Book Reviews

612 Solovieva, Olga V. *Christ's Subversive Body: Practices of Religious Rhetoric in Culture and Politics.* Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 2018. Pp. 307. US$99.95 hardcover, US$34.95 paperback, US$34.95 ebook.

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Much of Christianity is focused on the body of Christ, be it bodily suffering, marking, dying, rising, and ascending, as well as its central role in key Christian rituals such as communion. *Christ's Subversive Body* is an innovative and impressive monograph that examines the discursive deployment of Christ's body in the context of cultural and political upheavals. This book provides an in-depth, even immersive, analysis of the ways in which images of Christ's body figured into a series of critical moments in Christian history. The author, Olga Solovieva, demonstrates quite compellingly how the discursive deployments of Christ's body figured prominently into the historical development of Christian thought and practice. In this way, Christ's body casts a very long historical shadow. Solovieva has a remarkably careful eye for key turning points in Christian history while exploring how these moments of crisis gave rise to the creative and influential reimagining of Christ's body, or bodies, given the diverse discursive representations studied here. The result is an outstanding study of religious history that has contemporary implications.

Solovieva selects six historical examples in which cultural and political contestations yielded subversive visions of Christ's body. I will treat the first and last of these historical examples here. The first historically contested moment explored in this volume is Epiphanius of Salamis's iconoclastic polemics in the rivalry between the Roman state and early Christianity. Among his other arguments, Epiphanius

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contended that the "image of Christ" found in the communion host forms a "synchronic unity of the body of Christ […] accomplished in worship" (38). In the eyes of Epiphanius, it is at this moment that the host and the congregation become united. These ideas and others led Epiphanius to urge religious leaders of his time, including Emperor Theodosius, to take political action consistent with Epiphanius's entrenched opposition to artistically rendered images of Christ. In exploring this particular case, Solovieva demonstrates how, in a manner of speaking, the word (discourse about Christ's body) was made flesh (altered Christian practice). Her analysis of original writings by Epiphanius follows the discursive twists and turns evident therein. The rhetorical strategies found in the writings of Epiphanius gravitate between polemics and, when situations demanded it, strategic diplomacy.

Solovieva follows this in-depth analysis of early Christian debates with cases that are strewn historically across various centuries, ending with how political theology in the twenty-first century supports the idea of a "unitary executive." Although the argument could easily be made that all historical cases included in this incisive volume have contemporary relevance, the proximity of this particular case—really a series of contemporary sub-cases—to our current historical moment underscores its direct applicability to the times in which we now live. Solovieva dissects in rich detail the ways in which Christ's bodily has been discursively deployed by conservative religious advocates and groups, with particular attention to those she calls theoconservatives. She compellingly demonstrates how bodily depictions of Christ, some of them rather militant, have been used to Christianize contemporary American politics. This particular case indicates that, quite often, "successful subversion happens not though a fanatic confrontation" with one's political adversaries (232). Instead, Solovieva analyzes the counsel of such figures as Richard John Newhaus, who contended that effective subversion most commonly occurs though subtle changes that, given their smaller scale, often go unnoticed. These subtle, some may say insidious, changes are nonetheless transformative over a long period of time. Solovieva scrutinizes faith-based initiatives and the role of religion under the George W. Bush administration in this portion of the volume; she also examines subversive deployments of Christ's body in cultural discourse, with ample attention to Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ*. Connecting cultural discourse to political mobilization, Solovieva concludes that "Gibson's transfiguration of the message of the Gospels into the message of Christ's torn body equally supported the theocons' warfare on the home front against another 'spiritual host of wickedness'—the secular state." Thus, cultural discourse is not neatly bounded outside the realm of governance but instead has direct and pronounced political implications. The turn toward authoritarianism in the US and in the West makes sense, if disturbingly so, in light of theoconservatives' pursuit of a unitary executive form of governance. It might be recalled that more than eight in ten voting conservative Protestants supported the election of Donald Trump during the 2016 presidential election, thereby propelling him into the White House. The image of Jesus Christ's body looming behind a seated Donald

Trump, with the Christian saviour guiding the new president's hand as he signed a bill soon after his election, was celebrated by many theoconservatives, even as it deeply disturbed Trump's opponents, religious and secular alike.

Christ's Subversive Body is suitable for religious history courses and those that examine representations of religion in cultural discourse. The erudition exemplified in this volume's prose is excellent scholarship, but may make it a challenging read for some undergraduate students, particularly those in lower-division courses. That statement is not a criticism of this volume, however, as Solovieva's arguments rest not only on her thoughtful selection of historical cases and archival materials but on her impressively incisive analysis. This book leaves no discursive stone unturned and provides a fascinating examination of religion, discourses of the body, and social change.

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Hatto, Arthur. *The World of the Khanty Epic Hero-Princes: An Exploration of a Siberian Oral Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2017. Pp. xv + 246. $60.00 hardcover.

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Rarely studied in depth, the epic poetry of Siberian peoples can provide a unique window on the worldviews, linguistic richness, and indigenous cosmologies of the people who have nurtured their performance and transmission. Regretfully, many of these Siberian epic cycles, traditions, and tales are currently either moribund or preserved in a "frozen" state; in memorized or purely literary forms rather than improvised, live performance (Harris 13). Long after the living traditions of epic performance fade from the memories of their practitioners and eventually disappear, however, the documented texts that remain can provide windows into the past. Arthur Hatto's volume illustrates the value of this kind of textual preservation, as the eighteen Khanty epic poems he examined were transcribed in the mid- and late nineteenth century and their translations into Hungarian and German provided him with rich material for analysis, despite the significant complexities of language and time.

The introductory chapters of the book (together with the *Afterword*) are alone worth the price of the book. Valuable for anthropologists, ethnomusicologists, sociologists, folklorists, and those in Siberian studies, the first chapter provides an ethnographic introduction to the Khanty, including a description of other groups living in the vicinity. The vast majority of the Khanty (29,000) live in the Tyumen Oblast, with some additional Khanty spread throughout the Tomsk and Sverdlovsk Oblasts and the Komi Republic. Increasing in-migration of Russians due to oil and gas development has eroded mother-tongue use, and the average life expectancy in

the 1980s was "forty-five years among men and fifty-five years among women" (2).

This first chapter includes a compact history of the Khanty, drawing on archaeological and linguistic evidence to depict a people in motion who eventually settled in fortified settlements ruled by princes. These forts served as bases from which the Khanty waged warfare on their neighbours "from as early as the third century up until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (6), when some of the princes began to join Russian enterprises of taxation and trade (8). Eventually, the fortified settlements gave way to colonialization, becoming towns that served the administration of the Czar's rule and a place of exile during the Bolshevik Revolution.

Hatto points out that the policies of the Soviet state toward indigenous peoples swung from one extreme to the other, first supporting and encouraging the development of an intelligentsia, but then changing abruptly, and eventually the Stalinist policies of the 1930s led to a rebellion that was brutally repressed. Since the 1970s, oil and natural gas extraction in the Khanty-Mansi Autonomous Okrug has grown to its current level of approximately half of the oil production of the Russian Federation. These extraction policies "cause pollution, lead to irreversible environmental damage, and jeopardize traditional lifestyles" (9).

A section outlining the current state of traditional economic patterns for the Khanty describes the extensive hunting and reindeer breeding of those Khanty living further north and the fishing traditions toward the southern parts of the region. Descriptions of traditional clothing are noteworthy because they appear to be "enjoying increased popularity today" (11), a trend among other Siberian groups as well. Other aspects of traditional life appear to be waning, however, as Hatto notes that the "number of Khanty living in a fully traditional manner is nowadays very small, no more than a few thousand […] Khanty living in towns have assimilated most, preserving only some elements of their traditions such as eating habits and religion" (12).

