "the affective geographies implicit in diasporic identity and community" and aims to "explore the intricate ways in which diaspora interacts with space, place, and emotional attachment in various cultural forms" (2). Its examination of literature, film, and visual culture texts that "seek to connect and reconnect with their 'homelands,'" strikes a needed discussion about the contemporary tide of precarious migration (2).

Affective Geographies understands "diaspora" as a displaced experience of being "far away from 'home'" while at the same time being "homed" in another place (1). Geographically, it covers movements from the Chinese mainland to Hong Kong, Taiwan, France, the UK, the US, and more. It expands the notion of diaspora, commonly understood as a geographically "transnational" movement of people, and demonstrates the specificity of the Chinese diaspora. The idea of diaspora reveals not only a geographically transnational movement but also a dialogue between the affective, imaginary, and disputed realm. For instance, Kenny K.K. Ng's chapter "Borderscape, Exile, Trafficking: The Geopolitics of Ying Liang's *A Family Tour* and Bai Xue's *The Crossing*" discusses the cinematic expression of "intranational migration" that is "occurring within the borders of one country" (5). Huanyu Yue's "Displaced Nostalgia and Literary Déjà vu: On the Quasi-Archaic Style of Li Yongping's *Retribution: The Jiling Chronicles*" observes the relationship between a Malaysian writer's lived

experience as "an overseas wanderer" and his literary construct of a "fantasized motherland of China" (71). Both cases envision "diaspora" as more porous than has been commonly perceived.

Underlying the idea of diaspora to understand the flow of people from mainland China to other places including Hong Kong and Taiwan can be indicative of political controversy due to the "transnational" implication of a "diaspora." Though this problem remains intractable, this book expands the scope of "diaspora" and renders it more flexible in the case of the Chinese diaspora, claiming that it happens "both in and out, both of and off, China" (7). Sheng-mei Ma's "The Holy Hole in Chinese Patriarchal Culture: Going Pop and South" reminds us that rather than be limited to the realm of "China studies" "Sinophone studies" or "diaspora studies," academic research can benefit more from emphasizing a diasporic perspective that looks at the intersection of the homeland with other spatial cultures. In this sense, the keyword "remapping the homeland" highlighted in the introduction serves as an accurate supporting pillar to the study of "Chinese diaspora." The phrase "remapping the homeland" also helps complicate the idea of "homeland" as not purely a space or a place, but a concept immersed in affect. Relying on "China" as the origin of "homeness," it also tries to critique the China-centered perspective, referencing "contact zone" theories and analyzing how "homelands" are reimagined and recreated in diasporic spaces.

Chapters include various diasporic experiences, especially those that remain marginalized or understudied. Elizabeth Ho's "'The Geography Helps': Affective Geographies and Maps in Xiaolu Guo's *A Concise Chinese-English Dictionary for Lovers*" investigates the linguistic dilemma of immigrants from developing countries. Dorothee Xiaolong Hou's "From Rust Belt to Belleville: Two Recent Films on Chinese Migrant Sex workers in Paris" exposes the hyper-exploitation of women sex workers in the global chain of consumption. Ping Qiu's "Literary Exile in the Third Space: Ha Jin's Critique of Nation-States in *A Free Life*" and Melody Yunzi Li's "Remapping New York's Chinatowns in the Works of Eric Liu and Ha Jin," both rely on texts by the Chinese immigrant writer Ha Jin. The first examines the relationship between the writer's transnational movement and his literary creation to analyze nation-states, while the other investigates how "Chineseness" or new "homelands" are created by Chinese people in the US.

Robert T. Tally Jr.'s concluding essay, "This Place Which is Not One: Diaspora, Topophrenia, and the World System" offers a theoretical contribution to diasporic studies and illustrates "the complexities of diasporic space" (8). The volume as a whole could benefit more by applying this last chapter's overarching theoretical frame to engage with the Chinese diaspora. Nevertheless, *Affective Geographies* presents a variety of approaches to decode the spatial and affective problems of diaspora and offers a productive conversation concerning these domains.

Rafael Malpartida Tirado***. Una nueva mirada entre la literatura y el cine: el legado de Juan Luis Alborg.*** Zaragoza: Libros Pórtico, 2022. 250p.

Juan García Cardona
University of California, Davis

Rafael Malpartida es uno de los grandes estudiosos de la adaptación cinematográfica en España. Entre sus publicaciones dedicadas al tema, se encuentran numerosos artículos en los que ha estudiado los entresijos de la literatura y el cine. Ha luchado contra tópicos como el del *fidelity criticism*, junto a obras colectivas en las que ha dado cabida a distintas investigaciones sobre esta temática. Es, además, director de la revista *Trasvases entre la Literatura y el Cine*, que identifica una clara carencia y cubre un ámbito únicamente tratado de forma tangencial en revistas de estudios hispánicos. Con este amplísimo bagaje se lanza a la aventura del primer monográfico de autoría individual dedicado a la literatura y el cine, a través del historiador de la literatura Juan Luis Alborg, cuyo legado se aloja en la Universidad de Málaga. Las intenciones son claras desde un principio: investigar la herencia de Alborg e insertarla en la teoría sobre literatura y cine de los años cuarenta y cincuenta. Malpartida elabora una metáfora excelente, como es la de "recuperar un 'eslabón perdido'" (9).

