

## BOOK REVIEWS

- 372** CRAIN, PATRICIA. *Reading Children: Literacy, Property, and the Dilemmas of Childhood in Nineteenth-Century America*. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 2016. Pp. 280 illus. US\$75.00 hardcover, US\$37.50 paperback.

**Brigitte Fielder, University of Wisconsin, Madison**

In *Reading Children: Literacy, Property, and the Dilemmas of Childhood in Nineteenth-Century America*, Patricia Crain explores how the concept of childhood has developed alongside ideas about children as readers. Tracing the “linked genealogies” of the concepts of the child/childhood and literacy/reading and writing practices, Crain argues that these concepts are mutually constituted (8). The idea of “reading children” characterizes not only childhood activities, education, and abilities, but emerges as a deeply classed, racialized, and moralistic understanding of children and childhood. In her discussion of “the promise and presumption of self-ownership signified by literary practices” (7), Crain shows how the construction of childhood that emerges in tandem with notions of literacy is also racialized and classed. Children who are poor—those who lack access to material commodities and wealth—and children who are enslaved—those who do not legally own their own bodies—are not absented from notions of “reading children” but are interpolated in various constructions of idealized (middle-class, white) children as readers. Throughout her study, Crain emphasizes the shifting landscape for understanding reading children, as a result of shifting beliefs about and constructions of childhood, changing technologies of print and other media, and transatlantic influences in which US literature is never entirely contained.

The book opens with two chapters focusing on early children’s texts, the ballad of

the “Babes in the Wood,” a version of which Crain reproduces in full in her Appendix, and *The History of Little Goody Two-Shoes*. Reading literacy as a form of property, the first chapter forms connections between Goody’s material lack of property and inheritance and “the inalienable property of literacy” (31). Taking up the place of literacy acquisition in the larger shifts toward a market economy from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth, Crain reads both this classic story and its subsequent retelling to show how literacy, rather than property, comes to be associated with childhood subjectivity. Chapter Two extends this discussion to regard childhood itself as a form of “literary property” available only to some (11). Attending to the ballad and its later print forms and adaptations, Crain understands reading children’s connections to the production and commodification of childhood and all its attending nostalgia.

Chapter Three turns to missionary uses of Joseph Lancaster’s monitorial education system and the relationship between pedagogical practices and media technologies such as the optical telegraph. In what she calls a “literacy contract, treaty-like” (13) to which children implicitly consent in antebellum literature, Crain examines this contract as a false promise. Reading the reeducation and renaming of Cherokee mission students, Crain shows how children do—and more importantly how they do not—become legible to white authority within the assimilationist Lancasterian system. Chapter Four also takes up the institutionalization of children via familial belonging and labour exchange. Reading “lost” or “stolen” child stories of the early nineteenth century and Jacob Abbott’s popular children’s series, Crain explores the extent of children’s autonomy within US capitalist systems and asks questions about how children are valued—questions that depend upon both race and economic class. If reading is understood as a kind of property children might claim, this raises the question of their property in themselves, a question in which the possibility of race-based chattel slavery looms, even for free Black child readers.

Chapter Five explores children’s uses of the material artifact of the book. As children engage with the text, books sometimes become marked by the children who read them. This evidence of use, at times, also becomes a marker of property, designating to whom a book belongs; at other times, these markings are more ambiguous. Childhood markings are also markers of childhood, the tracings in which later readers would attempt to understand children’s relationships to and engagements with books. While not extending or preserving childhood, exactly, Crain discusses how these markings might—as with the book owned by a child who has died—convey not only their particular account of childhood cut short but constitute a part of that child’s memorialization. The sixth and final chapter reads in Henry James’s turn-of-the-century representations of childhood the image of the “medial child,” a figure who “provides a channel to a sought-after realm” (146). In James’s writing, Crain reads childhood as literary property, the figure through which notions of self-consciousness and self-possession are explored and developed. Crain reads James’s engagement with childhood as also registering the shifting media landscape of this moment, as reading print materials takes a prized place among other modes of com-

munication, both technological and supernatural.

The book's coda on bedtime stories briefly describes this now-familiar genre and practice of late-night reading. Crain discusses the emergence of "bedtime story" reading as a relatively recent development that was facilitated by the technological advances and economic accessibility of safer lighting, books available within the home, and—of course—leisure time. The pairing of bedtime reading and sleep produces an idea of reading-as-dreaming, shifting the child reader's relationship to space and time. The Appendix includes the text of the ballad "The Children in the Wood." Having this text available for reading and discussion would be particularly useful for course adoptions of this volume.

374 Crain's book is interested as much in the construction of "reading child" as it is in actual children as readers. Understandings of children as readers have been tied especially to imagining them as readers of books. Thus, discussions and depictions of reading children have related them to particular material culture objects that denote the permanency and possession of the printed text, while giving less attention to other reading encounters and forms. The image with which Crain begins her discussion—of a child reading in a window seat, book nestled on her lap—drives this point home. Crain briefly extends her discussion of the reading child into the twenty-first century, showing how this familiar imagery is repeated in advertisements for Barnes and Noble's NOOK e-reader. This visualization of the embodied act of reading is accompanied by an array of archival images, reproduced in colour, which provide examples of many of the children's book illustrations Crain discusses here, as well as of how children's relationships to books and reading have been depicted and developed.

One imagines that this volume might appeal broadly to readers interested in childhood studies across various fields. Crain's careful and close readings of a variety of texts for and about children are a highlight of her book. Literary scholars, in particular, will not be disappointed. Still, readers invested in not only children's literature but in the construction of childhood and the history of children's literacy will also find much here. The ground that Crain covers here is broad, spanning the "long" nineteenth century. While this scope allows readers to see a long historical and literary arc in her argument, this is inevitably limiting in some respects, as there are several avenues that Crain might have explored more fully—particularly the still under-studied histories of nonwhite child readers. Alternately, the work Crain does produce here about nonwhite children as readers does not foreclose this study but suggests rich avenues for further scholarship. Nevertheless, Crain's book will surely be a much-cited text among children's literature and childhood studies scholars for years to come.