A section on Khanty beliefs explores the "inseparable connection between people and the natural world around them" (14) as well as the roles of harmful and helpful spirits. Hatto notes the Khanty belief that helpful spirits are "former heroes, princes, and warriors who were later transformed into guardian spirits, a process about which researchers still know very little" (14).

A compact linguistic description of the Khanty language (from the Uralic language family, and thus distantly related to Hungarian) follows, with an overview of language shift resulting in "the gradual extinction of Khanty traditional oral culture" (17). In fact, some of the epic texts analyzed by Hatto in this volume "preserve memories and cultural traditions in language varieties that are no longer spoken" (17).

The next section, outlining Khanty verbal art genres, demonstrates that in addition to epic poetry, Khanty verbal arts are rich with complexity, meanings, and rules for performance practice. The large genre divisions are between verse (which is always sung) and prose, though even prose genres can be "performed with some degree of rhythmic organization" (18). Further divisions of prose genres include both narrative forms such as legends, sagas, folk tales, and personal narratives; and non-

narrative forms such as riddles, prayers, and nursery rhymes. This section ends with a description of the genre of heroic epic among the Khanty, outlining its role as both sacred (connected to ritual) and profane (for purposes of entertainment). Although he asserts the epics are a mix of fact and fiction, Hatto posits that they should be seen as a "rich store of Khanty cultural memory [….] [I]n many cases the places mentioned in these songs can be geographically identified" (19).

Concluding the chapter with a description of the performance practice of Khanty epics, some of which stretch to "several thousand lines in length" (20), Hatto reminds the reader that during the nineteenth century, when researchers were collecting the texts examined in this volume, there were "very few native speakers who knew the songs and the meaning of all their motifs and special vocabulary […] Even contemporary Khanty audiences could not understand all of the words" (20).

The second chapter overviews the provenance of the eighteen Khanty heroic epics, including their collectors and publishers, and the third introduces the reader to some of the primary themes of the epics that follow and to some complications of translation and rendering in Hatto's work. Among the most striking features of Hatto's writing style is the convention of capitalization, which he connects to "living with eighteen Khanty Epics for some six years [and …] to the powerful and highly developed Animism which informs them" (27). Thus, a tree becomes a Tree because it "gives Bow-wood high on the Forest Ridge for a Hero-Prince to make a weapon on which his and his Kinsmen's lives will depend" (27). Describing heroic epic poetry as a meta-genre, in that "genres occur only within the poetic corpus of individual cultures" (35), Hatto sets the stage for the reader's understanding of his work, explaining conventions such as bypassing the unwieldy Praise-names of characters in the story and replacing them with the place of a person in his/her lineage, such as Ego, Elder or Younger Brother, Sister, Father-in-Law, and so on.

The central chapters of the work cover nine aspects of the Khanty epics: The Cosmos, Time, Seasons, Geography, Spirits, Personae, Warfare, Armour and Weapons, and Men's Handiwork. Several topics are split into sub-categories, the two most extensive being the chapters on spirits and the following chapter on personae, covering personages somewhat common to other Siberian epics such as Ego among His Brothers, Ego and His Fosters (foster-parents), The Bride, The Bride as a Person, The Antagonists, The Rus, and The Samoyed (Nenets). In these chapters, numerous examples from the Khanty epics are organized according to topic and documented through citations of highly relevant passages and extensive footnotes. Primarily aimed at scholars engaged in comparative literature and folklore studies, these chapters give rich insight into the Khanty "archaic mind" of the distant past, including complex aspects of worldview and cosmology. The extent to which modern Khanty hold those views is not addressed; in fact, there are no contemporary Khanty collaborators or interlocutors included in the work.

The posthumous publication of this work was coordinated by Hatto's daughter, Jane Lutman, and her preface acknowledges the extensive team of experts who con-

tributed to the painstaking scholarship of this work—including the contributions of Daniel Prior, the author of the *Afterword* "Arthur Hatto, Ethnopoetics, and Epic Moments." This carefully documented chapter provides an overview of "the late author's comparative approach to what he considered the still unrealized dream of global ethnopoetics" (227). In particular, the *Afterword* points to "one of Arthur Hatto's most significant theoretical contributions, the concept of the epic moment in the structural analysis of epic plots" (227). Defining *epic moments* as those in which the bard condenses "long-drawn tensions in to brief scenes of dramatic power enhanced by visual magnificence"[1] (229; Hatto, *Traditions* 4), Hatto placed these structural markers as a higher order than the more well-known organizing structures of "themes" and "formulas" (Lord 4), thus providing an analytical category that has been successfully employed by scholars such as John D. Smith, Karl Reichl, and Prior himself.[2]

Researchers from a variety of disciplines will appreciate the extensive bibliography and index attached to this work, as well as the good quality maps, drawings, facsimiles, and photographs included throughout the text. A testimony to scholarly perseverance and collaboration, this culmination of Hatto's corpus contributes a fine-grained snapshot of the distant past of Khanty verbal artistry, worldview, and cosmos through the lens of their epics.

Notes

1. Prior also cites Hatto's description (in the same work) of epic moments as "highly charged narrative ganglia" (6).

2. Prior's copious footnotes on pages 230-31 document the use of the "epic moment" as an analytical tool and will be highly useful for someone wishing to trace the use of this concept within epic studies.

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A review of this book requires, first and foremost, a recognition of the groundbreaking work of the late Professor Paul Sellin, a pioneer in the study of Anglo-Dutch relations in the early modern age. His article "Royalist Propaganda and the Dutch Poets on the Execution of Charles I," published in 2000 in the journal *Dutch Crossing*, demonstrated how a large number of pro-Stuart poems circulated in the Dutch Republic. Sellin argued that these sources formed a distinct corpus of interrelated Anglo-Dutch materials that were not only of interest to the political and literary-

bibliographical history of the Netherlands, but also to the history of English printing and literature. His findings were surprising since it seemed natural—at least to non-specialists in seventeenth-century Anglo-Dutch relations—to assume that Dutch sympathies in the struggle between King Charles I and Parliamentarian forces would have been overwhelmingly on the side of those who ultimately were to establish the (Republican) Commonwealth of England. Sellin made clear, however, that the view of the Dutch Republic as a nation solely defined by republican values needed correction, even in the field of literary studies.

Sellin's appeal for further study of this fascinating material was taken up by Helmer Helmers, an expert in early-modern Dutch diplomatic history whose systematic analysis of mid-seventeenth-century Dutch literature enabled him to identify many works dedicated directly or indirectly to the 1642 Civil War and its aftermath. His long list confirms that Dutch writers—and, we can assume, Dutch public opinion—passionately followed the events in England and that their sympathies were predominantly with Charles I.

Helmers's methodological and theoretical approach to this complex matter can be classified as a text-oriented form of cultural history, influenced by New Historicism and Cultural Materialism, yet with an international, multilingual (Dutch-English) approach that places the English Civil War in a broader European context. This approach was well chosen, since English royalism could only survive after Charles I's defeat at Naseby thanks to continental support. This also accounts for the efforts of both parties to influence public opinion in the Netherlands and the creation of what Helmers aptly calls a "hybrid sphere," where British politicians and migrants flooded the Dutch market with political pamphlets, to which Dutch authors reacted with their own interpretations. As Helmers explains, the way people on the European continent perceived the English power struggle is of vital importance in understanding the survival of English royalism and its eventual resumption of power in 1660. However, he also points to the importance of the Dutch national self-image and

to parallels between the Dutch uprising against Spain and the English Revolution. Through their reflections on English affairs, mid seventeenth-century Dutch authors often also made statements about the Dutch nation, its history, its present state, and in particular, its future. Anti-Cromwellian pamphlets, for instance, could implicitly also target the Dutch statesman Johan de Witt.

