

Book Reviews

***Behind the Masks of Modernism: Global and Transnational Perspectives.* Andrew Reynolds and Bonnie Roos, editors. Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2016. ISBN: 9780813061641, 289 pp.**

In *Behind the Masks of Modernism*, editors Andrew Reynolds and Bonnie Roos collect nine case studies on “negotiating and dwelling within modernity” (227), endeavouring to create a global map of modernism with a transnational and interdisciplinary approach. This work responds and contributes to the currently rigorous discussions on comparative and global modernisms: a field that transcends the Western modernist canon and considers modernism the outcome of cross-cultural encounters.

All the nine essays collected in this volume use masks—both literal and metaphorical—as their thematic concern and central trope, revealing the complicated process of making and unmaking identities for modern subjects in a number of national/cultural places: India, Brazil, Spanish America, New Zealand, Russia and China. According to the editors, the mask is a ubiquitous but relatively underexplored image in modernist artistic practices all over the world. The mask, sometimes as a strategy to hide the true self, and sometimes as a way of performance that constructs one’s identity, greatly facilitates the discussion of identity formation for modern subjects.

However, besides this thematic concern, the volume has a more ambitious aim, which is, according to the editors in the introduction, “to address what we see as a problem inherent in both Western modernist studies and global modernist studies, involving a suspect relationship with history” (9). This inherent problem lies in the relationship between

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modernity and history, and the debate “among the proponents of three competing paradigms of modernity, the ‘singular’, the ‘multiple/alternative’, and the ‘uneven’” (242). Fredric Jameson in *A Singular Modernity* argues that capitalism is the primary cause for all modernities and modernisms, and as a result, all cultures will look alike in the end. Jameson’s ‘singular modernity’ is criticised as a-cultural and a-historical, and it also conforms to the binary mode of centre/periphery as capitalism flows from the West to the East. In fact, the global modernist cultural field is much more nuanced and complicated. The principles of heteronomy (economic and political factors as the driving force for cultural formation) and autonomy (symbolic capital/prestige becomes more predominant than economic and political capital) interact with each other; the forces of making for sameness (globalisation and universalised cultural patterns due to the march of modernity) and difference (nationalist movement and struggle for cultural diversity) keep negotiating; the positions and position-takings of different participants in this field, which are both national and transnational, autonomous and heteronomous, will exert influence on their cultural norms and practices. With all these elements and backgrounds considered, this volume borrows ideas from ‘alternative modernities’: to hear an alternative voice and “to think with a difference—a difference that would destabilise the universalist idioms, historicise the contexts, and pluralise the experiences of modernity” (15). With a global and transnational vision, all the essays collected in this volume are historically contextualised, politically, economically and culturally grounded. The theme of the mask in turn masks this book’s real aim to reconsider the definition of global modernisms and modernities.

This collection starts with Aida Yuen Wong’s case study of Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore’s mask-like figure paintings on the one hand cater for the Westerners’ orientalisising strategy of the East, but on the other hand, as Tagore is “aware of his own constructedness” (34), the paintings in turn have gained international attention for India. This study points out that although Tagore is against British imperialism, he also casts doubt on nationalism. His borrowing of Japanese *Noh* mask traditions indicates his cosmopolitan stance in this colonial/national encounter. Modernism is always considered as a radical rupture in the

tradition. In response to this idea, essays in this collection relocate modernism's relation to tradition as transformation and rewriting instead of a total break from it. Sandro R. Barros's 'A Pedagogy for Modernity' explores the Brazilian composer Heitor Villa-Lobos's combination of Afro-Brazilian primitive music with Western classical music as a strategy which masks both his aim of marketing an 'exotica' to European audience and his collaboration with the nation-state to refashion Brazilian audience with modernist aesthetics. Similarly, in Sylvie Beaud's 'Roots Reconfigured: Contemporary Chinese Masks in the Flux of Modernity', the renewal of tradition in the present is also discussed. With the operation of the two important driving forces—mass media and nation-state, the traditional Chinese *Guan Suo Opera* gained its symbolic prestige in modern China. The appearance of *Guan Suo Opera* in Zhang Yimou's film *Riding Alone for Thousands of Miles*, and the state's institutionalisation of this opera as 'living fossils', epitomise how China rehabilitates tradition and makes it a way into modernity.

