

of Frank Paci's "The Stone Garden," a story that does not seem to mirror the concerns he mentions in his interview as being central to his work. Finally, the omission of Native fiction is an error. Although Native writing is given pride of place in an interview with First Nation playwright Tomson Highway, the literature still remains conspicuous by its absence.

But on a subject so sensitive it is easy to slip, and one is startled by Rudy Wiebe's remark that he is probably more Canadian than most (are we seeing the rise of a new fundamentalism?), or Himani Bannerji's rhetoric; while the headnote states that she arrived in Canada to continue her education, she herself ascribes her departure from India to more remote causes: "The question is the degradation of a large part of the world on which brutality was done, and that if we are here, we came here as a result of our colonisation . . ." (147). *Other Solitudes* certainly generates discussion at every turn; the anthology will be required reading on my next course.

## WORKS CITED

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MAIA BHOJWANI

Marian Arkin and Barbara Shollar, eds. *Longman Anthology of World Literature by Women, 1875-1975*. New York and London: Longman, 1989. pp. 1274. \$27.20 pb.

Let me state at the outset that I have no substantial negative criticisms to make about this monumental editing project, which to my knowledge is the first of its kind and hence deserving of unstinting appreciation. Besides, for reviewers who feel their reputations are at stake unless they do say something negative, the anthology of literary works is too easy a target. The canon can always be appealed to as the "objective" standard and the anthology held up to one or another of W. W. Norton's tomes and found wanting. This strategy can and has been used to mask the ideology, personal taste, and limited knowledge of reviewers. But the beauty of any anthology of women's literature is that it thumbs its nose at the traditional, male-dominated canon, and the advantage of an anthology of *world* literature by women is that at this point in history there is no established canon, no comparable volume of Norton—in short, no prior authority to appeal to. Indeed, to adapt Elaine Showalter's famous metaphor, Arkin and Shollar's anthology represents the tip of a submerged continent of women's writing rising like Atlantis from the sea of world literature.

Not only does this anthology implicitly participate in the new concept of canon as a *process* rather than a *structure*, it also defies traditional notions of periodicity by staking out its territory as 1875 to 1975, defining

this period as "the first vigorous flowering of women's writing on an international scale" (xi). The two outside dates seem fitting, for, as feminist historians are now discovering, these dates mark the climaxes of two waves of political feminism that were not confined to the Western world. If there is a problem with focussing on this particular century of development, it is that this is when much of world literature bears its most obvious traces of Western influence. But that is a historical fact, and one which may or may not have played a role in the selection process.

The anthology contains all the requisite extra-literary parts: biographical notes on the impressive list of scholarly advisors to the project; a good general introduction that not only explains the complex process and criteria of selection but also pays respectful attention to many varieties of feminist criticism and literary theory; useful bibliographical essays by distinguished scholars on the geographical/linguistic regions represented; and brief biobibliographical introductions to all the authors. The literary selections are organized chronologically by birth dates of authors, but an alternative list of writers and selections by region is also included. I like this method of organization, as it keeps me constantly aware of my typical Canadianist habit of reducing everything to a few national themes as a way of bringing order to bear on seemingly endless diversity.

And diversity is what this anthology celebrates. Every genre short of the cookbook is represented. As Arkin and Shollar state in their introduction,

[w]e have included not only short stories, poetry, and drama (as well as excerpts from novels), but oral works, journalistic essays, literary criticism, letters, diaries, and excerpts from autobiographies in the recognition that the definition of what constitutes literature has been broadened. In a variety of ways, the selections reflect the major social, political, and historical movements and events shaping the writer's world during the period in question. They frequently touch both directly and indirectly on women's roles, aspects of female development, and feminist issues as well as feminist interpretations of cultural and world events. (xli)

Over 280 authors from nineteen regions are represented, on average, by two or three short selections or excerpts each. Ideally, one would want more from each author, but given the enormous scope and size of the volume it is not difficult to see why that would be impossible. In many cases, however, the bibliographical essays and introductions to authors make possible the task of supplementing the selections with other texts where required.

As might be expected, the United Kingdom and Ireland, the United States, and Western and Central Europe are very well represented, but none of the other regions is far behind. This is all the more impressive, considering that many of the selections were translated especially for this anthology and are appearing in English for the first time. As Canadian literature rarely fares well in anthologies edited and pub-

lished in the United States, I was quite pleased to note that Canada is represented by twenty-one authors, as are Australia and New Zealand, and that, moreover, our two official linguistic communities are recognized and each treated to its own bibliographical essay: Wendy Robbins Keitner writes on behalf of anglophone Canada, while Gillian Davies treats francophone Canadian writing. In keeping with the fate of all anthologies, every Canadian user of this one will probably have some idiosyncratic quarrel with the choice of authors and works; for example, my own feeling is that a short poem or two by Marjorie Pickthall, accurately identified in Keitner's article as one of the "most successful women poets" writing between the wars (1098), might have been included. More objectively, however, I think the Canadian choices are defensible, and certainly none of the selections is a "bad" one.

Resisting the chronological ordering, I made Japanese and Chinese authors my major focus, for their work is the most remote from my literary experience. This body of writing, representing two loosely related but distinctly different literary traditions, contains good generic variety and traces diverse female experiences through twenty-four selections by fourteen authors. By reading through all the selections and the relevant regional essays, I think I got enough of a take at least to begin constructing a coherent course unit on writing by women in the Far East. This is not the only—or even the best—way to reorganize the material for classroom presentation, but I think my reading strategy was a good way to test an anthology of world literature. I would recommend this anthology for consideration as the major text in a Women's Studies literature survey, and, more important, as a companion text to anthologies currently used in World Literature courses.

DIANA M. A. RELKE

Dermot McCarthy. *A Poetics of Place: The Poetry of Ralph Gustafson*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1991. pp. 323. \$39.95.

A study of Ralph Gustafson's poetry from *The Golden Chalice* (1935) to *Winter Prophecies* (1987), *A Poetics of Place* is the third book about this contemporary Canadian philosopher-king. My own *Ralph Gustafson* (1979) first mapped the territory by providing a literary biography and locating Gustafson's *oeuvre* in the context of the general evolution of Canadian poetry. Ten years later, McCarthy's *Ralph Gustafson and His Works* updated the survey and directed attention to the expanding body of criticism of Gustafson's writing. This latest study adopts a formalist perspective, aiming to discuss the "poet's craft" and to analyze the poems "as poems." His premise that "to attend Gustafson's craftsmanship . . . is to study the whole man," however, is about as sure as the sound of one hand clapping.

Gustafson's poetics—see *Plummetts and Other Partialities* (1987)—do not mistake poetry for pure music. The recent "New World Northern: Of Poetry and Identity," for instance, clearly states that "[the poem's]