En el primer capítulo se revisa el estado bibliográfico de las relaciones entre literatura y cine en la época en la que Alborg dedica sus escritos a esta materia, alrededor de los años cuarenta y cincuenta. Para esta revisión se escogen las figuras de Díaz-Plaja y Entrambasaguas, dos profesores de literatura que habían explorado las correspondencias

con el cine en sus clases, y que habían elaborado ensayos sobre esta temática. El autor sopesa lo que a día de hoy son aserciones vigentes y aquellas que no han cuajado en el panorama actual. En el siguiente capítulo se incluye una edición anotada del ensayo inédito *Talía y su sombra* (1944), "joya de la corona" del monográfico (10), que muestra las valiosas reflexiones del historiador sobre las relaciones entre literatura y cine. No obstante, antes de reproducir el ensayo, introduce algunos aspectos como el debate entre el teatro y el cine en la época a través de Díez-Canedo. El cine se considera la siguiente fase del teatro, un arte que, según algunos investigadores de la época, acabaría pereciendo ante al triunfo del medio audiovisual, una creencia sostenida por Alborg.

El ensayo queda transcrito por completo; consta de unas ciento cuarenta páginas con abundante anotación. Como bien señala el autor, la escritura es sobresaliente, y resultan de gran interés diversos factores, como son los intentos de predecir el devenir del teatro y el cine. Sobre todo, ello reflexiona el autor del monográfico, que fue también el encargado de dar forma a una versión final para la que utilizó el primer manuscrito y hasta tres copias mecanografiadas, ofreciendo una transcripción inmejorable. En palabras del propio Malpartida, que resume con maestría el atractivo del ensayo, "su principal interés estriba en que se nos revela ahora como un precioso documento histórico para el estudio de las relaciones entre ambos cauces artísticos, gestado en una época en la que no eran muy frecuentes, y menos de forma tan extensa, reflexiones de este tenor" (49). A lo largo del texto quedan acotadas las referencias del texto a autores como Galdós o Azorín, proceso mediante el que ofrece una extensa profundización bibliográfica a las reflexiones de Alborg. En cuanto al texto reproducido del historiador valenciano, destaca la revisión histórica de géneros literarios de entretenimiento para esbozar una de sus principales ideas: el cine es el siguiente eslabón, y merece el estatus que poseen otros espectáculos artísticos.

En las secciones posteriores se disponen algunas de las creaciones artísticas del autor, que escribió guiones con la intención de ser producidos, como son los de *La danza sobre el mar*, *Marta* o *Los marañones*, firmado este último junto a Juan García Atienza. Para dar fin al monográfico, se incluye una coda magnífica en la que se apuntala la intención de la edición reseñada y se enmarca a Juan Luis Alborg en la tradición académica de su época. A lo largo del

texto analizado, las referencias a investigadores que han tratado los vínculos entre literatura y cine son constantes. Es el caso de Utrera, Pérez Bowie, Sánchez Noriega, Peña-Ardid y, a nivel internacional, de Stam y Zecchi. Es justo afirmar que mediante la presente obra, Malpartida no solo logra insertar las cavilaciones de Alborg en una amplia genealogía de estudios de la relación entre literatura y cine, sino que también logra reafirmarse él mismo como uno de los mayores referentes actuales del campo, en adición a todas las contribuciones anteriormente señaladas. El texto, en su conjunto, es tremendamente sugestivo; nos deja preguntas a largo plazo, y el hallazgo y la edición de inéditos contribuye a seguir reconstruyendo reflexiones sobre el teatro en los años cuarenta y cincuenta, época caracterizada por una severa crisis de este arte. En definitiva, el monográfico alberga un tremendo valor no solo para los estudios comparativos entre literatura y cine, sino también para la historiografía literaria.

E. Nicole Meyer and Eilene Hoft-March, editors. ***Teaching Diversity and Inclusion: Examples from a French-Speaking Classroom.*** Routledge, 2021. 216 p.

Georgy Khabarovskiy
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At a time when our classrooms are increasingly threatened by the narrowing of what can be said, taught or questioned, *Teaching Diversity and Inclusion: Examples from a French-Speaking Classroom* is a welcome addition for educators looking to align their world language curriculum with the realities of the 21st century. Its introduction, seventeen chapters, and reading list offer ideas to actively engage students' diverse identities and incorporate a variety of French-speaking voices in a thoughtful, dynamic, and non-tokenistic manner. United by common themes of intersectionality and interconnectedness of identities, cultures, and backgrounds, the volume addresses three broad questions: *Who is present on both sides of our language, literature and culture classroom? What content should we teach to foster inclusivity? How to succeed in doing so respectfully and not overwhelm our students and ourselves in the process?*

The contributors to Part I lay out frameworks from which questions of diversity and inclusion can be examined. This section

situates and legitimates affirming practices in order to accommodate the multitude of identities in world language courses and decolonize traditional teaching paradigms. It foregrounds issues such as queer and trans identities, racial justice, and the intersection between disability studies and the French classroom. It further argues that we as ambassadors of languages and cultures are in an excellent position to foster respect and mutual understanding among our students. Importantly, diversity becomes not only that of the students taught and the content studied, but also the diversity of the educators, who, from their unique vantage points, can offer informed and ethically sound strategies to increase motivation, success and student retention.

The second part further contextualizes inclusive practices and provides readers with a toolkit to diversify their curricula. It particularly focuses on gender equity (including non-binary language and the use of epicene words in teaching French), learning differences (dyslexia and auditory processing disorder), a productive engagement of Francophone undergraduates to nurture a diverse learning community, and a study of systemic oppression in French-language primary sources to promote civil dialogue among students. Chapters in this section also underscore challenges of inclusive practices, notably, resistance to language change from prescriptive authorities such as the French Academy and the need to step out of our comfort zone and unlearn our own language habits that have shaped our teaching of French. Additionally, the contributors examine their own French programs and give examples of how we can introduce content that reflects both the diversity of the French-speaking world and our students' lived experiences.