JAGOE, EVA-LYNN. *Take Her, She's Yours*. Goletta, CA: Punctum Books, 2020. Pp. 216. US\$21.00 paperback.

**Ricky Varghese, Ryerson University/Toronto Institute of Psychoanalysis**

Psychoanalysis, both in theory and practice, becomes particularly enlivened when a foundational concept comes to life in the most wildly unexpected and strangely serendipitous manner. In my practice, I often find myself returning to the well-trodden Freudian idea of the uncanny, that “species of the frightening that goes back to what was once well known and had long been familiar” (124). This review, as will become apparent shortly, emerged from just such an uncanny experience that both inflected my reading of Eva-Lynn Jagoe’s book and its possible perception within public discourse.

While working my way through Jagoe’s text, I posted an image of the book’s cover on my *Instagram* account on a whim, mentioning that I was thinking of reviewing it. Within minutes, I received a private message from a well-meaning colleague alerting me to a minor controversy involving Jagoe in 2017. The issue in question involved an essay that Jagoe had published in the Spring 2018 issue of the journal *Discourse*, “Jumping the Break: Wildfires and the Logic of Separation.” The essay outlines Jagoe’s perception of the events and discussions during the 2017 iteration of the Banff Research in Culture residency program, of which she was one of the co-organizers. Other participants in the program and some of the guest faculty took issue with Jagoe’s account and characterization of events, issuing a collectively authored critique. This response, “Staying with the Breaks, Disappropriating the Universal: A Response to Eva-Lynn Jagoe,” was also published in the subsequent Winter 2019 issue of *Discourse*. In the same issue of the journal, Jagoe was invited to provide a response to “Staying with the Breaks,” “Broken? Notes toward 2067.”

The matter was thus seemingly resolved in true academic fashion: a contentious essay, a necessary critique, and a response to the criticism, all published by the same journal that offered its pages as the site for this spirited exchange, until, of course, my well-meaning colleague reached out to alert me of what had happened. Not only did she message me and give me a brief summary of the events as they seemed to have played out, but she also offered to email me PDF versions of the “two racist ‘essays’” [*sic*]. Within minutes, the first two essays had arrived in my inbox. In the meantime, I removed my post, found the third text—Jagoe’s response to the criticism—through my university’s library system, and prepared myself to read all three texts in earnest and think about what had just occurred in this bewildering encounter.

It was startling, to say the least. What I was startled by, however, in thinking more about this instance of concern, after I had read the essays in question, was not the debate per se. I was not at the residency and cannot claim to speak to what may have happened. As far as I was concerned, from my outsider’s perspective, the matter had

already been rigorously addressed. What startled me was how, unknowingly, my colleague had literalized the very title of Jagoe's book. The need to reach out to me was baffling, especially when the concerns at hand had been addressed. My colleague had not indicated why she was sharing this information with me, and I was left with an uncertain feeling as to what she was expecting me to do, if anything. On reflecting upon it further, I began to observe that what my colleague had done was fascinatingly psychoanalytic in its gestural implications. She inadvertently manifested the psychic splitting that is the thematic core of Jagoe's memoir, that so tormented the author and that she, as is outlined in the book, had spent her entire life struggling against. By alerting me to the debates, my colleague had passed Jagoe on to me, and, more precisely, had passed her subjectivity on to me as the reviewer of her book to be the bearer of some unnamed sort of ethical responsibility. It is as though with that gesture, that appeared out of well-meaning concern, she was saying, "take her, she's yours..." and this felt like a significant way to imagine what it might mean to review a profoundly psychoanalytic book.

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*Take Her, She's Yours* derives its title from a painful story that Jagoe grew up with, which sets the stage for what feels like an originary scene of psychic trauma. Jagoe "told the story [she] had heard so often [to her psychoanalyst, Dr. O], about when [she] was born and brought home from the hospital [... her] father handed [her] to Dolores, the housekeeper [... he] said, 'Take her, she's yours'" (45). Her parents, an American father and a mother from Spain, "hadn't wanted more children. They were strict Catholics so they didn't want to use birth control. All six pregnancies were unplanned. The two miscarriages between [her] siblings were a relief to [her] mother. She didn't want children in the first place, and suffered from postpartum depression after all [their] births [... a] child should never know that she was unwanted" (45).

Reminiscent of the late Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *A Dialogue on Love*, but resolutely ensconced within a class of its own, what follows in *Take Her, She's Yours* is part memoir, part psychoanalytic diary, and part exercise in self-exegesis. It is a reading of oneself and one's psychical formation in the context of being in analysis as if one might do a close reading of a formidably challenging text. Set within the space and time of the five years that Jagoe spent in analysis with Dr. O, we find a subject in search of herself and a sense of belonging otherwise beyond the confines of her father's formative command, "take her, she's yours." Having had to negotiate the complex feelings of being unwanted by her parents, having had to volley herself between a mother whose affection felt deeply scarce and a housekeeper, Dolores, whose affection at times seemed brazenly overwhelming, Jagoe learned to split herself into disparate parts to accommodate the desires, needs, and wants of others. She reflects that "maybe I split myself because I learned, as a young girl, to give bits away, and to hide away those that seemed unattractive or repulsive" (94). In the heart of such an observation, one might discern a remarkable yearning for the assuredness of a kind of primal safety that she felt she sorely lacked. Splitting the self, as she began to understand it through the work of analysis, became a way to protect the self from the

harm of non-belonging. Jagoe would recognize through her work with Dr. O “what a pained logic” (95) this was “that chooses the breaking off of parts over the risk of attack to the vulnerable self. It’s safer, [she] guessed, to do it [herself]. At least that way you can choose where the splitting occurs” (95).