In the subsequent chapters of his book with the provocative title *The Royalist Republic*, Helmers explains in detail why so many Dutch authors felt attracted to the royalist cause in England and why Stuart defenders in the Netherlands included people from a wide variety of religious, social, and geographical backgrounds. Among them were, obviously, many Catholics, such as the influential Joost van den Vondel, who sympathized with Charles I in consequence of his marriage to Henrietta Maria of France. Unsurprisingly, we also find many Orangists among the Stuart sympathizers. Yet, as Helmers argues, the latter's ambitions to establish a joint Anglo-Dutch royalist faction should be understood with reference not only to personal ties between the Princes of Orange and the Stuarts and to the diplomatic efforts undertaken by Charles II during his Dutch exile, but also to concerns over political dominance by the States of Holland in the Dutch Republic.

Stuart sympathies among Remonstrants, which Helmers explains with reference to their eagerness to defend religious uniformity and "puritanism" against Arminian influences that, in their view, represented a threat to national unity and the achievements of the Reformation, are more intriguing. Not surprisingly, then, the Dutch debate about Charles I in the early phase of the Civil War developed along confessional lines, with Contra-Remonstrants being among the strongest supporters of Parliamentarian forces, whereas a curious alliance of Catholics and Remonstrants sided with the English king. Once prominent English Presbyterians began to defect, however, Dutch Contra-Remonstrant support for Parliament waned and the two main confessional spheres in the United Provinces began to overlap. Influenced by the Dutch translation of the *Eikon Basilike* ("Engelandts Memoriael"), both Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants eventually came to embrace the martyrdom of Charles I. This support for the Stuarts further increased in the aftermath of the Navigation Acts and the (first) Anglo-Dutch War of 1652-54, when the profoundly anti-regicide mood in the Netherlands was famously captured in the epigram "Where Oil is in the fire [Oliver] and the crooked is well [Cromwell] / Be sure to find a terrible Hell." Thus, ironically, at the coronation of Charles II, both Organists and Remonstrants could claim to have been "good royalists," with the former hoping for the end of the stadtholderless regime and restoration of the House of Orange, while the latter envisioned the coming of a new Johan van Oldenbarnevelt.

Helmers's study also deserves praise for the clarity of its structure and for making a complex research topic accessible to a broad international audience. It is clear, however, that his study would have attracted more attention if it had also covered the era of the Glorious Revolution. While Dutch reactions to the English Civil War and the execution of Charles I are undoubtedly of interest to an international readership, this

debate remains of secondary importance to the Dutch involvement in the Glorious Revolution.

There can be no doubt that Helmers's decision to interpret the available primary literary sources from a political perspective contributes substantially to the understanding of a large number of mid-seventeenth-century Dutch literary works. With the exception of the sections on the martyrdom of Charles I and the chapter on the resemblances between Vondel's *Samson* (1660) and Milton's *Samson Agonistes* (1671), however, Helmers pays little attention to the purely literary aspects of the texts under analysis. A close reading of these sources with a focus on the literary tools used by their respective authors might have revealed some additional insights on how writers conveyed their message to the public and whether their constructions were modeled after an English or a Dutch pattern.

Considering that most of these sources are only available in their original Dutch versions, it remains to be seen if this study will have the desired impact on the discourse on royalism in Anglophone nations. While I applaud Helmers's criticism of the monolingual approach in Anglophone historiography, the fact is that the desired inclusion of Dutch material in international scholarly debates will only succeed if more of these sources are made available in English translation. The impact of Helmers's study would have been bigger and more enduring had it been accompanied by an anthology with English translations of his most important sources. It is, in this respect, regrettable that funding agencies and promotion committees that evaluate the work of young scholars such as Helmers keep insisting on the production of original research only and fail to recognize the importance of critical editions and anthologies with translations of Dutch sources.

Plotz, John. *Semi-Detached: The Aesthetics of Virtual Experience since Dickens*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton UP, 2018. Pp. xiii + 329. US$35.00.

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Semi-Detached is fascinating for many reasons, not least of which is how it taps into our current concern with technology's fracturing of attention only to direct our thoughts to historical antecedents, encouraging us to wonder, "when have we not been semi-detached?" (17). The book also promotes not only acceptance of simultaneous absorption and detachment, but a complex, appreciative understanding of this state of consciousness, especially given its pertinence to aesthetic experience. In the book's introduction, John Plotz, professor of Victorian literature at Brandeis University, clarifies his central concept by invoking several examples. In George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, for instance, the narrator emphasizes being at once in the

fictional world and external to it, remarking on his/her arms getting numb from resting on the bridge outside the mill, but quickly revising that image to elbows pressed against the arms of the chair he/she is sitting in, caught in reverie. In an essay on Impressionism, Ford Madox Ford likens this doubled awareness to reflection in a glass that is so bright he can see a landscape through it while also seeing the reflected face of a person standing behind him. Ford found this window glass an apt metaphor for life: "we are almost always in one place with our minds somewhere quite other" (qtd. in Plotz 3). The reflection in the glass can function as a metaphor for the fictional world we see looking forward with an overlay of the real-world personal experiences we see behind us. This is the concept Plotz defines and redefines with playfulness and intellectual zest through nine wide-ranging chapters focusing on novelists, painters, and filmmakers between 1815 and 1930.

Plotz is as interested in the artist's awareness of this phenomenon as he is in the state of doubled consciousness itself. The book does more, then, than note moments of being semi-detached: it traces the artists' reflections on the experience and their ways of prompting an audience's reflection, too. George Eliot does so through the momentary disorientation of her narrator in *The Mill on the Floss* but also by confronting readers with how partial our attention to others is even in the most powerful moments of connection, as in Dorothea's hard-won empathy for Rosamond in *Middlemarch*. Readers of novels by Dickens, Eliot, and James are offered vantage points on characters' consciousness that prompt our own reflection on unreliable memory, lapses in attention, and variable meaning. Plotz challenges Lukacs's distinction between nineteenth-century realism with its strong social context and modernism with its subjectivist narrative experiments, arguing that Victorian novelists are doing something in between, working within a narrative form that fits neither of Lukacs's categories. In these novels, the world is neither "event" nor "experience," but a tangle of both. Plotz draws on Catherine Gallagher's work to emphasize "fictionality's cognitive complexity" and how consciousness of experience, past and present, gives shape to episodes or events in the lives of characters and readers alike.

One of the early chapters in the book explores the aesthetics of virtual experience through an illuminating discussion of John Stuart Mill's ideas about reason, imagination, and "conceiv[ing] of other minds in various imperfect ways" (49). The prelude to this chapter, with its complex discussion of the aesthetic theory of Kant, Coleridge, Schiller, and Lamb, brilliantly paves the way for Mill's ideas about sociability and reading. If imagination is stimulated by what is absent, in Kant's formulation, then the semi-detached for Mill involved the "mediating intervention of the written word" (55). Reading plays a valuable role in developing moral character and supplementing direct sociability. Plotz humorously illustrates what he means with the example of "excusing oneself from a dinner with Bentham to go upstairs and read some Bentham" (56). For Mill, there was greater liberty in reading than in social interaction because society's coercive force could be avoided in semi-detached sociability. Compared to direct conversation, aesthetic experience offers presence-in-absence

and more profoundly personal reflections. Mill craved the depth and intimacy made possible by reading and writing. The representation of emotions and experience in poetry enables access to one's own feelings in the process of encountering another's, and for Mill this doubled consciousness created writing he found "at once subjective and objective, intimate and universal" (60). Plotz convincingly argues that, for Mill, immersion in the cultural and political conflicts of his day was importantly enhanced by solitude with books. Mill writes powerfully about the transformative encounters reading made possible. This chapter illuminates how semi-detached, mediated involvement with others played a key role in shaping Mill's liberalism.

