United States. Tania Ørum’s fine chapter considers Stein’s influence on Scandinavian artists and writers in the 1960s, where the phrase “a rose is a rose is a rose” was taken up as a kind of meme for aesthetic experimentalism and subsequently passed among artists through a chain of artworks. In France, meanwhile, postmodern artists continue to this day to engage in dialogue with Stein as an “artist who must be addressed.” We are reminded of the many remarkable ways Stein’s work continues to live on in contemporary art, music, television, and film, generating ever more encounters and new connections.

Ending with a beautiful, precise meditation by the French poet Jacques Roubaud on the patterning of Stein’s writing, Gertrude Stein in Europe offers a fresh take on a writer whose influence and appeal increasingly extend far beyond the modernist and American contexts.

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Leslie Elizabeth Eckel and Clare Frances Elliott, The Edinburgh Companion to Atlantic Literary Studies (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016, £150.00 hardback, £150.00 ebook (PDF), £150.00 ebook (ePub)). Pp. xi + 419. ISBN 978 1 4744 0294 1, 978 1 4744 0295 8, 978 1 4744 1828 7.

This intellectually rich volume seeks, say its coeditors, to “examine the extent of the cultural and literary energy system that formed the Atlantic world” from “first contact to the present” (vi). Quite an ambitious goal, of course, given the long chronological framework envisioned, a geographic scope pushing well beyond the US-and-UK focus of much prior work in transatlanticism, the plethora of new primary texts being recovered and familiar ones being recast in transatlantic terms, and the increasingly extensive scholarship appearing now in a range of venues, including journals that had previously been content with a nationalist focus. To the credit of this collection’s contributors, however, as well as the organizational skill of its editors, readers will find here about as comprehensive a survey of the status of this burgeoning field as could be assembled.

The collection is bookended by two pieces that affirm its commitment to locating transatlantic studies in historic frameworks as well as geographic ones. In his “Introduction,” Paul Giles provides a clear analysis of the field’s history, highlighting both such seminal contributions as Paul Gilroy’s The Black Atlantic (1993) and ways in which transatlantic scholarship continues to move beyond “the old Atlantic literary studies” to a “new” version, not merely focussing on “particular ‘contact zones’” but now emphasizing “global networks” (11). Closing the volume is Catherine Morley’s thoughtful “Unbridgeable Gaps: Time, Space and Memory in the Post-9/11 Novel,” which dubs Colum McCann’s Let the Great World Spin (2009) and Jess Walter’s The Zero (2006) as significant not only for their shared engagement with a key global event but also for their consideration of literature as potentially bridging across time and space – that is, for doing what transatlantic networks, in terms of Giles’s introduction – call upon us to analyze.

In between, as in all essay collections, I found some essays especially helpful for my own work, whether for teaching transatlantic units to undergraduates and planning graduate seminars, or for my research. Brigitte Bailey’s “Urban Reform, Transatlantic...
Movements and US Writers: 1837–1861,” for instance, examines texts set in Britain by Herman Melville, Margaret Fuller, and Williams Wells Brown to underscore how nineteenth-century social developments like industrialization encouraged writers to think comparatively and comprehensively about reform. Finding in that chapter both new texts for my classroom and ways of resituating familiar ones (such as Melville’s urban triptych), I also noted a useful reminder about linking nonfiction transatlantic forms like journalism (Fuller’s dispatches) and performance texts like Brown’s oratory with more traditional literary ones. Similarly, Clare Elliott’s treatment of “Early Feminism and the Circulation of Self-Reliance in the Atlantic World” and Barbara Green’s “Suffragette Celebrity at Home from Abroad” together reaffirmed how movements that are still sometimes studied within national contexts, such as US transcendentalism (in Elliott’s piece) and suffrage (in Green’s) benefit from being repositioned as print-supported transatlantic enterprises. Meanwhile, clustering all three of these essays in a section entitled “Reform and Revolution,” the editors invited readers to see connections in textual themes and scholarly methods – linkages that became even more telling when I revisited all three essays in light of their shared use of gender.

Gender is not the only strong current running within and across particular sections of Atlantic Literary Studies. Though different readers would surely have their own favorite essays, I suspect that any teacher–scholar working in transatlantic studies today would appreciate the productive interplay between the anthology’s organizational clustering, on the one hand, and undercurrents cutting across those rubrics, on the other. Thus, while readers will not be surprised to find such topical organizers as “Cultural Geographies” (the opening section), “Mobilities,” “Exchanges,” and “Events” in a volume on transatlanticism, perhaps even more generative are the threads that connect various essays across sections. For instance, Susan Oliver’s “Transatlantic Magazines and the Rise of Environmental Journalism” and Kevin Hutchings’s “More Savage than Bears or Wolves: Animals, Colonialism and the Aboriginal Atlantic” clearly affiliate with other contributions within the “Ecologies” section where they appear; but these insightful analyses also resonate with such earlier chapters in the “Atlantic Cultural Geographies” section as Leonard von Morzé’s “The Silkworm and the Bee” and Juliet Shields’s “From Auburn to Upper Canada” by demonstrating how writers in different time periods and locales all around the Atlantic basin have drawn readers into exploration of the natural environment. Similarly, essays in the predictable but nonetheless essential cluster labeled “The Black Atlantic” gain critical force when put in dialogue with contributions in other sections, such as Louis Kirk McAuley’s engagement with early Caribbean literature and Ivonne M. Garcia’s “‘Local locas’: Trans-Antillean Queerness in Mayra Santos-Febres’s Sirena Selena.” So, too, Christopher Gair’s analysis of the complex cultural exchanges evident in such transatlantic musical icons as Bob Dylan and the Beatles can be profitably read in dialogue with Sarah Wagner-McCoy’s revisiting of a very different kind of culture-shaping exchange – courtship and marriage – that nonetheless illustrates a similarly long-standing ability of transatlantic culture to knit social groups together based on shared values, interactive connections, and social institutions bridging an oceanic divide.

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