As such, *Take Her, She’s Yours* is a deeply intimate text. As the reader will come to learn, Jagoe had initially wanted to write a (theoretical) book “about psychoanalysis” (174), and instead she ended up scribing a book about her own analysis. There is a distinction often made between what happens in the clinical setting of the analyst’s office and couch and the world of applied psychoanalysis that uses theory to understand cultural objects such as art, literature, and film. As someone both trained in the humanities and now presently training to become an analyst himself, I had always found this distinction somewhat suspect. Jagoe rigorously showcases why we need to be suspicious of such, dare I say, disciplinary splitting. Though there are incursions into the theoretical terrains of Freudian and Lacanian analysis at times, and though she invokes children’s fables, rhymes, and mythologies in her book on occasion to enact a reading of them, her commitment is, it would seem, first and foremost to herself and how all of these passions she holds dear to herself offer yet another piece of the puzzle that is her self. Analysis, as she observes it, “[is] always about telling a story, and retelling it, and reinterpreting it” (94). It is an intimate work founded on the grounds of a profoundly intimate sort of encounter.

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Speaking of the encounter itself, no text I have read in the last while has so effectively represented the utter loneliness, or rather the poignant solitude of the work that happens in an analytic session, between the analyst and the analysand. It is an intimate sort of solitude punctuated by the weightiness of the words and silences that seem to pass between the two. Nowhere is this so significantly showcased than in how Jagoe ends her analysis and her book: “It had been a long and painful conversation that had shaped us in relation to each other. In that room, we held each other accountable for our words and actions. We attended to whatever was brought into words. And we held it. Everything that had happened between us was not going to be summed up [... there] was no one to thank” (203-04). The question of accountability—as in holding space *with* an other—feels like an uncanny way to end this review. I still wonder about the charges laid upon Jagoe’s essays. When I directly asked my colleague how I might productively address the issue, and whether I should go ahead and write this review, she suggested that perhaps I add a footnote to attend to my awareness of the debates. I recalled Rebecca Comay on the gesture of footnoting, about “banishing the inexpungible residue to the negligible wasteland of a footnote.” I wondered, was this enough? Was that the sort of accountability that was required of me? Or, would I only function to further sever Jagoe into the parts that she worked to understand and hold together in the analytic space? The answers to these questions may remain open and uncertain to me. But, as Jagoe has suggested, when it comes to the question of accountability, both psychoanalytically and possibly politically speaking, there might be no way to sum up everything that happened.<sup>1</sup>

## NOTE

1. I would like to thank Vince Rozario for reading a draft version of this review and offering suggestions toward revising it.

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FANG, KAREN. *Arresting Cinema: Surveillance in Hong Kong Film*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2017. Pp. 240. US\$85.00 hardcover, US\$25.00 paperback.

### **Jessica Ka Yee Chan, University of Richmond**

Timely and even prescient, Karen Fang's *Arresting Cinema: Surveillance in Hong Kong Film* articulates the longstanding obsession with "surveillance" in Hong Kong cinema from the postwar colonial period to the postcolonial millennium. Throughout her study, Fang argues that Hong Kong and its cinema are at the forefront of global surveillance. The 2003 SARS epidemic, American National Security Agency whistleblower Edward Snowden's leakage of documents in Hong Kong in 2013, and the 2014 Umbrella Protests illustrate that Hong Kong has long been a hotbed of surveillance, civic protests, and security issues. Film, especially Hong Kong film, is "uniquely positioned to forecast future surveillance technologies and practices" (21). Given the anxiety surrounding state and medical surveillance that resurfaced in the 2019 protests in Hong Kong and the COVID-19 pandemic that is ongoing as of this writing, Fang's unique and pioneering study of surveillance as a mode of representation in Hong Kong cinema is a major contribution to the fields of Film Studies and Hong

Kong Studies.

Fang's study uncovers "surveillance," defined as "any technology or practice engaged in social, spatial, and data monitoring" (1), as an understudied narrative representation that encompasses a wide variety of genres in Hong Kong cinema. Divided into four chapters, the book traces the historical, formal, and generic transformation of surveillance in colonial and postcolonial Hong Kong cinema. Each chapter is devoted to a unique aesthetics and ethics of surveillance that emerged at a particular historical juncture: the emergence of the working class and Cantonese comedies in Hong Kong's capitalist economy in the 1970s in Chapter One; the sense of prosperity and paranoia in the 1980s and 1990s prior to reunification in Chapter Two; the symbiosis between the Hong Kong film and media industry, surveillance institutions, and law enforcement that gave rise to the cop and crime genre in the 1970s and afterward in Chapter Three; and the survival and transformation of the undercover genre in an age of self-censorship and co-production after reunification in Chapter Four. Fang convincingly demonstrates that surveillance and Hong Kong cinema are intimately intertwined: from rags to riches, from prosperity to anxiety, and from British colonial surveillance to Chinese national surveillance.

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The introduction establishes the book's theoretical framework and positions Hong Kong cinema in world surveillance cinema, which is largely Eurocentric and underpinned by longstanding Cold War binary thinking. Fang argues that Hong Kong cinema demonstrates an alternative aesthetics and ethics of surveillance due to its unique position of political disempowerment with its colonial past and postcolonial present. She revisits the canon of Hong Kong cinema by exploring surveillance motifs and conventions in understudied genres such as tenement films and gambling films, which are reflective of the postwar working class, its upward social mobility, and financial speculation in the increasingly industrialized and capitalist economy in colonial Hong Kong. Tenement films such as *In the Face of Demolition* (1953) and *The House of 72 Tenants* (1973) typically revolve around the local practice of subdividing rooms and installing multiple families within single-family homes due to limited housing stock and social services during the postwar influx of refugees. Fang highlights individual and collective acts of surveillance, such as voyeurism and eavesdropping, which often ultimately undermine tyrannical landlords in tenement films. Such acts of surveillance in tenement films, Fang argues, represent working class disempowerment, empathy, solidarity, and "communitarian ethics" (15). In that regard, she articulates an alternative definition of surveillance as diffused, decentralized, and even subversive. Fang also discusses gambling films, an idiosyncratic, highly commercial, but less commonly taught (and translated) genre that proliferated in Hong Kong cinema. She astutely observes the "optical pleasure of gambling-motivated surveillance," such as casino security and card counting, as well as "optical and cinematographic flourishes such as zoom, swish pan, point-of-view shots, split screens, aerial and under-the-table shots, and screens within screens" (10). These images of surveillance create a circuit of "intense, vigilant gaze" by gamblers and