Other chapters in the first half of the book shed light on both Victorian aesthetics and the concept of the semi-detached through consideration of nineteenth-century fiction. The discussion of James Hogg, John Galt, and other early nineteenth-century short story writers presents a challenge to traditional ways of thinking about the role of this genre in literary history through its attention to "the readerly experience of semi-detachment" (22). The contingent nature of what is important and meaningful in a narrative unites the early-century short story with the mid- and late-century novel. One of the most engaging arguments in this chapter is the claim that at the beginning of the Victorian period, the novel became the repository of short stories. Dickens's *Pickwick Papers* is, of course, the quintessential example of the novel built from interpolated tales, but Plotz goes further, proposing a narrative method of "pseudo-interpolation" that makes readers aware of these stories as at once like and unlike the novels that engulfed them. The Victorians thus reveal "a taste for the complications that ensue when the artwork's artifice and its suasive fictionality are both recognized simultaneously" (45). The implications of this doubled consciousness are explored in greater detail in Chapters Four and Five on the Victorian novel.

The focus of Chapter Four is the provincial novel. By contrast to European novels with urban settings, the Victorian provincial novel "is willfully centered on out-of-the-way eddies and the flotsam and jetsam that wash up in them" (110). The relationship of the province to the metropolis, as Plotz interprets it, is analogous to the reader's relationship to any work of art: semi-detached (108). The province may seem to be a retreat from the city, but in these novels—Trollope's Barchester series, for instance, or Gaskell's *Cranford*—connection with the city is vital. Plotz moves from this observation to a subtler point about microcosms within these novels that figure "semi-detachment from one's own milieu" (114) and a reader's doubled consciousness of experiencing a self-contained world that is simultaneously broad, infinitely suggestive. The conclusion to this chapter does a fine job of showing how Victorian this phenomenon is, considering that the twentieth-century British provincial novel nearly always offers a parody of provincialism, not a paradoxical investigation of how the cosmopolitan is contained in the provincial, nor an underscoring of how the uniqueness of a place makes it as important as all other places.

A centerpiece of the book is its discussion of the realist novel from Dickens through Eliot to James. This chapter considers the doubled consciousness of char-

acters, represented externally and internally, and the self-aware, semi-detached state experienced by authors, narrators, characters, and readers through a variety of intriguing examples. Plotz takes up the "vexed question of whether we should think of aesthetic experience as the product of an artist's creation or audience's apprehension" (122), discussing approaches to this question in recent criticism and examining how novelists guide readers through problems of temporality, such as presenting sequentially what happens for a character simultaneously and calling attention to the doubleness, so both writer and reader are aware of the movement of mind that creates the aesthetic experience. Free indirect discourse (FID), an important narrative technique from Jane Austen's novels through the work of her Victorian successors, is discussed only briefly here, to underscore Plotz's departure from Lukacs's division between Victorian social realism and Modernist representations of consciousness: FID "offers a way of registering the relationship between individual consciousness and the overall social habitus" (127). Although the point makes a valuable contribution to the discussion of this narrative method of mixing a narrator's consciousness with that of a character, I expected much more attention to the technique, especially given that it epitomizes how "consciousness […] can be located in more than one place simultaneously" (13).

Discussions of two very different writers, H.G. Wells and Willa Cather, round out the book's treatment of nineteenth- and twentieth-century novels and the semi-detached. The choice of Wells was brilliant because his novels move away from Victorian realism and are not modernist in formal experimentation, and yet are, as Plotz emphasizes, "conceptually innovative" (13) and in many ways surprisingly easy to contextualize with the work of ostensibly very different late-Victorian novelists. Conrad termed Wells a "Realist of the Fantastic" (13), and Plotz perceptively alludes to Wells as "an uneasy servant of fact" (182), skeptical, as other writers of the 1890s were, of the overestimation of scientific objectivity. Like Eliot, Hardy, and Conrad, Wells is a writer "interested by the gap between the event (time passing chronologically) and the experience—how subjective time unfolds for those standing by" (183). In this case, the semi-detached resides in the consciousness of characters undergoing extreme experience and yet remaining connected to the real world, able to relay their stories even from "the sites of experiential limit" (188).

Despite the book's primary focus on British literature and art, Plotz discusses American literature, film, and culture, too, and the trans-Atlantic comparisons enrich the study in interesting ways. The chapter on Cather, for instance, besides forming a bridge between Wells and the modernist novel, takes the fresh perspective of reading Hardy's novels as aesthetic precursors to Cather's. It is evident in Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* that the dream is not the reality, but nonetheless, to omit "unfulfilled longings and impossible ambitions would no longer be realist" (204). Similarly, Cather is interested in the relationship between a character's semi-detached state and his/her mundane surroundings. Her novels also investigate how "the past is overlaid upon the present, and capable of adding to that present some indescribable surplus"

(206). Plotz takes these insights a step further, drawing on Gallagher's arguments about the simultaneous believability and unbelievability of fiction: Cather explores how readers, like characters, experience these semi-detached states and in doing so she develops, as the chapter beautifully shows, her own distinctive aesthetics.

In addition to its discussion of fiction, *Semi-Detached* treats readers to three chapters designated "visual interludes." These discussions explore the difference genre makes to the aesthetic phenomenon Plotz is investigating, and the third of these, the chapter that follows the analysis of Cather, again focuses on early twentieth-century American culture. Interested in how the visual arts and novels are forerunners of film, Plotz discusses the films of Buster Keaton and concepts such as "the cultural series" and "repertoires of collective interaction" (220). Andre Gaudreault's notion of the cultural series is a method of formally and generically contextualizing narrative film, and Plotz combines this approach with Charles Tilly's ideas about the backdrop of "plausible political action" in a given historical moment as he argues that "Keaton strove to master publicly accepted norms and mores not in order to conform to them strictly, but in order to play on them parodically, satirically" (220). Keaton's burlesque leaves an audience only partially grasping his thoughts and desires, which struggle for expression in a slippery, befuddling world, and we are left "wondering what is going on within semi-detached Buster" (228), even as we recognize and laugh at our own capacity to be "embarrassingly out of touch" with the everyday world (233). Plotz's most striking example of this state is Buster sitting on a bench practicing a marriage proposal as his bride-to-be sits down next to him without his noticing.

In disparate ways, the other two visual interludes are just as enriching of the book's thesis. The chapter on Pre-Raphaelite paintings, focusing specifically on John Everett Millais and Lawrence Alma-Tadema, explores how visual art can leave its viewer simultaneously detached and immersed. The other visual interlude offers an absorbing discussion of William Morris within the context of recent work on Victorian book arts and materiality studies. The chapter focuses on a typographer's "lantern lecture"—a talk accompanied by plates shown through a magic lantern, an early type of image projector—and Morris's subsequent founding of Kelmscott Press. Morris brought together "aesthetics as a realm apart" and practical knowledge of the material world, and analysis of this venture opens for Plotz another path into doubled consciousness.

The book's brief conclusion is wonderfully self-referential. As Plotz puts it, this final chapter enacts a turning of the "lens of semi-detachment on the scholarly undertaking itself" (16). In doing so, the book leaves us thinking about the slipperiness of writing about the past, which will inevitably carry an overlay of the present. Similarly, subjectivity and shifting intentions combine with "the play between authorial intent and audience uptake" (239) to create slippage. That said, this ambitious and finely nuanced book leaves us with the paradox that what severs us from the past also connects us to it.