Part III extends beyond the most commonly discussed issues in diversity and inclusion pedagogies in French to zoom in on sometimes neglected or understudied topics: the French influence on the Spanish-speaking world of Latin America, French and Francophone gastronomy, hip-hop cultures, contemporary Haitian literature and its potential to promote tolerance, and Francophone Jewish writers. Through examples from their literature and culture syllabi in both undergraduate and graduate French courses, the authors in Part III make a convincing case for French-language programs at various types of institutions and give concrete, actionable tips to move us beyond a simple promotion of diversity toward fostering inclusivity.

Despite its focus on French, this collection will also be of interest to instructors of other languages as they realign their teaching practices with the imperatives of today's world. It contains useful information not just for college level, but for a broad array of educational settings to help teachers at all levels negotiate diversity and inclusion issues in a shifting educational landscape. It is perhaps useful to finish with a word of caution: the contributors seek to expand our knowledge of inclusive practices rather than to prescribe one-size-fits-all solutions. Indeed, due to the simple variety of perspectives, it would be unwise to try to implement all the practices discussed in one single context, at the risk of becoming unintelligible. Some ideas might even be at odds with each other; for example, a very clear benefit of giving frequent low-stakes formative assessments throughout the semester (Dettmer and Dyer) and another excellent suggestion to introduce staggered due dates into the syllabus (Berberi). Instead, the insights provided should be taken as a springboard for readers to create their own activities and generate ongoing discussion on their way to becoming more socially and ethically conscious pedagogues.

Felicia Mitchell. ***A Mother Speaks, A Daughter Listens. Journeying Together through Dementia.*** Wising Up Press, 2022. 87p.

Bailey Quinn
Weber State University

Author of *Waltzing with Horses* (2014) and the chapbook *The Cleft of the Rock* (2009), Felicia Mitchell debuts her newest collection, *A Mother Speaks, A Daughter Listens. Journeying Together through Dementia*, in which she chronicles the story of her mother, Audrey, and her struggle with dementia. Although dementia is a difficult experience to navigate, Mitchell weaves together a narrative arc that spans six sections and details not only her own memories, but her mother's memories as well.

Mitchell plays with narrative perspective, utilizing an I-speaker to blur the line between reality and memory. At times, it is clear that the speaker is either Audrey or Mitchell herself; however, in some poems the speaker is not clearly defined. By shifting between perspectives, Mitchell is not only able to mimic the reality-distorting effects of dementia, but she also allows herself to fill in parts of the story on

behalf of her mother, who was unable to remember those stories as her memory loss progressed. In Section V (of six), titled "wanting to find the words," Mitchell even steps directly into her mother's perspective, writing from Audrey's point of view. In these poems, Mitchell imagines Audrey's frustration with her cognitive decline: "I am still here./ My eyes are the keyhole/ to a past we share" (53). By stepping into the role of her own mother, Mitchell is able to "find the words" that Audrey may not be able to find, due to the cognitive and linguistic decline that accompanies dementia.

Memory and the way in which we pass on our memories is a major motif throughout. One way Mitchell explores memory is through the physical objects we tie to memories. In passing down familial heirlooms we are, in essence, passing down the stories of the people who owned them—so long as we share the stories attached to the objects. This idea comes through in poems such as "A Half of a Scarf" where the speaker details objects tied to her mother's memories of her family:

> In her uncle's well-worn sea chest,
> with sweaters and her sister's schoolwork
> from 1928, her son's last report card,
> a strand of glass pearls her husband gave her,
> and two hand-knitted shawls
> made by a cousin once removed. (12)

Most importantly, however, is "a half of a scarf from her mother" which the speaker later reveals, is "the sort of heirloom whose history/ my mother does not want me to forget" (12). The speaker explains that, despite not knowing where or how her grandmother came across the scarf, the scarf is tied to the "happy half" of her grandmother's story, and therefore must be kept and remembered. Each item in this poem is assigned a specific family member, and with it, we assume a story. Although those stories are never told to the reader, we can infer that each one has a special place in the mother's heart in the same way the scarf does. After her own mother dies, Mitchell considers keepsakes left behind that contain treasured memories in the poem "Inheritance": "Three place settings of silver,/ often tarnished but always sparking/ with memories of how I polished their silver/ before my parents had to sell it" (73).

Mitchell continues to explore the relationship between memory

and objects in Section II, titled "*why things so complicated*." This section is comprised of found poems from Audrey's letters and notes from conversations throughout the years, ranging from 1990 to 2004. As the poems progress, each becomes more broken in language, representing the cognitive decline experienced by those who have dementia. In utilizing the found poem structure, Mitchell is able to explore her own thoughts, feelings, and memories of her mother through her mother's own words. Her mother's story, in essence, becomes her own through her retelling. In this, the found poems represent a point made in the final poem, "Bedtime Story": "Underneath this story, there is another story determining its own destiny./ Remembering 1942 is not always an option,/ but that doesn't mean it's gone" (77).

Both haunting and masterfully written, *A Mother Speaks* deftly narrates the hardships of dementia and the effect it has on familial relationships and memories. In the afterward, Mitchell states a desire for readers to utilize the ways in which our memories stay behind long after we forget through "journals, letters, diaries, [and] video recordings" (81). "My main goal," she says, "is to help us not to forget if we are able to remember" (81). Whether it be in notebooks, cell phone numbers, clothing, flowers, or even our genes, Mitchell reminds us that our loved ones live on not only in the stories we pass down but in every aspect of our lives.

Kathryn Smith. ***Self-Portrait with Cephalopod***. Minneapolis: Milkweed Editions, 2021. 72p.