spectators (11). Fang notes that these visual tropes and aesthetics may cross over from one genre to another; for example, crime thriller auteur John Woo served as assistant director for *The Casino* (1972). In revisiting the canon of Hong Kong cinema as well as its understudied genres, Fang articulates an alternative way to define surveillance in world cinema.

Chapter One explores Michael Hui's surveillance comedies, which often include the monitoring of employees in bottling factories, hotels, restaurant kitchens, warehouses, and office backrooms. Fang demonstrates that surveillance, as an "attribute of Hong Kong social fabric," is mostly "economic rather than political" in Hui's films (41). Hui's films often feature the Hong Kong everyman as a labouring individual in a capitalist economy, which conditions individuals to surveillance monitoring while providing them opportunities for upward social mobility (40). In her comparative reading of Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* (1936) and Michael Hui's surveillance comedies, Fang describes the use of surveillance as a "comic lingua franca" (48).

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She further highlights the creative energy of Hui's surveillance comedies in incorporating the Hollywood tradition of private detectives with parodies of Bond-style espionage.

Chapter Two explores the action and crime films of the 1980s through the mid-1990s before the 1997 handover. Fang observes that those films often feature Sinophobic and Manichean plotlines, mainland criminality, looming fatality, impossibility of emigration and escape, and bureaucratic and capitalist monitoring. She suggests that surveillance motifs preceding the 1997 handover "entail both a positive emphasis on surveillance's association with prosperity and economic mobility and negative connotations of political repression and violence" (61). In other words, action and crime films of the handover era are symptomatic of anticommunist paranoia and economic aspirations for prosperity and continuity (62).

Chapter Three is the most thought-provoking chapter, as Fang articulates what has been missing, understudied, and critical in scholarship on Hong Kong cinema. She critically decouples what is conventionally known as the "crime thriller" or "cop and crime" genre from a formalist reading of the action (and *wuxia*) genre and highlights instead the historical collaboration between the film and media industry and law enforcement.<sup>1</sup> In doing so, she effectively identifies the key moments in Hong Kong film and media history and the crisis, reforms, and evolution of the Royal Hong Kong Police (RHKP). No film scholar has explored that symbiosis as attentively and eloquently as Fang. She also notes that the Hong Kong new wave emerged from the collaboration between the film and media industry and the RHKP. In that regard, Fang makes the important observation that colonial surveillance gave rise to the flourishing of Hong Kong cinema and its film stars, which partook in civic education and promoted the image of the RHKP. Fang's discussion of the codependency between surveillance institution, law enforcement, and the film and media industry echoes recent scholarship on the artistic experimentations that were made possible by collaboration with and sponsorship by surveillance institutions and law enforce-

ment (see Lovejoy). Much of the history of that collaboration remains unexplored and will be a fruitful area of inquiry and research.

If British colonial surveillance enabled the flourishing of Hong Kong cinema and the cop and crime genre, would postcolonial and Chinese national surveillance wither the arts? Chapter Four examines the anxiety, dilemma, and possibilities posed by that question. Fang presents two modes that characterize the Hong Kong film industry in the contemporary age of co-production: Mandarin-language big-budget co-productions (*wuxia* revival film or *dapian*) with epic plots, set in epochal moments of Chinese national history; and Cantonese-language films with a local setting that is unmistakably recognizable as Hong Kong in the tradition of social realism. Fang argues that Hong Kong's comparatively less spectacular and small-budget undercover films represent a third way and "model for Hollywood and other world cinemas a paradigm of survival in a new age of Chinese political, economic, and cinematic power" (130-31). For instance, Fang highlights how *Infernal Affairs* (2002) packaged highly local stories in ways that remained commercially viable with "a loose Hollywood gloss," therefore attracting a Hollywood remake and mainland Chinese cooptation or imitation (132). She argues that the "cosmopolitanism and portability of surveillance motifs" make Hong Kong cinema the "vanguard of cinematic influence" (140).

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Like Victor Fan's monograph *Extraterritoriality: Locating Hong Kong Cinema and Media* (2019), which highlights perturbation as a condition of extraterritoriality, Fang's study locates and articulates the anxiety surrounding surveillance in Hong Kong's colonial past and postcolonial present. The case of Hong Kong cinema, Fang suggests, complicates conventional notions of surveillance because solidarity and community are also made possible by surveillance. Clarifying or expanding the myriad definitions of surveillance in the body of the work, rather than in endnotes, would make the book's central ideas more assessible and compelling. Fang's study is informed by attentive historical reading of a wide variety of Hong Kong films, including their remakes and permutations in world cinema. The study is refreshing and imaginative because of its deep historical sense and provocative emphasis on the contemporaneity of Hong Kong cinema with the rest of the world in the midst of surveillance challenges.

## NOTE

1. For a formalist reading of the aesthetics of action in Hong Kong cinema, see Bordwell.

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FISK, GLORIA. *Orhan Pamuk and the Good of World Literature*. New York: Columbia UP, 2018. Pp. 280. US\$65.00 hardcover, US\$64.99 ebook.