Hamrouni, Naima, and Chantal Maillé (eds.). *Le sujet du féminisme, est-il blanc? Femmes racisées et recherche féministe*. Montréal: Les éditions du Remue-ménage, 2015. Pp. 278. $25.95.

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This collection of essays digs deeper grooves in the tracks already laid out by previous feminist theories such as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet* (1990) and *Touching Feeling: Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (2003) while also uncovering new territories and new interlocking pathways at the intersection of gender and race studies. In the introduction to the collection, the editors announce their subject position, which is to be understood in its threefold meaning: as the topic of research, the tenuous condition of subjection, and most importantly, the author of the message delivered. The latter is a position of empowerment, while the second attribute constantly erodes at the authority of the *author*. The purpose of the work collected by Naima Hamrouni and Chantal Maillé is to go to the very root of the epistemological assumptions which make the field of research analyzed crack open and crumble apart under the heavy weight of centuries-old false identity constructions and overdetermined hegemonic power plays:

> Faire de la recherche sur les femmes racisées en étant soi-même racisée constitue l'un des thèmes centraux de cet ouvrage. De manière plus fondamentale, cette posture ouvre vers le développement de perspectives et d'outils de recherche alternatifs qui, contrairement aux paradigmes dominants qui tendent à reproduire la colonisation des savoirs, permettraient de s'en affranchir et de produire un savoir à visée émancipatoire. (9)[1]

Diahara Traoré's article "Les théories postcoloniales et leurs enjeux pour une anthropologue racisée: quelques éléments de réflexivité" ("Postcolonial Theories and the Stakes for a Racialized Anthropology: A Few Reflection Points") asks what the stakes and the challenges of a postcolonial approach are within the framework of anthropological research. Her argument is that all feminist research on racialized women is based on the historical premises of colonialism and on the hegemony of a Euro-American epistemology. Traoré examines ethnography as ideology and as an act of studying and observing racialized women; consequently, she denounces the arrogance of ethnography as an act of writing the Other. Ultimately, she considers the challenges faced by a racialized scholar who conducts ethnographic research.

Leïla Benhadjoudja's "De la recherche sur les féminismes musulmans: enjeux de racisation et de positionnement" ("Research on Muslim Women: Racializing and Positioning Stakes") shows that the voices of racialized researchers, especially Muslim women, meet with a double discreditation: on the one hand, through the negation of the very existence of their object of research (apparently, such a thing as Muslim feminism does not exist at all, seen as an utter antinomy from a westernizing perspective), and on the other through the questioning of their objectivity as

researchers, while they themselves position themselves as Muslim feminists. Current feminist scholarship on Muslim women is still entangled in the modern philosophy of the Enlightenment, catering to its biases and depicting Muslim women as inevitably victims and as devoid of agency. Benhadjoudja lays the groundwork for new scientific knowledge on the one hand concerning Muslim women and by Muslim women.

Karine Rosso's "Regards altérisés sur l'oeuvre de Nelly Arcan: histoire d'un parcours racisé en études littéraires" ("Othered Views on the Work of Nelly Arcan: The History of a Racialized Track in Literary Studies") addresses how a non-Caucasian woman of Colombian origin can read Nelly Arcan. Intersectionality functions as a theoretical tool for reading the latter while demonstrating the existing correspondence between the book's themes and the realities of Latin-American women.

Ryoa Chung's essay "Femmes racisées et épistémologie féministe en éthique des relations internationales" ("Racialized Women and Feminist Epistemology in International Relations Ethics") argues that there is no such thing as neutrality in research, and that the mask of the "universal subject" still contributes to the dissimulation of the experience of injustice lived at the intersection of gender and race. In terms of ethics of international relations, the dominant cosmopolitan theory still takes as its subject the fundamental unity of its moral and political preoccupation. In doing so, it sidelines the issues that affect racialized women in particular, such as poverty (especially the responsibility toward dependents), war (taking into account systematic rape as a weapon), and the killing of women. This essay posits that the ethics of international relations needs to revisit the epistemological and methodological presuppositions on which the field of study began to form, and attests to the full pertinence of taking racialized women into consideration if it wants to honour its pretension of suggesting adequate remedies to the injustices to which they are particular victims on a global scale.

Julie Cunningham's essay "Faire de la recherche avec les femmes autochtones et faire sa part pour reconstruire le cercle: expérience d'une étudiante québécoise" ("Conducting Research with Indigenous Women and Playing One's Part in Reconstructing the Circle: The Experience of a Quebec Student") describes her experience conducting doctoral research with Indigenous women who have been itinerants. Cunningham speaks with them, rather than for them, and reveals how science played the part of colonizing agent in native communities. It behooves a non-native who wants to work with natives to seize the intrinsic stakes of such an approach so as not to reconstruct the circle.

Why speak of racialized women? Why not speak of the less pejorative concepts that are currently in use in the politics of diversity handling in Quebec, such as cultural minorities, ethnic minorities, immigrant women, or sub-minorities? Naïma Hamrouni's "Mal-reconnaissance, déni des droits, déshumanisation: en quels termes penser l'injustice faite aux femmes racisées?" ("Poor Acknowledgement, Denial of Rights, Dehumanization: In Which Terms to Consider the Injustice Done to

Racialized Women?") maintains that if the recognition theory and the liberal theory of minority rights articulated around notions of culture or ethnicity can identify the distributive injustices these women have undergone, specifically their unequal access to social goods, they do not exhaust the multiple aspects. The conceptual category of the racialized woman provides in this sense a conceptual language that allows a more precise definition of the injustice that occurs at the intersection of race and gender. By evoking the violence undergone by racialized women while Quebec was shaken by the debates concerning the draft of Bill 60 in 2013-14, Hamrouni's chapter maintains that the concept of sexualized dehumanization best expresses the form of injustice that results specifically from the imbrication of sexism and racism, an injustice that has all too often become banal and which escapes the theoretical framework articulated around notions of recognition of difference or the rights of minorities.

The dynamics of racializing specific to the Quebec context have contributed to the invisibility of the question of race. In fact, racism in Quebec has long been eclipsed by a nationalist discourse that has appropriated the subject status of black people and of slaves. In her article "Est-ce qu'on peut être racisées nous aussi? Les féministes blanches et le désir de racisation" ("Can We Ourselves Be Racialized? White Feminists and the Desire of Racializing"), Geneviève Pagé proposes a reflection on the dynamics of racializing in Quebec, taking as a departure point the desire for racializing expressed by a white Quebec woman. Two main dynamics are at work in the attempts of white Quebec women to reappropriate a racialized identity: nostalgia for the fight for sovereignty, and its attachment to the subject position and the loss of power caused by the decentralizing of the white experience in the feminist medium through the adoption of an intersectional approach.

Chantal Maillé's essay "De l'articulation entre race, classe et genre: éléments pour une analyse féministe intersectionnelle au Québec" ("Of Articulation Between Race, Class, and Gender: Elements for an Intersectional Feminist Analysis in Quebec") argues that in terms of race, the realities of minority and racialized women are rendered invisible by lack of data and by use of non-specific conceptual categories in scholarship. These obstacles are particular concerns for the development of intersectional analysis.