Sean H Jenkins
Independent Scholar

The Hebrew Bible, particularly Psalms, is part of the seam of this little book of bespoke poetry, much as it was in Smith's previous *The Book of Exodus*. The two volumes differ radically in perspective, the earlier volume concentrating on the unlikely survival of a destitute family in the remote Russian taiga, while the latter is concerned with the (again, unlikely) survival of the planet. One finds another shift in perspective in the author's use of the Bible throughout. The Russian volume implores, celebrates and begs with a holy sincerity and lacks all trace of

irony. *Self-Portrait with Cephalopod* uses fragments of scripture to power lines with the same load of seriousness, but also with (sometimes black) humor and even a trace of blasphemy: "An erroneous vision / of heaven and hell shall come to you / in books, and this will divide you. // Some will say it's possible for a child to die and come back / from death having seen the realm of God. But some will say what / does it matter when earth is a lonely / chasm where children die unnoticed as / we sharpen our knives and whiten / our teeth and tighten our skin and / implore our screens to refresh." William Blake is much subtler, but the insufficiency of the sacred text, its need to pierce beyond, is an insight common to them both. In a mash-up of Paul and Psalms, Smith writes, "I am fearfully and wonderfully / made, made wonderfully / fearful. When I was a child, I acted / like a child. / When I was afraid, / I acted afraid. Put these things / away. Surely goodness / will dog me all the days of my life." One finds a number of these transformations throughout.

In my first journey through *Self-Portrait with Cephalopod,* I marked in pencil "R" for "rancid" next to some lines that offended my judgement of what a line of poetry should say and sound like. On my second read through, I erased a number of these, finally erasing them all on my third. "Why do mammograms make me // contemplate apocalypse?" Why indeed? I am a man, and the question scrambles me. And there are lines of arresting purity as when she writes, "I have recently, to hone / my objectivity, stopped observing. I don't remember / the sound of snowmelt dripping from a roof, the gleam of icicles' / sharp translucence." Smith's language is neither complicated nor particularly challenging, but it is taut, coherent and in parts enthralling.

In the apocalyptic poems there is a discussion to be had about what sort of life deserves to survive, both the lives on which we feed and the lives which feed on us. Smith is willing to entertain fetal rights in the light of an ordinary breakfast: "I scramble the egg / until it does not resemble / egg—no longer the globe // a body bore into / the world for a purpose / entirely other. First I scraped // the blood-knot / from the albumen—trace / of its potential, of what // reminds me of me, / life force hidden / in the viscous clot." For Smith, this is the axial question: is the grandeur and simultaneous squalor of the life of earthly being, with all its chances and changes and transformations for good and evil—is such life worthy and fit for an open-ended

existence, unconditionally? In what terms, by whose argument, do we frame the question? This question of questions, which bears down upon us in the form of legal pronouncements subject to change and climate catastrophe much less responsive to even the most vigorous efforts of the scientific elite, is one we no longer look to canonical texts to answer. This is where Smith's earlier work parts company from *Self-Portrait with Cephalopod*. In this later poetry we ourselves *become* the question as incarnate in the all-encompassing world of internet calculations. In a poem whose title poses its own answer—"Photos of Pig That Appears to Have Blue Fat Beneath Skin Shared on Social Media"—she writes: "O swine, how you / bait me, and I cannot / touch you, I can only / click. O pig that appears, I / am also blue, and though / my shade is more / metaphorical, it's like / you know me, and the internet, it knows me, it says / *recommended for you*." The question itself—the question of survival and its meaning, metaphorically and literally—opposes two things that it turns out we cannot live without, despite our ambivalences and screen addictions: a pig's blue fat is—was—life, the very mark of movement in a world of pain, loss and consumption; and the person in embryo, destined for the most part for neglect, poverty and early death. Smith does not avert her eyes or offer pre-packaged religious answers. The choice for life—for all life on the planet—is rapidly slipping away and increasingly predetermined. *Self-Portrait with Cephalopod* is not a clarion call for action; it is elegiac, full of regret and regretful irony, and a worthy successor to her earlier *The Book of Exodus*.

Steemers, Vivian. ***Francophone African Narratives and the Anglo-American Book Market: Ferment on the Fringes.*** Lexington, 2021. 263p.

E. Nicole Meyer
Augusta University

Struck by the "deformation" that narratives by sub-Saharan female writers undergo when translated into English and published in the US and anglophone market, Steemers examines the trajectories of 118 francophone narratives by male and female authors published in English since the 1920s. She sees this re-presentation of black women

in Brancusi's 1928 sculpture *The White Negress II* as exemplary of the remodeling that takes place when bringing narratives of the colonized writer into print.

Taking René Maran's *Batouala* as a watershed moment, Steeemers develops an in-depth analysis of that text in her final chapter. This work develops in a convincing manner—from a broad overview of the French and anglophone literary spaces, the work moves to relevant narrative subgroups. Before reaching the final analysis, however, this thoroughly researched book raises complex questions of the colonial and postcolonial context's imposition of power relations between the dominating culture and language onto the dominated authors in question. This said, boundaries and margins become blurred, and this understanding suggests in part the subtitle of the work. For instance, geographical boundaries are not so clear, especially when one notes the movement of authors through many countries, whether in Europe, Africa, or the islands in the Indian Ocean. Indeed, labels fail due to this "plurality of geographical and sociocultural influences at different stages," characteristic of the diaspora experience (16). What hurdles do the texts encounter in their transition from the French to the Anglo-American market? What political, socioeconomic factors influence the editorial and dissemination of the narratives? Why are these texts chosen and not others?