### **Yuqian Cai, Hong Kong University**

382 What is “the good” of world literature? To begin with, it must be “good” world literature; following Pamuk in holding high standards for the “global” novel, Gloria Fisk considers literary merit a prerequisite for anything to qualify as world literature. But for Americans, “world literature” usually means just “world literature (in English or English translation).” Whereas New York and London are the present headquarters for what Pascale Casanova calls “the world republic of letters,” writers in languages other than English, especially non-Western writers such as Pamuk, are subjugated to “uneven processes of translation, circulation, and judgment” in the West, which Fisk’s scholarly debut tackles. Thanks to her experience in Turkey, Fisk includes a Turkish perspective on Pamuk and problematizes the Western point of view. Reading Pamuk as her central case study along with other Nobel laureates, Fisk defends these writers’ literary value and autonomy against political imposition and instrumentalization, and she probes what good the global novel and novelist, and American literary critics, can do.

From the onset, Fisk is concerned with author-reader relations in an uneven transnational sphere. Introducing Pamuk as a global novelist who engages a literary public “as rich in cultural capital as it is far-flung,” Fisk reads Pamuk’s canonization as a “Rorschach test” to see what it takes for a non-Western writer to become an author of world literature accessible to Western readers. Put simply, Pamuk is appreciated by the Western public not so much for his craft as for his service as a “bridge between East and West,” who brings cultural and political good, such as solidarity among strangers, to audiences unfamiliar with a world that they expect a national spokesperson or native guide to reliably show, albeit through fiction. Pamuk was further rewarded with a Nobel Prize soon after he touched on “the Armenian issue,” which remade him into a public figure and brought against him a criminal charge for his “insult to Turkishness.” The polarized reception of Pamuk in Turkey and the West highlights the politicization of international prizes and the asymmetries in world-literary formation. It also reflects a Western penchant for fusing the aesthetic with the political as the criterion for literary merit, as Fisk discerns, while in the US,

after multiculturalism won the canon wars, world literature has become what David Damrosch calls “windows into foreign worlds” without necessarily demonstrating the quality of masterpieces. That means, for Fisk, that in the West, especially America, the literary value of non-Western and multicultural texts is too often made contingent on political utility.

Despite her insistence on aesthetic quality, Fisk mainly inquires into the cultural and political uses of world literature. She divides her book into three sections: “What Good Can a Novel Do?” “What Good Can a Novelist Do?” and “What Good Can World Literature Do?” The first section is further divided in two, the titles of which indicate the educational functions of the global novel: to teach Western readers about “other people” and “other people’s history.” This may seem commonplace, but what Fisk does is to analyze Pamuk’s own claims and writings, together with the testimonies of the “culture brokers of Western literary institutions” such as Margaret Atwood and the Swedish Academy, and with the critiques of Turkish readers who find in Pamuk a “betrayal of their national identity” or a “purveyor of the Orientalist propaganda.” Pamuk is more sophisticated than what he is typically praised for or accused of. In *Snow* (2002), for example, the characters embody a “full range of ideological factions” and express all kinds of viewpoints, including some that protest Western hegemony and doubt the odds of cross-cultural understanding. Fisk points out that *Snow* represents a version of Mikhail Bakhtin’s heteroglossia and of Rebecca Walkowitz’s “comparison literature,” and one might add that it also corroborates Adam Kirsch’s belief in the global novel’s capacity to encompass and transcend all sorts of divisions. Given the novel’s empathy-building effects, such as “solidity” and “therapy,” Fisk argues that readers’ “identification” is a new criterion for literary value. In a sense, Pamuk’s novel enables Turkish characters to speak nonfictional truths to Western readers who identify with the characters in turn; meanwhile, it underlines its own status as fiction, the core value of which is “embedded in the political but not in service to it.” When Pamuk misrepresents historical facts to convey a message in the story of the suicide girls, whose headscarves are turned into an emblem of individual freedom against the secular state—to figuratively align the author’s “nationalist persecutors,” Fisk suggests anachronistically as Pamuk had faced no persecution at that time, with the commonly assumed “patriarchal oppression in the Islamic world”—Fisk claims that the novel creates an “interpretive failure” for readers unfamiliar with the context. Even so, she defends the novelist’s right to manipulate details, to challenge rather than confirm Western expectations and prejudices about the East, and to knit “the particular” with “the universal” through diegetic rather than historiographical or journalistic narrative. In short, the good a global novel can do is to expand readers’ imaginations through literary identifications, and hence to achieve a sort of cross-cultural enlightenment in line with cosmopolitan principles.

In the second section, consisting of three chapters on Pamuk as “political gadfly,” as “exile,” and as Nobel Prize winner, Fisk turns her attention from literary texts to cultural and political contexts. The controversies surrounding Pamuk began with the