Apart from the tension between tradition and modernity, essays in this collection also focus on the relationships between high modernism and market, cultural identity and race or history. Andrew Reynolds's essay 'Unmasking the Journalistic Aesthetics of Spanish American *Modernismo*' focuses on a group of Spanish American poets who regularly wrote journalistic articles for newspapers and magazines. However, based on Andrew's study, journalism is just a mask for their real aim: to advocate their high aesthetics and poetics. Through taking advantage of journalism and market, they find a way to consecrate their poetry and endow it with symbolic prestige. In 'The "Colder Artifice": Paul Laurence Dunbar, Countee Cullen and the Masks of Blackness', Steven A. Nardi uses a deconstructive approach to analyse the mask metaphor in two modernist African American poets. For Paul Laurence Dunbar, black people wear a fake mask which hides and protects their real self, so the mask can be detached from the face. But for Countee Cullen, the mask and the face are fused together after the historical racial encounter, so there is no essential black subjectivity behind the mask that can be retrieved, and the self is already transfigured by the mask imposed on him; any attempt to detach the mask will cause mutilation. Moreover, in the case study of 'The Emotion as Such: Un/Masking the Poet in

Mayakovsky's work', Connor Doak considers the animal personas in the Russian poet Mayakovsky's poetry as a mask which reveals his break from realistic aesthetics and his emotions suppressed by urban modernity.

The nine essays collected in this volume, though covering a wide range of cultural spaces and artistic genres, all have a thematic concern with masks (both literal and figural), and explore modern subjects, dwelling, struggling and negotiating within particular historical contexts in a global modernist field. Through including a number of 'marginalised' places and writers who have received insufficient attention, the editors make great efforts to maintain a 'cultural diversity' in this volume. However, it would be more comprehensive and 'global' to also include one or two Anglo-American cases as representatives, since a number of modernists in the 'centre' also had a transnational vision through their 'voyage-out'.

Modernism is never a self-contained system which has definite boundaries; nor is it a binary system which only flows from the centre to the periphery. In the global modernist cultural field, the dialectical tensions between history and present, West and East, heteronomy and autonomy, sameness and differentiation, make modern subjects struggle and suffer. Facing the ever-changing and self-consuming modern world, everybody needs a mask to protect oneself, to answer all challenges, and to stabilise one's identity.

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Linguistic Ethnography: Collecting, Analysing and Presenting Data.

Fiona and Angela Creese. London: Sage, 2015. ISBN: 9781446257371, 240 pp.

Linguistic ethnography is a research approach in which two fields of study – linguistics and ethnography – are brought together, the

argument for this being that there is more to be gained in combining these disciplines than keeping them separate (Creese 139). It is a relatively recent, European phenomenon that is closely related to North American scholarship in linguistic anthropology. In a discussion paper published by the Linguistic Ethnography Forum in 2004, the general orientation of linguistic ethnography is described as follows:

“Linguistic ethnography generally holds that to a considerable degree, language and the social world are mutually shaping, and that close analysis of situated language use can provide both fundamental and distinctive insights into the mechanisms and dynamics of social and cultural production in everyday activity.” (Rampton et al.: 2).

Thus, by combining the two disciplines, research in linguistic ethnography seeks to examine language use in various social contexts, as the two are closely intertwined and influence one another.

This work provides a comprehensive guide to conducting linguistic ethnographic research, from the initial research design stage through to data analysis and writing up findings. It is—as set out in the introduction—aimed at students and researchers with various levels of experience in conducting linguistic ethnographic research. The book is well-organised and split into three parts, allowing the reader to locate and refer to a given section as and when it is necessary.

The first part, ‘Ethnography and Language’, comprises two chapters. Chapter 1, ‘Linguistic Ethnography’, begins by looking at why linguistics and ethnography should be combined, examines links between language and culture, and briefly charts the development of the study of language over the past century. The second part of this chapter focuses on the antecedents of linguistic ethnography and its current relevance. The reader is introduced to four of the major scholars whose shared interest in language, culture, society, and whose interaction has influenced linguistic ethnography: Hymes, Gumperz, Goffman, and Erickson. Following this, information is provided about the current relevance and status of linguistic ethnography.

Chapter 2, ‘Data in Linguistic Ethnography’ outlines four approaches to data collection and analysis that can be used in linguistic ethnography research: interviews, fieldwork, interactions, and text. In the description

of each approach, types of data, data collection, data analysis, and reflexivity are discussed.