Data informs this study. For instance, a perhaps not surprising statistic is that 82% of the works are originally published in French in Paris. Only 13% are first published in French outside of the hexagon. The originating press as well as prizes (two not unrelated circumstances) also influence the choice of which works get disseminated through translation into English. When considered within the context of the global book market, sub-Saharan narratives occupy a marginal space, on the fringes, to use Steemers' word. Furthermore, as might be expected, the publication increased markedly after colonial rule ended. New specialized presses emerged along with the recognition of French-speaking African fiction.

Of further interest to this reader is the ways in which translation sometimes is truly a rewriting of the work, in some cases re-defining the genre of the narrative. A case in point is the translation of Ken Bugul's *Le baobab fou* translated as *The Abandoned Baobab: The Autobiography of a Senegalese Woman*. Venuti describes the reframing as "domesticating"

the narrative—in short, bringing it in line with the target language and culture (11). What is clear is that the power asymmetry between colonized and colonizer marks the translation, paratexts and other editorial processes in fascinating and oft unrecognized ways. Indeed, the texts chosen to reach the marketplace are hugely impacted by this process. In the late 1970s works of important women authors such as Mariama Bâ, Aminata Sow Fall, Ken Bugul and Nafissatou Diallo made their way into the anglophone book market. The economic fate of presses also explains the decline of published translations, for instance with the closing of Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines in 1988. This may be part of the reason that truly innovative and important texts, many by women, such as later Bugul works are not available in English.

However, Steemers gives a convincing argument that Bugul's prize-winning *Riwan ou le chemin de sable* was denied publication in English due to anglo resistance to Bugul's positive presentation of polygamy as an empowering healing choice she makes for herself. The lacuna of important voices impedes further understanding of the hybrid identities and the brutal impact colonialism had on the voices of women and male authors, and thus the way we read sub-Saharan works. Steemers' final point is the way in which Maran *Batouala*'s itinerary illustrates the legitimizing roles of those engaged in the production (including the subtitle of "a true negro novel" and other prefatory aspects), dissemination and subsequent recognition through prizes (le Prix Goncourt) and more. Steemers' work reveals fascinating ways in which the literary world remains subject to political power, how this impacts what we read through re-presenting and sometimes rewriting rather than translating. This not only changes the language of the text. It transforms, in sometimes arbitrary manners, the construction of the writer's identity, how we read as well as in some cases the ways that authors fight against certain constraints, producing new narratives. In many ways, this volume is an eye-opening thought-provoking read.

Elizaveta Strakhov. ***Continental England: Form, Translation, and Chaucer in the Hundred Year's War***. Ohio State UP, 2022. 268p.

Jeffery Moser
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Poetic form as a cultural road map is the basis for Elizaveta Strakhov's extensive research that bridges debates about the socio-political fallout and cultural impact from England's armed conflicts with France in the late Middle Ages.

In *Continental England: Form, Translation, and Chaucer in the Hundred Year's War*, scholars discover how the author applies the often neglected and discounted observation that good things can come from bad—the silver lining from events and conditions that alter an old world may, and indeed often do, forge new political and cultural connections in a new world. This is the heart of the "reparative translation" model that identifies how literary translation helped rebuild community and restore unity for the European Continent and England during the early fourteenth century and into the fifteenth.

Medievalist historians and literary studies scholars will welcome Strakhov's attendance to the late medieval lyric genre known as *formes fixes*, which covers a variety of emerging poetic forms in pre-Chaucerian times (1300-1400), including two eventually popularized lyric forms of the lament—particularly the *complainte*--and the ballade, along with other poetic forms. However, these same scholars may take some mild academic umbrage as to whether, theoretically, any firm sense of what counts as "English Literature" existed then, due to a lack of two things: a stable language and continuous works that could be described as "literary" and that were passed down to and replicated or executed through multiple generations.

Fortunately, Strakhov anticipated this potential criticism. She identifies specific lyric types in works by ascribed authors, which were readily recognizable to medieval readers according to prosodic features of stanzaic number, stanzaic length, and rhyme scheme. In fact, this is how many manuscripts from the period that have survived to this day came into existence, by medieval narrators and copyists who meticulously translated English, French, and Latin and transcribed verse structure and forms onto the "page." In this way, *Continental England* examines the phenomenon that poets and scribes "unexpectedly and highly self-consciously" made ties, affinities, and connections through poetry that bind Francophone Europe together (5).

The text proves that medieval European historians and scholars of medieval language and literature would do well to look closely at medieval translation and those translators and scribes who engaged

with form and interlingual translation work. For Strakhov, "form blows open the stakes and reach of translational literary endeavors" (5). The advantages of attending to form gave her license to consider major authors and texts in entirely new combinations by defining form as "reproducible units of meaning" (15). This, in turn, allowed the author to methodically approach and dissemble Anglo-French literary relations to parallel, if not counter, the dirth of existing scholarship that abounds and claims that the Hundred Years' War (c. 1137-1453) left England and France more isolated from one another and more bitter and acrimonious.

Instead, Strakhov cites English poet Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400) as the most evidential and leading practitioner of *formes fixes*. Chaucer was a prolific translator of verse structure and verse form that contributed to a sense of renewal, less anxiety, and more calm between France and England. Chaucer must not be seen only as a great English poet and author, but also as an avid and astute translator. His works of versification and meter accommodated and helped to civilize communities upon the Continent and in England that were disenfranchised and fragmented from the disputes and armed clashes between the English royal House of Plantagenet and the French royal House of Valois. Of course, not lost upon any literary student, is that Chaucer, himself, was a trusted and worthy civil servant. He was able to pursue and sustain his literary and scientific interests while pursuing a career as a diplomat, courtier, and member of parliament.