Armenian issue and the swiftly-following Nobel Prize, but the Western public does not know how equivocal Pamuk was: he never mentioned “genocide,” for instance. For the West, he is a hero of free speech against a repressive regime; for Turkey, however, he is a traitor who speaks “like a globalist abroad and a nationalist at home,” and he is “a remnant of a privileged class” nostalgic for an aristocratic past. Pamuk assumes an exilic mantle as “a superior vantage from which to see the world,” which is crucial to the Western critical tradition “fathered” by Erich Auerbach; but whereas Emily Apter and Kader Konuk both find Auerbach “ideologically disposed” to diminish Istanbul’s intellectual scene from which he was an exile, Konuk suggests that Pamuk’s exilic consciousness is more temporal than spatial, since Pamuk wrote in Istanbul while reflecting on Ottoman and early republican eras, often through a Western traveller’s or exile’s viewpoint. In light of this, Fisk boldly proposes to “retire all metaphorical uses of exile,” since such rhetoric is empty in the face of the lived experiences suffered by millions of refugees and underprivileged émigrés. Pamuk is not really an exile, and his exilic aura merely boosts his worldwide fame, at the cost of his ties to home country, but not gravely. The Nobel Prize has made Pamuk a celebrity, but comparing him to Mo Yan and other laureates, such as Kawabata, Solzhenitsyn, Mahfouz, Morrison, Pinter, and Munro, Fisk objects to the prize as a historically specific artifice, which tethers literary value to non-Western writers’ ability to act like global citizens in Western terms and renders their enshrinement arguably contingent on cultural particularity and political utility “as instruments to advance the grand narratives of the West.” Mo Yan seems like an exception to this rule, but following other scholars’ accurate analyses, Fisk acknowledges Mo Yan’s “more slyly disruptive than openly adversarial” subversion in his oeuvre, and she defends the *sui generis* autonomy of the literary as well as the writer’s extraliterary “freedom to be silent.” Knowing political activism is “much riskier” in some places than others, Fisk calls Mo Yan’s work “the best” a novelist can do “under the circumstances.” If there is anything that makes him unworthy, it is his “aesthetic weakness” and “linguistic impoverishment,” not his alleged compliance with the state. Thus, if Pamuk is a better global novelist, his difference from Mo Yan resides in aesthetic achievement rather than political engagement.

Novelists have their circumstances, and so do literary critics. Fisk’s third section (and coda) may be better titled “What Good Can A Literary Critic Do?” since it is about the role of US-based scholars in the discourses of world literature rather than about the good of world literature per se. “The key institution in the creation of World Literature,” as the editors of *n+1* have observed, is neither the literary festival nor the publishing house, but “the university” (“World Lite”), by which they mean the American universities that host writers such as Pamuk and scholars such as Fisk. Fisk’s criticism of the cultural institutions that have constructed world literature across the Atlantic, therefore, entails a self-reflexive gaze, on American universities and US-based critics, especially such representatives as Damrosch, Apter, and Gayatri Spivak, no matter whether they are *for* or *against* world literature. What

intrigues Fisk is a self-contradiction of the critics, who, while they debate the complicity of world literature with “global capitalism, neoliberalism, and the exercise of US hegemony,” also try to secure positions in the institutions operating on those cultural logics they resist. But against academic capitalism and “against purity,” Fisk contends that literary critics can launch critiques from their “admittedly compromised” positions, to defend the humanities and protest the inequalities, for example, and to study and teach not just *successful* but rather *good* world literature, defined not only by commercial or political criteria but also by aesthetic quality. Everyone is compromised, but the question of complicity can give way to better ones such as “*where, how much, to whose advantage, and in what way.*” Considering Pamuk’s “breadth of reference” that renders all readers relatively ignorant and uncertain in exploring the foreign with the familiar and imagining beyond their expertise, Fisk argues that to read the incoherence of Pamuk between his domestic and global audiences is to read not his hypocrisy but rather his “embeddedness in a world that makes contradictory demands on him.” Likewise, Fisk concludes that US-based critics must acknowledge their privileged status (though “marginalized in a national culture and a global economy”) in their institutional, geopolitical, and socioeconomic milieux, and take responsibility for a better measurement of their compromises, which requires “relative” standards for literary value to “negotiate the terms of literature’s circulation as a good” in the global marketplace. By “relative,” Fisk does not mean the double standards that Western institutions have applied to non-Western literatures: if the West values aesthetics for Western literatures, so should it value the same for non-Western ones, preferably in both non-Western and Western terms. As she states in private correspondence, she is calling for “a more equal standard of literary greatness, all over the world.”

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Taking not only Pamuk but “the good” as her subject matter, Fisk offers a remarkable debut that promises more to come by ending with questions rather than answers. Compared to the preceding sections, the final discussion of critics seems more polemical and repetitive than lucid and constructive, but overall, the book is contextually detailed and theoretically engaged, written with rigor and consistency. In addition to her insightful analysis of the cultural and political good of the global novel and her extensive coverage of the politics of world literature surrounding Pamuk, throughout her book Fisk is uncompromising on the importance of aesthetics for literary value. In this regard, Fisk adheres to Pamuk’s aesthetic yardstick for the global novel, in which category he includes neither those that “gain sizable audiences in their national cultures” but lack worldwide circulation, nor those that “circulate broadly but without the critical acclaim” reserved for serious literary works; therefore, Fisk provides a useful corrective to Kirsch’s *The Global Novel*, which downplays aesthetic merit. Nevertheless, Fisk misses the opportunity to give a working definition of “the good” and of literary value, while her book and future studies may benefit from relevant recent scholarship, such as Rick Rylance’s *Literature and the Public Good* (2016), Hanna Meretoja et al.’s *Values of Literature* (2015), Mirosława Buchholtz’s *The*

*Beautiful and the Doomed* (2013), Karen R. Smith's "What Good Is World Literature?" (2011), Pieter Vermeulen's "New York, Capital of World Literature?" (2017), and Karolina Watroba's "World Literature and Literary Value" (2018). Since Fisk's book is about the value of world literature and of literary criticism, it can be more explicit on the latter, with less guilty ambivalence. After all, it is critics such as Fisk herself who are defeating the misconceptions and misuses of world literature, and defending the good and the literary value of the global novel and novelist.

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## **Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen, University College London**

With crime fiction outselling general and literary fiction in the UK for the first time in 2017, and crime novels in translation ushering in a boom in sales of translated fiction in the Anglophone world, this anthology is a timely reminder that crime fiction today plays a seminal role in cross-cultural exchanges and the formation of world literature. One largely successful ambition of this anthology, apart from presenting

a novel perspective on crime fiction, is, according to the editors' introduction, to consider how its focus on genre may further our knowledge about "the transnational flow of literature in the globalized mediascape of contemporary popular culture" (2). The "globalized mediascape," remediations, intermediality, and the role of multimedia publishing conglomerates in the circulation, shaping, and popularization of crime fiction across markets could have taken a more prominent place in the volume, which only gestures towards visual marketing and TV adaptations as inevitable parts of today's transnational flow of genre fiction; however, this is only one of very few perspectives left for future studies by this anthology.