Reminding us to what extent "words are important," Sandrine Ricci's "Quand le sourire de la diversité cache les rapports de domination" ("When the Smile of Diversity Hides the Rapport of Domination") maintains that the use of the concept of "diversity" at the heart of the action plan *Diversity, Added Value* adopted in 2008 and currently in use in scholarship on multiculturalism, interculturalism, interethnic relations, and the sociology of immmigration, would paradoxically relegate the question of racism to a secondary plane. Ricci demonstrates that this notion, with its evocations of opening, tolerance, even exoticism and uprooting, has an euphemistic function that masks the lived experience of racism, the rapport between dominant and minority groups, and attitudes toward difference. For some feminists, diversity still represents vulnerability, difference, the challenge to overcome, and the "problem

to be solved."

There is a vital need to better problematize these conceptual categories and take stock of their perverse effects, such as the ever-present risk of reproducing the relationship of dominance among women. Speaking without false appearances of racial injustice goes hand in hand with the development of policies which more directly target the racism that these groups experience. If the use of the category of racialized women is important in scholarship, this category is perhaps not sufficiently refined. In the same way that the category of "*the* woman" erased the complexity of women's lived experiences, which varies according to class, national belonging, sexual orientation, and racializing, the category of racialized woman risks homogenizing the lived experiences of women in terms of other aspects such as religion.

Gaëlle Kingué Élonguélé's essay "Pour une perspective intersectionnelle dans l'analyse des représentations du féminin dans les manuels d'éthique et de culture religieuse" ("Towards an Intersectional Perspective in the Analysis of Representations of the Feminine in the Ethics and Religious Culture Textbooks") examines the representation of women in textbooks, which tend to construct a uniform, flat portrait of *the* ethnic woman. Élonguélé argues that the adoption of an intersectional perspective would avoid confounding the diverse experiences of women who come from minorities and would become sensitive to the specific lived experiences at the intersection of gender and religion, making the social representation of racialized women of faith presented in these textbooks more complex.

Sonia Ben Soltane's essay "Femmes maghrébines immigrantes au Québec: une 'double absence'" ("Immigrant Maghrebian Women in Quebec: A 'Double Absence'" draws attention to the representations of immigrant Maghrebian women as passive, vulnerable, needing saving, being at once over-visible and completely invisible, and as autonomous women, carrying out their own life projects, simply thriving. The conduct of several feminists toward these women, whose voices are heard amid these regroupings on condition that their testimonies translate the victimizing portrait that western culture has forged of them and reinforce the demonized images of their culture and religion, is seldom problematized.

Wearing one's natural hair becomes a matter of agency. In "Les enjeux du retour au naturel: perspectives du Québec" ("The Stakes of Returning to Natural: Perspectives of Quebec"), Ida Ngueng Feze discusses her study of a group of women of African origin who live in Quebec and the rise of a movement characterized by the affirmation of the right to wear natural hair, exploring the resistance and the potential of precise hairstyles. The data she has gathered allow her to emphasize the importance of the hair question in terms of affirmation and liberation stakes while natural hair becomes the symbol at the center of the process.

The round table "Intégrer la diversité dans la recherche, l'enseignement et la pratique: défis et expériences" ("Integrating Diversity into Research, Teaching, and Practice") illustrates the racializing process, a topic elaborated on by Alia Al-Saji. The racializing of veiled women is a process that is neither fixed/set nor stable.

Representation, methodological challenges, and the heterogeneity of voices among women of colour are primary concerns. Alexa Conradi points out that reflections on racializing and racism have become anchored in the Quebec women's movement relatively recently, and that the majority white movement is opening to intersectional practices thanks to the work of lesbian critics in the wake of the March of Bread and Roses twenty years ago. The racializing of issues began with the Women's World March and the stances taken by minority women.

Chantal Maillé points out that there are no tools in Quebec to advance discussion of the racializing process, and that vague notions of diversity and interculturality are used instead of a precise categorial language. Minority women should be able to define the terms of the feminist battles to come. Viviane Michel reminds us that colonialism and the law concerning Indigenous peoples are at the root of the construction of the problematic categories that are the sources of inequality while values of respect at the heart of Indigenous practices would have been very useful in the debate on the prospective Value Chart of Quebec. Rather than turning to the judicial system where issues of violence are concerned, Michel insists on the approaches used among Indigenous comunities, in which bringing the entire community to bear in finding solutions is preferred. Maria Nengeh Mansah draws attention to the theme of identity borders with her examination of the dynamics at work within the institution of the university and the research process, starting with examples taken from her own experiences.

There is great clarity of vision and a willful drive in the enterprises undertaken by the authors collected in this anthology, which brings much-needed, nuanced understanding of a topic that is far from functioning in mere black and white terms.

NOTE

1. "Conducting research on racialized women while being oneself racialized is one of the main themes of this work. On a more fundamental level, this position opens up towards the development of perspectives and alternative research tools which, contrary to dominant paradigms which tend to replicate the colonization of knowledge, would allow one to escape these paradigms and to produce a kind of knowledge with an emancipating outlook" (9).

MARRAN, CHRISTINE L. *Ecology without Culture: Aesthetics for a Toxic World*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2017. Pp. 186. US$100.00 hardcover, US$25.00 paperback.

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Christine L. Marran's *Ecology without Culture: Aesthetics for a Toxic World* is a thought-provoking study and an important intervention into contemporary ecocriti-

cism and ecological debates. It challenges some of the major dichotomies that have come to determine humanistic explorations of the non-human world, including the alleged rift between 'culture and nature' as well as monolithic entities long used to frame debates surrounding global environmental policy and pollution, such as the binary view of "the West" and "the Rest" (18). At the heart of Marran's text is the conviction that many of ecocriticism's central tenets are in need of serious reassessment. As she puts it, the goal of her book is to show "how ecocriticism can engage culture without making the perpetuation of *ethnos* or *anthropos* the endgame" (6; emphasis in original). In order to do this, Marran draws on an array of fascinating examples of fictional and non-fictional texts, television documentaries, and movies "that resist or explicitly dismiss exceptionalist claims made at the level of ethnicity, culture, and species in their critiques of industrial modernity" (3). What her analysis aims for is not so much a polemic against traditional forms of ecological or environmental criticism, but rather an expansion and, in the end, a reconfiguration of the cultural frameworks upon which critical analysis usually rests. Marran convincingly argues that 'nature' has often figured as a mere backdrop to or a discursive instrument for exclusionary worldviews having to do with ethnicity, identity, or, indeed, humanity. In order to avoid the pitfalls that necessarily come with analyzing cultural texts, Marran engages in a number of highly innovative close readings that bring the "material" and the "semiotic" world in conversation with one another (6), and that explore an aesthetics outside of cultural boundaries, where non-human agents, pollution, and toxicity come into play.

As Marran herself points out, the title of her book is a variation on Timothy Morton's *Ecology without Nature* (2007). In his monography, Morton offers a deconstructionist ecological philosophy aimed at stripping ecological thinking of its romantic legacy. According to Morton, "nature" can be seen as a highly problematic cultural construct and the ultimate expression of a mere literary symptom. Morton advocates abolishing the term "nature" in favour of a radically open ecology that highlights interconnectivity and coexistence. Morton certainly has a point when he illustrates how essentializing concepts of "nature" easily lend themselves to ideology and reactionary politics. However, this self-limiting move away from the concept altogether is itself problematic for two reasons: on the one hand, it blends out the critical reflection of the various cultural concepts of "nature" in human history, and on the other, "nature" as a signifier keeps reappearing in multiple places in Morton's writings, time and again undermining his argument. For this reason alone, Marran seems ill advised to step into the same trap and to opt for a title that does away not with "nature," but with "culture." In her book, too, "culture" pops up everywhere, like a ghost that is haunting her argument and surviving the attempt of its rhetorical exorcism. It is perfectly clear that she criticizes an essentializing concept of "culture" having to do with nationhood and collective identities that instrumentalize nature in a symbolical way for political ends, commodifying and undermining, at the same time, attempts at conservation, coexistence, or truly ecological thinking. It is, how-

ever, less clear what exactly counts as "culture" in her definition, the more so as the rich existing literature in ecocriticism that attempts to reset, and to finally overcome, the dichotomy between "nature" and "culture" is not included in her discussion: biosemiotics and cultural ecology are two of the most vibrant theoretical paradigms that offer, each in its own way, a view of culture as embedded in material and highly interactive processes of life, and that present "culture" as an evolutionary force that has staged, in ever new forms, the co-presence and inherent hybridity of biophilic and social forms of existence. In light of these writings that likewise focus on the intersections between material and semiotic worlds, Marran's book does not so much seem like a revolution but rather a reiteration and a powerful reflection of ecopolitical and environmental justice-based strands of ecological thinking.