Too, the relationship and correspondence between the French poet and composer Phillipe de Vitry and the Italian sonneteer Petrarch, along with their literary productions, are evaluated as evidence of broader and more expansive cultural impacts. Through war and poetry, places in England and on the Continent became intertwined. A humanist and more connected world began to emerge via manuscript transmission and poetic study and exchange by literary practitioners. The "Monolingualism and the Other" chapter examines French poet Eustache Deschamps's Ballade to Chaucer and Chaucer's *General Prologue* to Chaucer's long narrative poem in the form of a dream vision, The Legend of Good Women. Strakhov compares these works to reveal how English poets and poets on the Continent were folding politic into poetics. English and Continental *formes fixes* were mirroring one another, as well as introducing and generating new lyric forms and cultural concerns.

This extensive study culminates in a fresh understanding that Chaucer and other writers and poets of his time and shortly after should be newly read and interpreted as reparative translators and authors unbounded by nationality or canon. Most assuredly, Strakhov's text is a worthwhile and scholarly elucidation of a time and its poetry that should not be compressed due to the complexity of socio-political and cultural manifestations and the transmission, fluidity, fusion, and exchange of authors and their works during the late Middle Ages. Thus, the author rightfully concludes:

> Form, as it emerges in text, offers a powerful lens onto events that embrace panoplies of variegated actors, spaces, and modes of affinity and encase them in broad textual traditions. Literature rebinds what war and conflict tear apart. Suturing those binds, form helps us understand better the aspirations, significance, and lofty reach of reparative translation. (225)

Eszter Szép. ***Comics and the Body: Drawing, Reading, and Vulnerability.*** Ohio State UP, 2020. 206p.

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Humans dwell in bodies. How they feel about, relate to, and narrate their bodies and the bodies of the Other are not restricted to any one discipline. Drawing, like writing, is an embodied experience. Eszter Szép argues that reading comics is not just a cognitive experience, but "it is also a performance and interaction of bodies," (1) and "the line is a partner of the drawer and body" (77). However, writing, a verbal medium, happens even before the pen (pencil or laptop letters) hit the page; I compose while I walk which creates a state of mind. Barry, one of the writer-drawers studied here, teaches her students to think of "drawing as a way of thinking" (63).

Grounding her monograph in an impressive swath of theory and comics scholarship, Szép summarizes the array of sources that inform the study in the introduction and reiterates those sources frequently throughout the chapters. Building on film theory, art history, and trauma studies, Szép focuses on activities of the body crucial to making and reading comics. Her introduction, nearly a third of the

volume, draws out the theoretical frameworks and scholarship for her interest in the healing and transformation process in the artist and reader of autobiographical comics. The oft repeated goals established in the first three chapters center on vulnerability as a "central experience expressed by drawing," while chapters four and five focus on reader engagement and performance in dialogue with one's own vulnerability and/or that of the Other (50). Non-fiction graphic narratives by Lynda Barry, Ken Dahl, Katie Green, Miriam Katin, and Joe Sacco explore self-esteem, trauma, and paths to healing across the authors' and their avatars' experiences with drawing, herpes, anorexia, Caesarean, and war. Szép makes a painstaking case for the specific medium of non-fiction comics as a mediated interaction between three bodies: the drawer, the reader, and the material comic.

Representing and re-drawing the body of the authors' avatars is serious business. In Chapter One, readers of Lynda Barry's books like *Syllabus* and *What It Is,* will recognize the author's nearsighted monkey and the hair-tie Lynda avatars. Szép's reading of Barry's texts focuses on the active line and the state of mind produced by the drawer while drawing. Ken Dahl's *Monsters*, in Chapter Two, invites the drawer to illustrate how the Herpes virus transforms not only the avatar Ken's body but self-image as Dahl personifies the ever-changing virus. Without question, this redrawing of the body and its virus destabilizes form and identity. What Elisabeth El Refaie calls "pictorial embodiment" invites the drawer to redraw and reimagine the personality's diverse aspects in discrete modifications of the avatar (83). In the case of Miriam Katin's *Letting it Go* in Chapter Four, her avatar's vulnerability spans several pages of an involuntary defecation and clean-up. These texts, for Szép, affirm that "[d]rawing is interpretation; it is a way to *organize* reality" (39). The drawer-writer's perspective is an interpretation of the events experienced. Comics transform the metaphor into an embodied reality to foster dialogue about vulnerability.

While bodies are indeed the subject of Szép's chosen graphic memoirs, the style of lines are a technique for "[expressing] engagement and compassion with the pain and vulnerability of others" (109). In Chapter Three, Szép zeroes in on Joe Sacco's Bosnian war reportage and his haptic use of crosshatched backgrounds and textures. She makes a compelling case for how Sacco's "compulsive" crosshatching (121) allows the author-drawer to dwell with the drawn stories and

their avatars. This dwelling opens a temporal space wherein Sacco sits with and engages with his subjects, showing a form of bodily engagement. However, in Chapter Five, the use of scribbling in Katie Green's memoir *Lighter Than My Shadow* performs a different function; according to Szép, this particular style permits one "to visualize the subjective experience of how the body feels" (167). Green deconstructs and reconstructs her avatar Katie's body as a structural component of her physically heavy memoir about thinness and disappearing. The "menacing" scribble replaces the traditional gutters and framing of the comic panels with a drawn figurative representation of Katie's anxiety that enters and surrounds her disappearing body (168). Szép reiterates that Sacco's stylistic crosshatching is for dwelling with, and Green's stylistic scribbling makes visible the avatar's suffering and anxiety. I read Green's emotive style as another way of dwelling with her feelings.