*Crime Fiction as World Literature* is a rare academic anthology, which, as Susan Bassnett points out in her chapter on "Detective Fiction in Translation," foregrounds what people actually read, watch, and share around the world: genre fiction and especially crime narratives in print and on screens. Arthur Conan Doyle's detective novels feature in fourteenth place on the list of the most translated of all time and have been incessantly adapted for film and TV, making Holmes and Watson recognizable characters all over the world, and at the top of various lists we find Agatha Christie, beating Shakespeare, as the most translated, with over one billion copies sold in more than 103 languages. With the recent wave of Scandinavian crime fiction producing astonishing sales of tens of millions of copies worldwide, led by Stieg Larsson's *Millennium Trilogy*, even crime writers writing in minor languages may reach a vast international readership and change how the genre is perceived both internationally and locally. The Scandinavian prominence in the global field of crime fiction, in fact, has demonstrated that the traditional one-way street from centre to periphery in world literature is a fading paradigm in the contemporary market for global bestsellers; as the editors state in their introduction: "American writers are as likely to be inspired by Swedish authors as the reverse, while writers in Bangkok closely follow the work of their Japanese and Italian peers" (3). In *Crime Fiction as World Literature*, an indication of the changing centres within crime fiction research and the global market for crime fiction is the centrality afforded Scandinavian crime fiction, as case studies from this region feature in five chapters.

If there ever was a genre that could lay claim to fulfilling the broad conception of world literature, defined by David Damrosch almost two decades ago as works that circulate beyond their culture of origin and are received into foreign spaces, crime fiction is a strong contender; particularly, but not exclusively, in our accelerated globalized age, in which Goethe's and Marx and Engels's intuitions of an imminent global market for literature driven by transnational trade and innovative technologies for distribution have become an ever-changing reality.

This anthology takes its place alongside a growing number of academic studies that venture beyond the mostly Anglo-American presumption of the genre's Anglophone origins and canonization by adding a range of cases from around the world to demonstrate the genre's cross-fertilization and hyper-mobility. In its nineteen chapters, we learn about crime fiction beyond the obvious Anglophone, Francophone, and



Nordic regions, with examples from Kenya, Thailand, Russia, Mexico, Turkey, Israel, Bulgaria, China, and Tibet. It is, admirably, by far the most inclusive global study of crime fiction to date, and one that provides a plethora of ways to further explore the historical and contemporary worlding of the genre.

Through its world literature perspective, the anthology promises not only to show the reader a wider world of crime fiction—studies of non-Anglo-American national or regional crime-fiction traditions have appeared steadily over the past decade—but to explore the multiple ways in which works of crime fiction circulate, influence, adapt, translate, and rewrite works across languages, cultures, media, and time. Such a transnational, global, or world literature perspective has been largely absent from crime fiction scholarship, just as crime fiction has been conspicuously absent from academic studies of and debates over world literature. This anthology goes a long way to mitigate these glaring gaps in scholarship.

388 What the reader will not find in *Crime Fiction as World Literature* is the distillation of a common world-literature approach to crime fiction, as this would have been too big an ask and probably undesirable. Instead, we get a wide range of perspectives distilled from diverse cases. These perspectives range from explorations of the relationship between international crime writing and its disjunctive publishing networks, the industry of translation driving the globalization of the crime novel, crime fiction as a “glocal” mode of literary creation and circulation, a focus on transnational detectives, plots, and motifs in different local settings, and the transnational crime novel’s investigation of justice, societies and geopolitics.

The anthology is divided into four parts. The first explores how crime fiction from Scandinavia, Mexico, Italy, the United States, Kenya, Russia, and the UK have given local expressions to wider international or global concerns focusing on sociopolitical issues. Michael Wood examines the transnational “collage of cultures” characterizing the locations of Mexican *narconovelas*, produced by the penetration of the global drugs trade into local lives and everyday cultures. A similar interdependence of the local and the global is central to Andreas Hedberg’s discussion of Swedish crime novels. In the Swedish case, crime writers skillfully employ the universal mould of the genre and the regional Nordic Noir brand to incorporate local concerns to market their stories to readers at home and abroad. In these contributions, as in several others included in this anthology, crime fiction is considered a preeminent “glocal” genre. Mũkoma wa Ngũgĩ’s *Nairobi Heat* is another example discussed in Tilotama Theroor’s chapter: a novel in which American cop culture meets the turbulence of Nairobi streets, local police methods, histories, and politics. A transnational detective novel such as *Nairobi Heat* offers uncomfortable “windows into worlds” (35), which challenge perceived notions of the crime novel’s conservative form and its legitimization of state power. Even if the genre promises that justice will be done, the remaining “excess” of cultural materials enables a progressive critique of global and local inequalities.

This conflict between the genre’s reliance on a conservative, universal form and its

potential for progressive politics is the focus of Bruce Robbins's investigation of the purportedly anti-statism of Scandinavian crime fiction. Robbins's convincing claim is that the success of Nordic Noir both in and outside the region relies on the narratives' superficial appropriation of anti-statist ideology, which has been a persistent cliché of the noir genre. However, in Scandinavian crime fiction, detectives serving as the ultimate protectors of the (welfare) state do not equal blind legitimization of state power; the state is viewed as a desirable antidote to the power wielded by global capitalism. Michaela Bronstein's final chapter in this section also traces the shifting values that follow the transnational circulation of crime fiction devices. Bronstein follows a common crime-fiction motif, the demasking and killing of a former heroic figure, in "Utopian crime" novels spanning a century and four different locations. Each novelist has reworked the plot of his predecessor, forming a network of trans-historical and transnational affiliation, which provides changing considerations of the relationship between legal and moral violations.