The two chapters in this part of the book provide brief, but useful introductions to the development of linguistic ethnography and some of the common research approaches used by scholars in this field. Additional key readings are listed at the end of both chapters, which will especially be of benefit to readers who are new to linguistic ethnography, as the brevity of these chapters mean that they may need supplementing with some additional reading.

Part Two, 'Doing Research in Linguistic Ethnography: Building the Case', comprises four chapters, and is arguably the focal point of this work. The respective authors of each chapter present a case study on a research project of which they have been a part, and discuss some of the issues that they faced and problems they had to overcome during the research process. The case studies presented highlight the diverse range of research areas and topics for which a linguistic ethnographic approach can be employed. In Chapter 3, Angela Creese discusses her work as part of a research team examining multilingualism in community-led language schools. The case study discussed by Fiona Copland in Chapter 4 is based on research carried out in English language teacher training centres. The setting for the case study written by Frances Rock in Chapter 5 is police custody; and in Chapter 6 Sara Shaw discusses her work on language and healthcare planning.

The chapters in Part Two are structured similarly, and the same issues are discussed in all four. Each author sets the context of their respective case study by providing some background information and the research questions that were investigated, after this they proceed to discuss some of the issues that arose while conducting the research. Some of the headings under which the research projects are discussed include research design, collection of data, data storage, analysis of data, and representation and writing up.

These case studies provide rich, in-depth accounts of the research undertaken by each author. The close attention paid to practically every step of the research process really brings each study to life and allows the reader to fully engage with the various issues that arose whilst the author was working on the given project and how these were dealt with.

The third part of this work, 'Practical Issues in Linguistic Ethnographic Research' is made up of four chapters, each of which focuses on some of the different practical issues that arise when doing linguistic ethnographic research. Chapter 7 focuses on empiricism, ethics and impact – the latter of the two being issues that currently seem to be of particular importance in all fields of research. Chapter 8 provides guidance on transcription, translation and technology, such as advice on making decisions on how to transcribe data, how to present data from languages with different orthographies, and how to manage data. Chapter 9 provides invaluable advice on writing up the results of research for different outputs including doctoral theses, articles, posters, and policy briefing papers. Chapter 10, the book's final and concluding chapter, takes some of the main themes of the book and looks at how linguistic ethnography may move forward in the future.

Overall this work is an excellent contribution to a relatively new area of research on which there is still relatively little written. The emphasis on the importance of the need for reflexivity at all stages of the research process is something that is stressed throughout the work and is one of its particular strengths. As mentioned above, the different methods that can be used in linguistic ethnographic research are not discussed at great length, which could be a potential weakness of the work – especially for readers who are new to research – however, adequate further reading suggestions are provided.

This work is an essential read for graduate students and researchers in a wide range of disciplines who are conducting research using a linguistic ethnographic approach. It is not a prescriptive, 'how-to' guide to linguistic ethnography, but instead, makes the reader aware of the processes involved in doing linguistic ethnography, and should therefore enable them to make their own informed decisions throughout the research process. The layout is clear and it is written in a very accessible style. Moreover, the examples taken from the authors' research projects that are scattered liberally throughout this book provide the reader with further practical guidance on conducting linguistic ethnographic research. This is a work that all researchers in this area should have close to hand whilst conducting their research.

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***British Spy Fiction and End of Empire*. Sam Goodman.** Abingdon: Routledge, 2015. ISBN: 9781138777460, 198 pp.

This short criticism on spy novels interprets the figure of the spy where British national identity is concerned, linking it with space in both post-war Europe and colonial territories. With consecutive events such as the independence of colonized countries and the Suez Crisis in 1956, the location of the British Empire after the Second World War was thrown into flux, its former reputation and power lost. Recollection of the empire's glorious past was necessitated by the construction of nationhood so that the unflinching resistance of Britain against the Nazis was not rendered useless after the war; however, the new powers of the USA and the USSR were the obvious pivot of the Cold War period, and the British Empire was ousted on the world stage. Spy novels at this time thus played a critical role in making the British feel proud again and, more importantly, in retrieving 'British' as their national identity by sharing the emotional experience in these novels. Unlike in today's post-devolution era, the heroes in spy novels fight for the single entity of Britain, which makes them—as Sam Goodman points out—"ideas of patriotism and national security, with the spy himself indicative of the

defence of British interests and the preservation of British power around the globe" (2).

