

expect here a comprehensive critical survey of the entire region. Such a survey is more the jurisdiction of Chapman's single-authored volume, which deals with a broader historical and geographic range.

However, these essays – discrete analyses of particular authors – are historically and culturally specific, and are usefully divided into differing sections on narrative and poetry, making the volume both suggestive and easy to reference. Its contemporary focus brings to the fore a generation of writers from this transitional period, some of whom, like Chinodya and Mbuli, will be new to many readers outside the region. These factors, along with its accessibility, interest and range, help to mark this collection out as an ideal introduction for those new to Southern African literature of this period, and a productive reference for those already involved with it. *New Writing From Southern Africa* contributes significantly to the emerging body of work on Southern regional literatures.

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M. J. Daymond (ed), *South African Feminisms: Writing, Theory, and Criticism, 1990–1994* (Gender and Genre in Literature, Vol. 5, Garland, New York and London, 1996), xliii + 343 pp., ISBN 0-8153-1626-7.

This timely collection of twenty-one ambitious essays by black and white South African literary critics, edited with a substantial, politically nuanced introduction by Margaret Daymond of the University of Natal-Durban, is essential reading for anyone caught up by Juliet Mitchell's 'longest revolution', especially, social science and literary scholars in Southern African studies, and combatants in the debates over post-coloniality and identity politics. The book is also an admirable introduction to the current practice of feminism and literary studies in the South African 'transition'. The fifth volume in Garland's 'Gender and Genre' series, it is the first book-length collection of its kind, the culmination of several important conferences, special issues of academic journals, and anthologies of women's writing in South Africa as feminist analysis made itself visible from the mid-Eighties on. Daymond has reprinted a special issue – which she edited – of the Durban journal *Current Writing: Text and Reception in Southern Africa* 2 (1990), along with new essays (roughly half the book) written between 1990 and 1994. The book's unity derives from the theoretical debate undertaken in the *Current Writing* issue in response to Cecily Lockett's article, 'Feminism(s) and Writing in English in South Africa', with which two new essays make up the first, 'Theory and Context', section of the book.

But the theoretical questions are pursued just as searchingly in the second section, 'Reading, Writing, and Criticism', with eight new essays extending the *Current Writing* inquiry to the earliest South African women's writing in English (the journals of Lady Anne Barnard), black women's religious narrative, male anti-apartheid theatre, and other directions as well. In fact the book is as much interested in the politics of history as in the theory of representation, and makes an impressive start, in the essays by Lenta, Driver, Woodward, and Metelerkamp, on a systematic feminist rereading of regional literary history. Some of the better-known writers discussed include Coetzee, de Kok, Gordimer, Head, Joubert, Krog, Kuzwayo, Malange, Mhlophe, Ndebele, Ngema, Nkosi, Schreiner and Tlali; there are also rewarding studies of earlier figures less familiar outside the country, like Barnard, Pauline Smith, Ethelreda Lewis, and Ruth Miller. In a clear indication that South African feminism is affiliating with the post-colonial rather than the metropolitan, citations run more to Spivak, Trinh, Said, and Foucault than to Cixous, Showalter, Derrida or Althusser.

This is in keeping with the thematic question posed by Lockett's essay, how feminism in South Africa can break out of the white metropolitan frame it became conscious of finding itself in by the late Eighties; or, in Daymond's words, 'the relationship of a developing, heterogeneous post-colonial culture to its hegemonic origins' (p. xix). The book offers a lively, plural, often contentious answer, which Daymond – in a conscious analogy to the political process after February 1990 – sees as a form of 'negotiation' (p. xxi) between positioned readings, a negotiation of power and difference in the construction of a possible common purpose. Recognizably local, especially in

the centrality of race, it will find echoes in feminist debate throughout the global cultural economy. Lockett (who is white) rests her case by preferring the 'womanism' of Alice Walker and Chikwenye Okonjo Ogunyemi to either Anglo-American or (particularly) French feminism as a model. Though almost all the respondents take issue with her binary definitions and contrasts, defending the political uses of post-structuralism and urging other traditions like materialist and post-colonial feminism, as well as black feminist theory not identified with womanism, Lockett has nevertheless produced a fruitful confrontation of the main issue, the historically defined relations of power when 'patterns of racial domination have determined patterns of interpretive authority in South African scholarship and research' (Lewis, p. 99).

As this crux is negotiated, interesting theses emerge. Among the black scholars, Maqagi and Lewis differ on whether 'legitimate interpretations of groups can come only from within those groups' (Lewis, p. 102; Maqagi, p. 28), while Wicomb answers Maqagi's question 'Who Theorizes?' by developing her own internationalist black feminist critique, drawing on discourse analysis, not womanism. From a position outside the academy, the black women poet-activists, journalists, and theatre performers interviewed by Daymond and Margaret Lenta in a *Current Writing* workshop (pp. 107–129) are more concerned with sexist obstacles to their work in the culture industry than with interpretive politics.

The range of response from white scholars links Wicomb's and Lewis's demand for a supple, race-conscious theory with Jill Arnot's cross-race deployment of Spivak's analysis of representation, and with Jenny de Reuck's thesis that white feminists' 'trans-discursive forays' need not become 'theoretically voiceless', but can 'resist silence, and interrogate the hegemonic discourse that otherwise would inscribe us' (pp. 38–39). Dorothy Driver, whose theory-making is much cited throughout the book, carries out such an interrogation in her reading of Pauline Smith's repression of race. On the whole Daymond seems justified in her description of these theoretical essays (including their sharp conflicts and open questions) as negotiating a new space where no one is ineluctably 'scripted in black and white' (p. xxv)—a properly post-colonial space, a 'new nation' space, and one where both postcoloniality and the nation will be subject to feminist immanent critique.

One of the most interesting suggestions, that black women's writing can itself supply, if not a theory, at least a theoretical *attitude*, is carried forward in many of the interpretive and historical essays. Thus Coullie demonstrates a 'new discursive practice' in Kuzwayo's writing between praise-poem and (auto)biography (pp. 138–139); Muller as 'mediating intellectual' is able, by an ethnographic reading practice (drawing on the Comaroffs, Hofmeyr and Bozzoli), to unfold the theorizing work performed by Nazarite women's ritual narratives (p. 167); and Daymond's essay on Head and Tlali shows them working out a new sexual/textual politics of the maternal. Finally, there are much-needed, hard-hitting, feminist critiques of sexist representation in the essays by Lazar on Gordimer's *Jump*, Steinberg on Ngema's *Asinamali!*, and Dodd on Coetzee's *Foe* and Nkosi's *Mating Birds*. This collection is an exciting step forward by one of the radical intellectual and political movements with the most promise for creating lasting change.

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John Thieme (ed), *The Arnold Anthology of Post-Colonial Literatures in English* (Arnold, London, 1996) xvii + 936 pp., pbk, ISBN 0-340-64620-9.

Post-colonial theory and criticism, a powerful intellectual force in university literature departments for most of the 1980s, has for some time now been in decline. A cursory look through the contents pages of current academic journals in the humanities shows that a fundamental shift in focus has taken place. It is at this point, then, that John Thieme's almost 1,000 page anthology of post-colonial literature makes its appearance. Perhaps anthologies are in themselves a form of stock-taking or retrospective, evidence that the subject matter at hand is not quite current, or at least no longer in a lively state of flux. Thieme's anthology however presents a rich and diverse variety of texts, the work of some 200 writers, among them some of the most well-known and influential authors of our time. Whether all