The second part explores the relevance of market mechanisms to our understanding of the dissemination of crime fiction. Delia Ungureanu, for instance, demonstrates how Orhan Pamuk exploited the resources of surrealist noir fiction (Aragon's *Le Cahier noir*) to reach a global audience with *The Black Book*. In discussing a more explicit case of transnational marketing, Karl Berglund argues in his chapter that if we want to understand the global trends in popular fiction, we have to identify the circumstances in which such fiction is produced and disseminated, with a nod to Damrosch's understanding of world literature as essentially a mode of circulation and of reading. Berglund's example is Swedish crime fiction, which is increasingly produced with translations, adaptations, and global popularity in mind, banking to a large extent on perceptions of the Nordic region as exotic. Louise Nilsson's study of how book covers have been used to market Scandinavian crime fiction in different markets essentially comes to the same conclusion. Abroad, Scandinavian crime fiction is marketed emphasizing exotic local colour with snowy "Nordic" landscapes, while cover designs aimed at the domestic market appeal to a universal palette of crime-fiction tropes.

The Scandinavian cases reveal a current paradox in the global market for literature: the more local crime writing and its marketing purports to be, the better its chances of going global. Especially when writing from the periphery, Berglund argues, one must brand oneself as exotic and different from the Anglophone tradition to be successful in the transnational marketplace. Interestingly, the marketability of globalism and exoticism has not (yet) entered crime-writing handbooks. According to Anneleen Masschelein and Dirk de Geest, the common advice for budding writers is that national diversity is subsidiary to the genre's universal pretensions. In such handbooks, crime fiction is world literature primarily because it addresses a global market.

As Stewart King notes in his wide-ranging chapter on translation and the circulation of crime fiction in Catalan in the anthology's third section on "translating

crime,” while translation is central to the circulation of crime fiction, it is often overlooked in crime fiction studies. His and Bassnett’s chapters foreground the different effects and functions of translated texts in their receiving cultures, relying to a large extent on Even-Zohar’s polysystem theory for understanding the movement of texts across cultural and linguistic frontiers. Migaela P. Harper’s chapter on the translation and reception of Agatha Christie in Bulgaria and Suradech Chotiudompant’s study of Conan Doyle’s influence on Thai crime fiction provide detailed examples of how local ideological contexts have influenced the translation and adaptation of classic British detective novels to serve new purposes in the formation of national traditions. Bassnett argues that translation studies often find that the reception of foreign forms into new markets is characterized by unpredictability. On the one hand, the global success of Christie and the British TV series *Midsomer Murders* can largely be understood as a function of their trade in a perceived “fantasy of Englishness” (152), allowing for escapism and imaginary travels. A similar case is made in Maayan Eitan’s discussion of the international success of Dror Mishani’s Israeli crime series as it has appealed to Western readers with its rare, somewhat exotic, depiction of suburban Israeli life inspired by the Scandinavian sociocritical crime novel. On the other hand, a strong tradition of interconnected European post-war detective fiction, dealing in shared and localized political issues such as dictatorship, organized crime, government corruption, and migration, suggests that readers and viewers consume crime fiction in translation not only for their exotic locations, but also for the genre’s ability to engage with current social and political changes. Through this unpredictable, cross-cultural exchange of narrative forms, crime fiction idioms, and plots, local traditions such as the Catalan explored by King create new idioms aided by publishing markets and translations, which may eventually enter the transnational market, turning a predominant small-language area import market into an export market.

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The chapters in the final part investigate how Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes has been worlded through a variety of world-literature mechanisms and strategies considered in the preceding sections. Michael B. Harris-Peyton’s chapter offers a valuable assessment of the challenge posed by a reevaluation of crime fiction through world literature to traditional discourses of literary evaluation that are still obsessed with the “fetish of originality.” His chapter and others in this section convincingly argue that crime fiction is instead involved in “a transcultural network of reference, reuse, and circulation,” where the genre’s main value for scholarship lies in its “ability to have a rich local context in several localities” (217). Theo D’haen’s discussion of American author Laurie R. King’s *The Beekeeper’s Apprentice* (1996) and other subversive “recyclings” of Sherlock Holmes demonstrates how the detective formula can be recast to engage with contemporary issues related to gender, sexual, and racial identities, which will also inevitably influence how we perceive the “original” text. Elizabeth Richmond-Garza’s treatment of Boris Alkudin’s queer detective Fandorin, also a reprise or reworking of Sherlock Holmes, argues that the queering of the British tradition allows the author to embed local commentary on the lim-

inality of Putin's Russia. Wei Yan's chapter on "Sherlock Holmes in China" charts Conan Doyle's influence on Chinese literary detectives, exemplifying the appropriation of the Holmes model to fit local needs and traditional values, while the story of Conan Doyle's reception in China also charts the dramatic ideological mutations of the treatment of Western and Chinese crime novels. David Damrosch's chapter on exiled Tibetan writer Jamyang Norbu's widely acclaimed Holmes novel *The Mandala of Sherlock Holmes* (1999) argues for considering this a work of Tibetan world literature by emphasizing Norbu's use of the global model of detective fiction as a frame, its intertextuality, its indebtedness to Tibetan history and religion, and its creative use of linguistic hybridization. All of these factors together contribute to a present anti-imperialist and humanist purpose, which, Damrosch argues, is already encoded, but rarely seen by Western readers, in the "original" tales themselves.

While Doyle's Holmes is often seen as the "original" British detective, Harris-Peyton and the other authors in this section demonstrate that there really is no pure "original" Holmes, and he is not very British either, emerging as he did from the messy periphery of the British Empire and its international dependencies, in narratives that are "riddled with things translated to or translated from other places." The case of Sherlock Holmes, and indeed the case of crime fiction as world literature as delimited by the chapters in this anthology, suggests that "there is no real center or periphery here—just raw materials and adapted productions" (228).