To argue for reading comics as a performative experience, where the reader's body is involved in the reading process, might be stating the obvious. However, the act of turning a paper page or touching a screen to "turn a page" does make reading a tactile experience and a non-conscious awareness of one's own body a proprioceptive one. Chapter Four delves in to two of Hungarian-born Miram Katin's memoirs, *We Are On Our Own* and *Letting it Go.* As noted above, Szép focuses on a specific scatological episode in the latter work. It is a challenge to define the abject image and even harder to determine "the reader's performance of reading [which] can be an answer to the drawer's articulation of the experience of vulnerability" (155). When Szép articulates the link between sight and kinesthetic, or proprioceptive, sensations, she is interested in the way lines and images are an embodied practice; reading images and text is cognitively processed with additional sensory information received.

In Chapter Five, Green's memoir's heft presents the material body of the comic in dialogue with the author's narrative about battling anorexia and sexual assault in her avatar's body that seeks to disappear; the memoir is metonymic of Green's avatar's fading body. Sacco's twenty-four-foot-long accordion-style narrative *The Great War,* a wordless, panoramic of World War I's Battle of the Somme, forces the reader to unfold and engage with the physical object as a war narrative. In my reading of this uniquely formatted war narrative, I recognize the absence of a spine and protagonist, which keeps the

reader's eye roving and inspecting. How one reads this creased-printed modern tapestry does break one out of the unconscious kinesthetic mode of reading. I cannot say that I agree with Szép who maintains that this "three-dimensional object establishes a connection between the reader's body and the bodies of the represented soldiers" (177). The initial movement may appear horizontal, but it is also upwards and out of the trenches, which, Szép contends, puts the readers in the trenches with the soldiers. For her, it is how the comic induces an embodied understanding of vulnerability in the reader.

Szép's study certainly affirms the value of reading across disciplines and the merits of comics established by Scott McCloud, Gillian Whitlock, and Hillary Chute. Champions of the humanities--and fiction readers in particular--value the empirical studies that support how reading can instill compassion and *Einfühlung* (empathy) in the reader. To recap her key points, Szép's succinct comic-style conclusion embraces the power of the figurative, emotive, and verbal lines to enact and embody her praxes. Non-fiction comics continue to teach us about vulnerability.

Thrity Umrigar. ***Honor.*** Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2022. 336p.

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Thrity Umrigar's *Honor* explores the consequences of impossible love in the midst of honor killings and a divided India. A journalist herself, Umrigar provides a unique perspective of India through two protagonists: Smita Agarwal, a reluctant Indian American journalist sent to capture the story, and Meena, whose forbidden love resulted in her husband's murder at the hands of her own brothers. Umrigar's past as an immigrant from India undoubtedly provides authority for this difficult yet important work. In an unlikely triumph, Umrigar unites the romance genre, complete with an enemies-to-lovers trope, with the voiceless victims of honor killings. Unflinching in its portrayal of the complicated race relations of Muslims and Hindus, the novel uses the framework of romance to expose Old India's presence in New India's reality.

Honor tells two parallel love stories, one doomed and one

privileged, while simultaneously exploring a love-hate relationship with India as a complicated and complex mother country. Smita, whose specialty involves women's issues in foreign countries, has a troubled and mysterious history with India that is teased and eventually revealed towards the novels' close. Meena, a Hindu woman who is suing her brothers for the death of her Muslim husband, is the subject of the seasoned journalist's endeavors. Smita is hesitant to form an attachment with Meena. However, Smita's own trauma with India makes her usual cold objectivity impossible.

Although the stories of women killed for honor are numerous, they often feature the men who kill women to preserve their own reputation and honor. Most of Meena's story, told in italicized sections in her own voice, is the tender love story between her and her lover. The honor present in their love restores meaning to the term and results in the naming of their child. Not flinching away from Meena's horrific treatment, Umrigar tactfully tells her story as a victim without victimizing her. Meena's final act of bravery to protect her daughter and cruel mother-in-law demonstrates the active rather than passive position she plays. Meena's choice to sue her brothers draws media attention, and subsequently, the interaction with Smita and the progression of the plot. Honor killings in India are well documented, yet Umrigar's positioning of Meena solidifies the importance of her work.

Meena and Smita take center stage, but India's presence is never absent. Smita's disgust towards India is personified in her developing relationship with Mohan. Mohan, a kind and proud son of gold miners, often argues that India is a beautiful place. Smita's frequent biting remarks against India are met with well-argued rebuttals by Mohan, causing readers to side with Mohan's seemingly more understanding approach. However, the author cleverly forces readers and Mohan to confront the realities of India through both women's stories. Meena's treatment by the chief of her village and her brothers begins to unravel Mohan. Later, Smita reveals her backstory, partly for her own relief, but also so that Mohan could finally see some of her own repulsion with India. Smita's family is forced to convert to Hinduism after a mob drags her and her brother, young children at the time, into the street and sexually assaults both of them while their neighbors do nothing. Smita's earlier comments about India no longer ring as harsh, and Mohan's defenses of India suddenly sound weak

and uninformed. Rather than demonize and condemn India, however, Smita's confession and solace in Mohan allows her to appreciate India again. Mohan represents all of the best of India, and in his loving embrace, Smita can begin to form healthy attachments again.

Honor does exactly what it sets out to do: restore honor not just to victims of honor killings, but to India. By describing India as a home, a place where food and people are united under the dust that permeates everywhere, Umrigar allows readers, through Smita's own reunification with India, to see what Mohan and others see: the possibility of a New India. Umrigar also, through the horrors of Meena's tragic and doomed tale, exposes the Old India traditions lurking under the surface that disproportionately punish women. The skillful unification of both these views leaves the audience with the beautiful vision of melding that Smita remembers at the close of the novel, causing her to join Mohan in India. The novel's close invites readers to imagine a future for India–and not to stop running against injustice until we have gotten there.