Based on these political contexts, Goodman argues that space in spy novels enacts the construction of British identity and its changes. To this end, Goodman analyses works by four different authors: Ian Fleming, Graham Greene, John le Carré, and Len Deighton. Goodman in the analysis does not take space as a still background against which characters act, but rather as a vibrant geography which "traces a narrative of decline mirroring the British position within post-war geopolitics over the course of the following two decades" (19). Following Henri Lefebvre's theorisation in which space is the result of socio-political actions and power, Goodman claims that active espionage activities across all of Europe and European-colonised countries in their works need to be more closely explored. As he points out, "the spy becomes a composite signifier of power and identity, as well as a crucial link in the exchange of values between political power and spatial environment" (9). He connects spies' activities with Britain's situation in post-war Europe, the status of London, British technology, and colonisers in five chapters.

Throughout the book, Goodman compares and contrasts the selected spy novels with their historical backgrounds. Early spy characters, like Fleming's James Bond, are quite different from the others in that Bond's manliness and competence effectively attracted public attention. Unlike Bond, the characters of Greene, le Carré, and Deighton portray a much bleaker Britain with "resignation in the face of modern political power" and "economic stagnation and geographical decline" (11). The lively discussion on the correlation between space and British identity occurs in chapters one and two. By way of examining the state of the British Empire, Goodman first looks at the British espionage activities across post-war Europe, including Germany and Austria, which were still very much scarred by the Second World War. Through characters' narratives in foreign lands, he maintains that British identity abroad at that time seems to be in quite "a state of flux" (24), as is the influence of Britain in the international arena.

Turning his gaze to the domestic sphere, Goodman discusses London as the centre of all operation and technological advances. Although each

writer's representation of London varies, Goodman is able to distill from them a clear image: a highly developed space, the vital centre of British power and national identity, which needs to be protected. As he argues that the figure of James Bond can be read as part of the construction of Englishness, he also treats London as 'central to projections of the British national character, geographically important as a centre of production and metaphorically vital to the construction of national identity' (49). What is implied in this statement, however, is that Britishness is interchangeable with Englishness. In terms of spies' use of state-of-the-art technology—including aeroplanes, cars and ships—he claims that the description of these technologies forms British national characters. For example, against the powerful U-boat of Germany, Fleming's emphasis on British maritime history and the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) captures British readers' pride and patriotism. However, despite detailed explanation and description of highly developed technology in the British Empire, the main thrust of his argument throughout chapter four is on the fading imperial power and changed perception about British power under international circumstances, which followed the two central powers of the USA and the USSR.

When it comes to the wane of British Empire, Goodman examines the British spies' activities in the previous colonies of Britain. Although 'spy' is still often depicted as a byword for a patriot who protects national interests abroad and at home in literary works, Goodman importantly asserts that these activities also play a role in undermining the British power and position, which is related to the territorial loss as well as "the decline of moral and political authority" (139). Goodman makes it clear that what intrigues him is not the decolonising process, but the protagonists' strife against the British identity in the novels themselves, which raises moral questions concerning what the spy as a coloniser perceives as colonial spaces. For example, Goodman asks whether the spies' selfish efforts to preserve their own national interests for the British Empire as well as to alienate the colonies only for their material benefits are acceptable. In the four authors' works, typical colonial spaces such as Africa, Indochina, and Hong Kong are largely ignored and used only as a means to an end, by which spies achieve their imperialist goals. Accordingly, as Goodman points out, colonial spaces allow the

protagonists of the novels to question their British identity as well as the crisis of the British Empire. In the case of Greene, Goodman believes his works to have concentrated on an inevitable devolution in which the British Empire is replaced by the USA in taking the leading role in the world. Fleming's description of Jamaica is much more pastoral, but in his narrative and characterisation he also shows concerns about the rapid rise of the USA in Jamaica. Finally, le Carré's Hong Kong is shown both as a mysterious colonial space and a place where the end of Empire is enacted.

Despite the wide range of spy novels covered in this study, Goodman's argument on spies mirroring the power and decline of the British Empire is consistent and well written. The connection he draws between the figures of spies, space, and British national identity with regard to each author is original and well-organized. However, this study does not make a clear distinction between Englishness and Britishness, and their interchangeable use can be potentially problematic and confusing. Nonetheless, the correlation he draws between space and identity in the context of British history is highly valuable, and his approach of reading British spy activities as being allegorical to the fate of Britain and the construction of British identity is inspiring for future studies.

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