While some of the theoretical groundwork could have deserved some further scrutiny and a clearer definition of the central terms and concepts, the analytical main part of Marran's book is all the better; in fact, the subtitle of her monograph, *Aesthetics for a Toxic World*, perfectly sums up what she sets out to do in her analysis of contemporary Japanese texts and films, with a persuasive analytical toolbox and many examples off the beaten track. It is in this context that she develops her theory of "obligate storytelling": "a kind of storytelling that foregrounds material relations as fundamental to narrative" (28) and that frames "storytelling as a relation" (29) between matter and mind, the non- or more-than-human and the social. In fact, "obligate storytelling" would have suited much better as a title, the more so as it shifts the focus from the theoretical level of abstraction to the aesthetic modes at work in contemporary environmental texts. As Marran convincingly argues, it is a mode of literary worldmaking that supplements her second major concept, the "biotrope," which enunciates "the point that representations of the biological world inherently indicate both the material and the semiotic" (6). Examples of "biotropes" encompass highly problematic nationalist or ethnic abstractions that take their symbolical power from nature, like "the cherry blossom" that found a new relevance for Japan after the Fukushima meltdown when it was used "to claim Japan as an ethnic national collectivity that would inevitably recover from the catastrophic experiences" (7). "Obligate storytelling," in Marran's view, counters such "literary forms that turn a vibrant and living environment to amber" (33), offering, instead, "a way to account for human life in and through relationships with the more-than-human world" (28). Her prime example is Ishimure Michiko's 1969 book *Paradise in the Sea of Sorrow*, which deals with the mercury poisoning of the Yatsushiro Sea and the toll it took on the communities along the seashore and on the wildlife and landscape. "Obligate storytelling," it becomes clear, offers a highly interactionist, multispecies perspective on nature-culture relations without giving in to politicized or institutional language, thus becoming an "aesthetic ontology that expands the range of voices for storytelling" (39).

Yet, as Marran illustrates, this aesthetics is not simply reduced to literature, but is also at work in photography, painting, and the moving images of films. In order to

show how the more-than-human ontology offered by "obligate storytelling" works as an imaginative force in the larger cultural frameworks, Marran turns to Rob Nixon's concept of "slow violence" in *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* —which she wrongly cites as *Slow Violence: Environmentalism for the Poor* (58)— that invites a reconceptualization of scale and time, especially with regard to toxic events: it frames how toxicity works over long periods of time, outside of the attention span of media coverage and politics, to disrupt communities and environments. By looking at the films of Tsuchimoto Noriaki, Marran convincingly illustrates that the film medium, despite Nixon's claim, is an apt medium for depicting "slow violence," "because it can capture the environment at different scales, from the microscopic to the macroscopic" (61). This is an important observation, further supported by the "optics of ambulation" (62) Marran sees at work in Tsuchimoto's films a conscious strategy of making visible the bodily and biological effects of mercury poisoning through an array of visual techniques, including the revelatory effect that is established between lab footage of poisoned cats and the voiceovers taken from interviews and dialogues of scientists. It also involves the participatory modes of observation by filming and living with a community for decades. "Obligate storytelling" turns the filmmaker into a witness who does not capture the images for dramatic or emotional effect, but as a testament to how landscape, wildlife, and humans interact in an environment teeming with visible (and invisible) agents.

The third chapter, "Res Nullius: The Domestic Turn in Environmental Literature," takes on another cherished dichotomy of ecological thinking: the notion of strict separation between the country and the city. As Marran shows, both the rural and the urban are not diametrically opposed, but rather constantly interact. This can be seen with regard to toxic events, on the one hand, because matter can easily traverse and permeate spaces and bodies; and it can be seen in the "domestic space" and its use of chemical substances that constitute a strange mixture of modernized urban life and agricultural practices. Marran convincingly shows how "spatial relations in environmental writing change the sense of who is vulnerable to environmental toxins" (92). In a number of close readings of poems and an analysis of Ariyoshi Sawako's novel *Cumulative Pollution*, which was first serialized in a newspaper (1974-75), Marran analyzes the ecological aesthetic that is at work in literature that focuses on the domestic as a spatial, social, and environmental microcosm in the true sense of the word. The "biotrope of cumulative pollution" is thereby thought of as an important literary intervention because it brings to light aspects that are otherwise hard to depict or to reflect on: as she puts it, "writing of the domestic turn features the unremarkable world of any home to convey a deep sense of the susceptibility of humans, plants, and animals to the kind of contamination that is hard to trace" (105). This perspective is all the more needed as it has so far largely been missing from (especially first and second wave) ecocritical accounts that have framed spatial relations in terms of either local and global or rural and urban dichotomies. It is also needed because it helps meditate on environmental justice in new ways by showing

that we need "'multipollutant' toxicity reference values" (115), also including our own homes in the account.

This perspective offers a good transition to the last chapter, "Literature without Us." It is both a summary and an outlook that explores the pitfalls of cultural humanism in the age of the "Anthropocene," especially when cultural difference is at stake in a globalized age. Her perspective on multispecies and nonanthropocentric forms of literary imagination offers Marran the possibility to come up with a convincing critique of the "Anthropocene discourse" because, as she explains, it "requires thinking at the level of species as declared in the name of the concept itself and, in that sense, is trapped by a tautology of human exceptionalism" (118). Discussing a plethora of important philosophers and writers, such as comparative literature scholar Masao Miyoshi's notion of "planetarianism" or Peter Singer's ethics, Marran presents the reader with an impressive tapestry of contemporary positions that allow her to challenge the idea that "Anthropocene" thinking could in any way overcome the exclusionary, and possibly fatal, anthropocentrism inherited from Enlightenment philosophy. Against this background, Marran's own concept of "obligate storytelling" becomes a necessary intervention in a debate very much based on cultural premises when, in fact, much more is at stake. The "aesthetics for a toxic world" analyzed and presented in her book show that imaginative world-making is an indispensable resource in its own right, not because it is based on cultural ideas of exclusion and identity, but rather on an ecological understanding of limitless possibility and coexistence. It integrates the non- or more-than-human world into the picture and creates a highly relational worldview which makes clear that the collective (human) "we" or "us" reflected on in the last pages of this inspirational book always depends on a "you" for coherence.

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Peretz, Eyal. *The Off-Screen: An Investigation of the Cinematic Frame*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 2017. Pp. 272. US$65.00.

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Drawing on Lacan, Benjamin, Žižek, and Derrida cultivating the field of Western film philosophy, Eyal Peretz considers how off-screen diegetic spaces in narrative cinema generate possibilities that speak to the mimetic limitations of on-screen rep-

resentations. Sounds and sights not shown or heard "on" the screen's diegetic space offer a realm of mystery for cinema audiences, whom the director as auteur forces to imagine what lies outside of the narrative's enclosed mimetic spaces. For Peretz, cinema as a modern western narrative technology replaces a monotheistic God with a secular off-screen artistic mystery (52).