Chris Warren. ***Ernest Hemingway in the Yellowstone High Country: A Complete Account of Hemingway's Work and Adventures in Montana and Wyoming***. Riverbend Publishing, 2019. 169p.

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When folks ask me about RMMLA, I describe it as the Rocky Mountain region's largest scholarly research organization for all languages and literatures including English. Not only is it our region's largest in terms of number of members, but of the six regional divisions of the national Modern Language Association, it encompasses the greatest geographical territory—north to south from Canada to Mexico and east to west from Colorado to Nevada. All the states in our vast region are part of the Rocky Mountain chain, plus one city, El Paso, the only part of Texas with a mountain. The two numbers of this year's volume 76 of our academic journal, *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature,* comprise our largest annual volume ever published. The Chinese Feature Issue 76.1 and this Issue 76.2 end our anniversary year with feature articles and reviews on Afghan,

American, British, Chinese, French, German, Indian, Latin American, and Spanish literature from all time periods, medieval through contemporary, highlighting that our membership and the scope of our studies is international, interdisciplinary and spans centuries. This past year, 2022, we celebrated the 75th anniversary of our founding in Albuquerque, NM. The masterful convention Keynote by Wayne Catan on Hemingway's Impact portrayed this "man of the world" journalist and creative writer who traveled, observed and wrote about the Italian front in WWI, France's cosmopolitan Lost Generation, Spain's Civil War and bull fights, African safaris, Key West and Cuban fishing—and won world renowned Pulitzer and Nobel prizes.

Yet, for all his worldly experience, a significant part of Hemingway's early formation as a writer and adventurer took place here in the heart of our Rocky Mountain region in Wyoming and Montana, what Ralph Glidden termed "the Yellowstone High Country." True to his subtitle, *A Complete Account of Hemingway's Work and Adventures in Montana and Wyoming,* Chris Warren begins with Hemingway's first visit to the Sheridan, Wyoming area in 1928. There he completed his first novel, *A Farewell to Arms,* and met Owen Wister, author of *The Virginian,* in Shell, Wyoming and drove around with him shooting prairie dogs (27, 35). After 1930, Hemingway's visits were centered on the northeast boundary of Yellowstone Park, from Cooke City, Montana to the L—T (Read "L Bar T" Ranch), where he wrote 350 pages of *Death in the Afternoon.* A rustic map details 20 key spots, from the Yellowstone River, where Hemingway was the first driver to ford Clark's Fork in his 1928 Ford Model A "Roadster Coupe" (sic) in 1930, then returned in the summers of '32,' 36, '38 and '39. A little more cartographic precision is needed, since page 155 states, "Cooke City sits ten miles to the west of the L—T Ranch," but the map on pages 18-19 locates Cooke City (# 20) east of the L—T (# 8). The carefully researched volume incorporates fascinating photos from the Sheridan County Fulmer Public Library, the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and the Patrick Hemingway Collection at Princeton's Firestone Library and never-before-seen views from townsfolk who hunted and fished with him. This well-documented study draws upon a wealth of biographies (especially Carlos Baker's) and Hemingway's prolific correspondence, particularly with Scribner's editor, Max Perkins.

One of the biographical strengths of Warren's account is

his identification of locals and locales that serve as prototypes for Hemingway's characters and settings. The introductory vignettes of "The Players," profiling Ernest's family and area residents, and Appendix III, describing towns and businesses, and Appendix II, "The Yellowstone High Country in the Work" offer useful connections between real people and places and their fictional counterparts and derivatives. Robert Jordan, protagonist of *For Whom the Bell Tolls,* is a Spanish teacher from Red Lodge, Montana, who refers to his best friend Chub, named for Chub Weaver, Hemingway's best friend in Montana, who was with him when he dropped the Smith and Wesson revolver that his father had used when he committed suicide into Froze-to-Death Lake. Likewise, Robert Jordan drops his father's suicide weapon into a deep mountain lake and mentions his riding partner, Chub (12, 147). The real Chub was godfather to Hemingway's second son Patrick and taught him to read on a grizzly bear hunt in 1936 (24). Weaver is from Cooke City, one of the sites along with Paris, Madrid, and Key West that Hemingway lists as one of his favorite places to write (153). Cooke City also appears in *For Whom the Bell Tolls, Across the River and into the Trees* and *True at First Light* (143*).* One of Warren's most enlightening discoveries is that Cooke City, renamed "Jessup," is the setting of "A Man of the World" (12), the final story published in Hemingway's lifetime. Appendix IV's reprint (151-58) of Warren's paper for the 2018 International Hemingway Conference in Paris convincingly details this close, and heretofore undisclosed, connection.

Warren also zeroes in on an essential theme that ties together Hemingway's lived experiences with his fictionalized versions: "wounding and injury, and how men deal with them physically and psychologically." Throughout his life, Hemingway suffered serious injuries that formed an experience base for his character portrayals. The first, and best known, was as a teenage ambulance driver when he was the first American wounded on the Italian front in WWI. His hospitalization with 227 shrapnel wounds became the basis for *A Farewell to Arms,* which he completed during his first visit to Sheridan, Wyoming in 1928. In 1930, a severe broken arm in a car accident in the Yellowstone High Country landed him at St. Vincent's Hospital in Billings, Montana for seven weeks' recuperation and resulted in the short story, "The Gambler, the Nun, and the Radio" (52). While Warren does not delve deeply into literary criticism, his perceptive links between