

Book Reviews

Heathcote, Owen and Andrew Watts, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Balzac*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2017. ISBN 978-1-107-69128-5. Pp. xxiii + 218. \$29.99.

Cambridge has added an overdue volume on Honoré de Balzac's *La Comédie humaine* (1829-1848), co-edited by Owen Heathcote and Andrew Watts. This compilation from renowned international scholars offers a comprehensive overview complete with introduction, twelve chapters, and epilogue, which are potentially divisible into three parts: external influences, unifying themes, and Balzac's enduring legacy. First, Elisabeth Gerwin contextualizes his work within the early development of science and sociology, followed by Michael Tilby's analysis of his earliest publications as effective precursors to his entry into Parisian literary society. Finally, no study could neglect his vast correspondence, which Ewa Szypula asserts has three dynamic functions: as an historical document, an appendix, and a space for literary creation. The next section studies overarching themes that unify *La Comédie humaine* as depicted by key works. David F. Bell considers the author's penchant for duality through his contrast of fantasy and reality in *La Peau de chagrin*. Subsequently, Allan H. Pasco emphasizes the irrepressible topic of money in the heat of nascent capitalism from the broad perspective of *Scènes de la vie de province*. Armine Kotin Mortimer's analysis of *Le Père Goriot* reveals the universal truth derived by Rastignac, "Dupes obey; scoundrels revolt; but heroes and the occasional heroic woman struggle" (91). Rastignac succeeds because of his acceptance to "struggle" and his realization of the "relaxed morality" necessary to survive in this study of society's virtues. Sotirios Paraschas tackles Rastignac's doppelgänger, Lucien de Rubempré, in *Les Illusions perdues*, highlighting Balzac's reflexive method of critiquing contemporary society through his characters' dilemmas. Meanwhile, Dorothy Kelly emphasizes the subtle undertones in *La Cousine Bette*, which challenge the bilateral notions of gender and sexual identity. This thematic overview concludes with Owen Heathcote's analysis of space, religion, and politics in the expanded setting of the countryside. In the final section, Tim Farrant assesses Balzac's external bearing through his short(er)-fiction, which, fostered by a flourishing newspaper industry and the advent of serial publication, served as a springboard for longer works. Balzac's oscillating popularity through time resulted in numerous adaptations in the evolving fields of theater, film, and television as presented by Andrew Watts. Finally, Scott Lee studies the author's legacy to his own century – Gustave Flaubert, Karl Marx, and Émile Zola – prevailing

through to our own. He emphasizes Balzac's impact on economist Thomas Piketty whose *Le Capital au XXI^e siècle* (Seuil, 2013) incorporates titles such as: "Vautrin's Lesson" and "Rastignac's Dilemma."

This *Companion* provides an excellent base for novices and specialists alike with supplemental materials including: a succinct biographical chronology, an overview of *La Comédie humaine*, and an updated bibliography of critical literature. Notably absent from this publication was any consideration for Balzac's aim to correlate the stages of social development within his *Scènes* (e.g. youth began in the provinces, careers were launched in Paris, and retirement resided in the countryside), which could have been easily incorporated into the analysis of *Scènes de la vie de campagne*. Though Cambridge covers Balzac in other guides, a corpus of such magnitude necessitates an independent volume to thoroughly cover the breadth and depth of his work, an endeavor the contributors accomplished with skill.

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Paliyenko, Adrianna M. *Genius Envy: Women Shaping French Poetic History, 1801-1900*. University Park: Penn State UP, 2016. ISBN 978-0-271-07708-6. Pp. x + 356. \$99.95. E-book available.

In *Genius Envy*, Adrianna M. Paliyenko, explores the history of female authorship and authorial presence in nineteenth-century French literature. Focusing on "the narrative of reception" of female-authored works during this period, Paliyenko describes in great detail the then on-going debate about the origins and applications of the notion of genius. Enlightenment thinkers, who felt that women, the *sexus sequior*, had no ability to truly contribute to any intellectual or artistic pursuit, inspired many male thinkers and authors of the nineteenth century who continued to promote the idea that genius was inextricably tied to sex. Debate hovered around questions of origin—was 'genius' descended from the Latin *ingenium*, 'inherent,' or from *gignere*, 'to beget or produce'? Medical philosophers, preferring the latter, argued that the male seed, long believed to be the reproductive catalyst, endowed men and only men with the capacity for genius. Such arguments proved tenacious, after all, biological science and history were on their side. Women authors, seeking to simultaneously cast off the condescending *bas-bleu* stereotype—illustrated in the cover im-

age and throughout the book – and prove their equal worth as writers and thinkers, had to fight on a variety of fronts to prove their literary worth.

Genius Envy is divided up into an introduction and eight chapters. The first three chapters make up Part One (“Reception Matters”), and the last five appear in Part Two (“Women Thinking Through Poetry and Beyond”). In the first chapter, Paliyenko describes the “un/sexing” of genius, the struggle for women authors to create a legitimizing space for their voices to be heard. Chapter two, “Literary Reception and Its Discontents,” further examines this philosophical battle, taking a closer look at the arguments used by and against women authors in spite of their surge in popularity during the Romantic era. The third chapter, “The Other History of French Poetry, 1800-1901,” extends the debate, exploring how some women authors chose to distance their work from one another. Paliyenko explains that the objective of these women was to further distance themselves from a feminizing stereotype that had grown with the popularity of Romanticism.

