

three chapters. As a result, *The Literary North* will act as a benchmark by which to judge future collections on the pluralities of northernness and their literary geographies.

Work Cited

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Neal Alexander and James Moran (eds) (2013) *Regional Modernisms*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 248pp., £70.00 (hardback), ISBN 9780748669301.

'Where did Modernism happen?' ask Neal Alexander and James Moran in their introduction to this collection, and the answer, revealed across ten illuminating chapters, is unexpectedly wide-ranging. This study of modernist writing in the Britain and Ireland brings together many well-known figures, as well as some unfamiliar names, whilst reassessing how 'modernism' is defined in terms, firstly, of place, but also of identity, politics, ideology, aesthetics, technique and time period. As Alexander and Moran explain, opening up the metropolitan borders of modernism also means stretching the sometimes strict and arbitrary chronological boundaries that place modernism between the turn of the twentieth century and the Second World War.

Clear definition of the potentially politicised terminology associated with 'region' is crucial to this even-handed survey of work that occurred in, originated from or addressed, locales lying outside the supposed centres of literary production. Terms like 'region', 'regionalism', 'transnational' and 'glocalisation' (the latter two appropriated from the language of global finance, but appearing increasingly in literary studies) are adopted and interrogated over the course of the book; thus this is a study that not only uses 'region' to investigate 'modernism', but uses modernism as a unifying theme with which to explore the notion of the region.

Several of the essays develop new critical models for thinking about regional modernisms. David James writes about Storm Jameson and Sylvia Townsend Warner, beginning with Jameson's account of taking a commercial flight: an 'aerial perspective' over Europe which contrasts with the localised and detailed focus elsewhere in her work. James's chapter, 'Capturing the Scale of Fiction at Mid-Century', thus constructs a filmic model, indebted to other new technologies, for understanding how post-1939 modernist writers developed forms to deal with the global-local concerns associated with the growing internationalism of a war-damaged world. His essay is followed by Dominic Head's chapter on Leo Walmsley, which argues, firstly, for a controlled admission of writers into the modernist canon. Head suggests that if some recourse to the aesthetic and intellectual standards of modernism is not made, the reputation of good rural regional writing could be jeopardised by the literary shortcomings of some of its more aesthetically and politically

conservative new members. Walmsley, he argues, is an important writer, who explores ideas of belonging in his regionalist novels. Head's argument identifies a crucial paradox that recurs in regional modernist writing: the perpetual outsider status of the observing writer. The potentially limiting requirement of regional art to appeal to a home audience is also raised.

Meanwhile John Brannigan's 'Between the Islands' makes the case for an 'archipelagic' model as a means of understanding regional and national identity as well as aesthetics, in post-war British and Irish writing. He focuses on the 'insular' work of Michael McLaverty. Patrick Lonergan's chapter begins with a train journey, and explores the moment of transition between region and centre that J.M. Synge's train trip from Galway to Dublin represents. The transitional space, and the process of moving between region and centre, is explored as a process of seeing as well as being. Lonergan also raises the issue of regional 'authenticity' – in this case because Synge's 'factual travelogue', *The Aran Islands* (1907), was criticised for portraying an inauthentic picture of the islanders (66). This leads to wider debate about how 'the authentic' and 'the regional' have become terms that are (sometimes 'dangerously') interlinked (67).

The question of regional authenticity is one that arises for a number of the authors studied in the book: some portray their protagonists, or even themselves, as perpetual outsiders whose work as artists separates them from the traditional working communities of their regions, but who might also be excluded from dominant, metropolitan culture because of their regional status. 'Region', and especially 'regionalism', bring with them the idea of belonging: itself a concept that has both negative and positive effects on communities.