This book's mediation on this cinematic dynamic expands into a meditation on modernity and western culture by arguing that ancient Greek theatre's use of off-stage violence, and specific types of Renaissance theatre and painting, anticipate the principle of the off-screen by generating mystery (21). I wish Peretz had grounded his speculation on these diverse mimetic forms in scholarship. For example, rather than a passing mention of off-stage violence in ancient Greek tragedy (20-21), he could have referred to Taplin's excellent and more specific work on Aeschylus's stagecraft or Walton. Peretz's text and endnotes revel in theorizing connections between disparate texts in ways that are both exciting and frustrating for a reader hoping to see these connections more firmly situated.

Peretz's study is divided into three sections: Part I muses on how pre-cinematic Renaissance art anticipates the rise of cinema's off-screen spaces, while Part II confines itself to a narrow set of films as the origins of narrative film by exploring Griffith's *Intolerance* (1916), Lang's *M* (1931), Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1935), and Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* (1940) and other earlier significant Chaplin films. Part III discusses film genre in relation to mid-twentieth-century American director Hawk's films and Tarantino's revisionist WWII film *Inglorious Basterds* (2009). Peretz selects feature-length narrative cinema mainly produced by straight white males grounded in the twentieth century situated in Europe and the United States. In terms of gender, the book's sole exception is German director Leni Riefenstahl; however, in her case, Peretz lessens her contribution to her celebratory Nazi documentary *Triumph of the Will* by arguing the film is "a joint visual project" with Hitler as the off-screen/on-screen presence who orders the visuals (113). The book never justifies this selection of films in a way that might suggest that the "off-screen" might be limited to a particular type of cinema or events in the twentieth century or that women, queers, and/or people of colour might lever the off-screen in ways that points to the ideological power of off-screen representations. Given the book's scant attention to women and others, it would have been best if it self-reflexively unpacked its methodology. Dismissive assertions such as "I am not sufficiently knowledgeable about painting from the perspective of art history to say whether Bruegel deserves a place of honour similar to Shakespeare's" (23) suggest that Peretz is tone-deaf to the ideological process of canonization. More acutely, Peretz ignores significant feminist scholarship on off-screen spaces, such as Silverman's *The Acoustic Mirror*, Doane's "The Voice in Cinema", and De Lauretis's *Technologies of Gender*. These scholars focus on twentieth-century American and European cinema and posit off-screen and voice-off spaces of cinema as sites of resistance to patriarchy and other dominant ideological projects. Peretz skirts the ideological politics of the off-screen in thinking

through a more universalist model of how great complex canonical films manipulates off-screen spaces despite dealing with ideologically thorny films that could be explored via the lenses of class, nation, gender, race, and sexuality.

Peretz's analysis is indebted to a psychoanalytical frame, as evidenced by the first chapter that asserts Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and various paintings by Bruegel offer, respectively, off-stage and out-of-frame spaces that embody modernity, a term he avoids defining, other than to say that from the Renaissance to now is a common way of understanding it (211, n. 2). He argues that Hamlet and Bruegel's paintings anticipate the generation of off-screen spaces seen in Andrei Tarkovsky's 1972 science fiction film *Solaris*. The respective off-stage/out-of-frame/off-screen spaces of *Hamlet*, Bruegel's *Icarus*, and Tarkovsky's *Solaris* operate as sites of paternal loss by wayward sons that the respective on-stage, in-frame, on-screen characters vainly seek to master and domesticate, with art equalling salvation and mystery (91). His reading of *Solaris*'s conclusion configures the main character Kris's wife (no name) as "not an actual object, but a ghost communicating with the death/life of the off" (57). I suspect that a more compelling reading of *Solaris* might resist the "rule of the father" reading of the film to consider the role of gender in the off-screen.

Part II of *The Off-Screen* contains two chapters. The first examines "the origins of film" by exploring D.W. Griffith's *Intolerance* (1916) as a puzzling case of a film, weighted by fascist and democratic tendencies, that revels in the mystery of the off-screen spaces despite Griffith's "reputation as the father of narrative continuity" (67). Eyal passionately argues that Intolerance's excessive cutting showcases the medium's potential to transcend intolerant moral forms and oppressive plodding classical editing techniques: "This excess kept haunting humanity as an unconscious memory, constantly, and intolerably repressed, until with the arrival of the medium of film, it can finally cry out or perhaps bleed, through the open wounds of cinematic cuts and come to be heard and to exist" (73). Thus, Griffith's cinematic legacy with the overtly white supremacist *Birth of a Nation* (1915) is conveniently swept away by this appeal to film's magical suturing of reality that keeps mystery alive.

The second and longer chapter of Part II links Charlie Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* (1940) to Leni Riefenstahl's *Triumph of the Will* (1935) and Fritz Lang's *M* (1931). The discussion of *Triumph*'s opening aerial shots (94-99) does not mention Steve Neale's seminal *Screen* article that analyzes this same sequence. Neale argues that Hitler consistently "moves out of the frame" of various shots in the film in order to generate his mysterious presence that all the on-screen figures gaze at (71). Neale argues "Hitler's presence [functions] in/absence from the frame in such a way as insistently to highlight his function as privileged object of the look and as a principle of visual orientation and coherence" (71). Neale's perspective supports Peretz's, yet Peretz does not mention him. The pairing of *Triumph* and Chaplin's *The Great Dictator* provokes an inspired discussion of politics with Peretz's deciding against Hitler/Riefenstahl's fascist gaze and for Chaplin's humanist play:

> The "space" Chaplin activates is not political so much as it marks the suspension of politics and exposure to a realm of play, where all those who gather by the poetic "leader" are open to communication with the groundlessness of the open Whole. Out of this exposure they suspend all political frames / leadership mechanisms that have been instituted and pleasurably occupy a non place that opens the possibility of politics, insofar as it give rise to new frameworks and decisions about the meaning of being-in-common. (155)

I am not entirely convinced that Chaplin's performances defuse Fascism, as I am not entirely convinced Chaplin suspends politics in *The Great Dictator* or the world circa 1940.

Part III, on film genre, explores American director Howard Hawks's idea of genre and Quentin Tarantino's WWII revenge fantasy *Inglorious Basterds* (2009). Peretz's celebration of Chaplin as a performer who moves beyond the frame carries over into his celebration of the films of American mid-century auteur Howard Hawks for his deft use of off-screen spaces to hint at the multiplicities contained in genres (198). The final chapter avoids concluding with an overview of the book's analysis and significance; instead, it celebrates Tarantino's *Inglourious Basterds*. Peretz sees this film as an antidote to fascist cinema because it keeps the Shoah off-screen while enacting "a cinema of Jewish revenge" with Jewish presence inhabiting the unseen borders of the film, literally under the floorboards of the house in the opening scene (206-07). Like many of the films discussed in this book, Peretz avoids reference to peer-reviewed contemporary scholarship on each film. For example, *Inglourious Basterds* has generated much relevant criticism that would provide short cuts for and challenges to his argument (see Kraus, Schreier, Setka, and Suleiman).

I am uncertain whether the conclusion to the book is abrupt because Peretz wished to generate his own off-screen type ending, leaving the reader to write the conclusion. The last chapter on *Inglourious Basterds* would provide a lovely folding back with Part II's focus on Hitler as a tyrannical on-screen presence, but it does not. I would have loved to read Peretz's musing on the implications of Facebook's Oculus (2017) and HTC's Vive (2012) goggles that give viewers room to roam around virtual or augmented realities with no literal off-screen elements. Does the arrival of these technologies extinguish the mystery of off-screen spaces and thus shift human consciousness?

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