In the Second Part, focus shifts from the general struggle to more specific case studies. Chapter four, “Anaïs Ségalas on Race, Gender, and ‘la mission civilisatrice,’” looks at the influence of slavery and colonialism on women authors’ arguments against female exclusion. Chapter five, “Work, Genius, and the In-Between in Malvina Blanchecotte,” is an interesting course in class/gender dynamics, highlighting the unique path by which Blanchecotte strengthened her evolving poetic voice and the struggles that she overcame to become a successful author. Chapter six, “The Poetic Edges of Dualism in Louisa Siefert,” researches the “Romantic sensibility and Parnassian formalism” that serve to contextualize Siefert’s literary career – one of wide success. Examining Siefert’s works, an author whose personal and medical pains would come to characterize her literary philosophy, lends important perspective to the divisive arguments of genius/sex highlighted in this book. Chapter seven, “Louise Ackermann’s Turn to Science,” examines the medical philosophies that founded much of the Enlightenment and later resistance to female authorship. Ackermann would explore notions of female authorship in her poetry, concluding upon a seemingly third perspective, that of an *objective* genius. Chapter eight, “Marie Krysinska on Eve, Evolution, and the Property of Genius,” serves as a culminating ending to Paliyenko’s observations about the complexity and nuance of the biological/cultural, genius/sex debate. Aimed at the biological end of the debate, Krysinska’s works emphasize an important, overlooked female perspective on women’s authorship – that, as for men, genius is to be understood from the works themselves.

In its conclusion, *Genius Envy* restates the diverse ways in which French, women authors of the nineteenth century argued to make their voices heard. In her arguments, Paliyenko underscores that these writers are not only worthy of continued readership, but of close study and appreciation.

Overall, *Genius Envy* is a well-written and engaging book. However, explanations occasionally do less to clarify than to complicate the line of argument, and there remains a need for greater depth of observation in Paliyenko's analyses of Ségalas' work and its commentary on colonial powers. Though research on female authorship and the female voice in French literature remains yet to be fully explored, Paliyenko's contributions are a clear step in the right direction.

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Saugera, Valérie. *Remade in France: Anglicism in the Lexicon and Morphology of French*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2017. ISBN 978-0-190-62554-2. Pp. xv + 205. \$82.00

In her book *Remade in France: Anglicism in the Lexicon and Morphology of French*, Valérie Saugera, offers a thorough survey of the phenomenon of English influence on the French language. Her linguistic analysis of borrowings from English (i.e. anglicisms) provides clear insight to give counterarguments to the Académie Française's perception that English loan words are simply "bad words" (14). Applying text-mining software to a corpus made of almost 28,000 articles from the French newspaper *Libération*, Saugera was able to extract anglicisms from lexical and morphological items that are not listed in the most commonly used French dictionary *Le Petit Robert*. Extracting these dictionary-unattested words and morphemes enabled Saugera to closely examine which types of words and morphemes occur, and to then be able to offer linguistic reasons for these borrowings. Her conclusion is—contrary to the most common perception that these borrowings happen out of linguistic laziness—the borrowing phenomenon actually "requires inventive application of complex linguistic rules" (141) and even produces the renewal of English words through French. As is reflected in the title of her book, borrowed English terms are literally "remade in France." For example, the English word "people," when used in French, refers not just to "people" in general but specifically to "celebrities."

The book is made up of seven chapters. Chapter 1 is an overview of the phenomena of French anglicisms and their implications. The second chapter describes her methodology: through text-mining software and manual search for homographs, such as “date,” which exist both in French and English (though with different meanings across languages), Saugera was able to extract anglicisms from the newspaper articles. Chapter 3 provides the history of adopting English words into French, dating back to the eighteenth century, proving that it has been an historically ongoing linguistic process rather than a totally new phenomenon. In chapter 4, Saugera gives a thorough list of dictionary-sanctioned words, as well as unsanctioned (i.e. those that are not in the current French dictionaries). Chapters 5 and 6 both explore the plural forms of borrowed English items; chapter 5 focuses on pluralized nouns (nominal anglicisms) and chapter 6 focuses on pluralized adjectives (adjectival anglicisms). Chapter 7 is the conclusion.

Saugera gives a strong, thorough analysis of English loanwords in the French language. By means of the text-mining software, her methodology allows for a solid and meticulous exploration of such a wide corpus. *Remade in France* is a complete study of anglicisms in the French language, and it truly explains the roots, the process, and the implications of anglicisms.

Remade in France, presents through research a sophisticated, yet accessible style. Linguists, media discourse specialists, French instructors, as well as non-academic readers who take an interest in the debate about loan words, will find *Remade in France* a solid source on anglicisms in the French language.

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