Andrew Thacker's and James Moran's chapters consider cultures surrounding the making, distribution and reception of regional writing. Moran, looking at Pound, Yeats and repertory theatres, provides a fascinating short history of these regional sites of production and performance, as well as setting up an important distinction between the 'region' of Dublin - as its own centre of national culture - Northern Irish Ulster, Scottish Glasgow, and metropolitan English 'regions' like Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. Thacker's chapter looks at how the 'littleness' of 'little magazines' granted them some freedom from the London-based industry of mass culture, thus enabling publications like *The New Age* to foster a regional literary scene and then introduce that regional culture to the centre.

Some of the essays explore work that is regional because its content makes reference to a specific locale or locales. Andrew Harrison tries to re-unite James Joyce with D.H. Lawrence, despite their conflicting ideas about aesthetics, linguistic experiment and form: these writers have much in common, Harrison's essay reveals, when it comes to commitment to region, indeed to birthplace. Other essays explore work that is regional because it makes a case for an identity based on its locale, however big that 'locale' might be. John Goodby and Chris Wigginton present the case for a Welsh modernism: a modernism that was suppressed in the post-war period by the clash of an Anglo-oriented critical lens in England, and an anti-Anglophone, anti-modernist literary culture in Wales. They highlight Wales's contribution to literary modernism by reading Lynette Roberts, David Jones, and the early, lesser-known avant-garde work of Dylan Thomas. The supposed regionalism of Basil Bunting gets a crucial and timely reassessment by Neal Alexander. Bunting, a self-identifying Northumbrian and, as Alexander notes, an evasive, even elusive, character, inhabits a liminal space

between the high Modernism of Pound and Eliot, and the relative obscurity of later regional writers. Alexander explores the contradiction between the specifically-located autobiography, and the regional but impersonal history of *Briggflatts* (1965). Drew Milne appraises Hugh MacDiarmid's efforts to forge a language for a specifically Scottish literature. MacDiarmid proposed that his 'synthetic Scots' would do for Scotland what the hybrid language of *Ulysses* had done for Ireland. Milne brings up questions about homeland, borderland, and alienation. He identifies the source of modernism's 'transcendental homelessness' as global capitalism which brings alienation, rather than unification, via its trans-nationalist spread (143).

The issues that the writers studied in this volume address have a distinctly contemporary flavour which is partly what makes this collection so timely: the devolution and dissolution of the United Kingdom, and debates about Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish independence; discussions about what constitutes national and regional identities (and whether the two might ever cross over), as well as what it means to live as a subject under global capitalism; and the apparently imminent threats from the outside world of war and disease are all issues that come up in the collection. Furthermore, the book has a notably fresh perspective on its subject matter due to its engagement with recent work in the field: there are some instances where longer-established theoretical or critical voices are oddly absent, but the effect is to create an energised, contemporary presentation.

While the collection's aim to redraw the boundaries of the map of modernism, looking beyond its metropolitan centres and familiar locales, is admirable, it is interesting that this quest for difference frequently generates the sorts of white, male, middle-class perspectives that are already represented by modernism. The subject of Irish post-colonialism is touched upon, but other former colonial regions are not represented. The collection brings together studies of a number of women writers: perhaps more than tend to appear in collections on modernism. However, the fact that a healthy number of women writers appear under the term 'regional', with its possible implications of a marginal, small or domestic perspective that lies outside the spheres of power and the centres of cultural production, complicates their relative success in this field. Crucially, though, the editors' introduction addresses a number of these issues and their subsequent collection of essays helps to complicate and define 'the regional' with regards to its positive, as well as its negative, connotations. This volume is, therefore, a revelatory and timely critical reader for anyone interested in literary geographies, or British and Irish writing in the twentieth century, and is an important contribution to modernist studies.

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John Heggland (2012) *World Views: Metageographies of Modernist Fiction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 224pp., \$53.00 (hardback), ISBN: 9780199796106.

In the closing lines of *The Waste Land* (1922), T.S Eliot writes: 'I sat upon the shore/Fishing, with the arid plain behind me/Shall I at least set my lands in order?' In this, as in the rest of the poem,