

Bunch, Mads, ed. 2013. *Millennium: nye retninger i nordisk litteratur*. Hellerup, Denmark: Forlaget Spring. 353 pages. ISBN: 978-8792381538.

This collection of essays brings together a wide range of perspectives on an even wider range of authors, genres, and trends in contemporary Nordic literature. In his introduction, editor Mads Bunch describes how the project grew out of a series of seminars during spring 2010 when he realized both that there had been some interesting parallel developments in different Nordic countries in the past ten to fifteen years. He also realized that he knew relatively little about what was happening in neighbouring countries. The resulting book is a kind of antidote to this problem, a form of public service to scholars and readers of Nordic literature and to the tradition of Nordic collaboration in literary studies. While no single work could capture all aspects of the region's literature in even such a circumscribed period (2000-2012), and though there are some omissions in terms of different genres or national or linguistic contexts, overall this collection serves as an excellent resource for a broad range of scholars in Scandinavian Studies. It is particularly helpful for those who specialize in a different time period or one specific region and who have not had the time to stay up-to-date on other traditions or the most recent literature.

It is indeed an ambitious undertaking to attempt to survey not only Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish, but also Faeroese, Finland-Swedish, Icelandic, and Danish-Greenlandic contemporary literature; the fifteen authors of the thirteen chapters (two are co-authored) also come from varying national and linguistic backgrounds and institutional affiliations, and their individual contributions unsurprisingly display a range of different approaches. Some of the chapters have a quite narrow focus on single authors, while others offer rather more sweeping reflections on multiple authors from one national tradition. The result is a colourful patchwork compilation that reflects the state of Nordic literature studies today in a manner that also demonstrates a pan-Nordic sense of community that is quite satisfying, especially for those of us located far outside of the region.

Bunch's introduction does a very admirable job of summarizing and relating the contributions and in drawing out some of the common themes of the volume. He points to realism, particularly in relation to global media, *slægtsromaner* [generational novels] as a vehicle for exploring history since World War II, and an acknowledgement of the construction and performativity of the self, as exemplified by the genre of autofiction. This introduction is bookended nicely by the final chapter, in which Stefan Kjerkegaard and Anne Myrup Munk write collaboratively on the strong trend of autofiction (or auto narration) and *selvfremstilling* [self-representation] in Nordic literature, with most of their focus being on Danish literature. Both their clear discussion of the terminology and their presentation of the international context for this topic are refreshing and

illuminating. In a thematically-related chapter, Ingrid Elam considers the increasing prevalence of *jagberättelser* [first-person narration] and autobiographical writing in a cross-generational selection of Swedish authors ranging from the 1930s until the 2000s.

Close readings of works by one or just a few individual authors make up four of the chapters. Mads Bunch analyzes the influence of reality television on the private as depicted in Kirsten Hammann's *Se på mig* [Look at Me]. Claus Elholm Andersen's chapter is another high point of the collection. Andersen considers different trends in the reception of Stieg Larsson and his *Millennium* trilogy. This contribution in particular will be very helpful for those who teach Nordic crime fiction and want to engage students in discussions about the role of politics and marketing in the development and success of the genre. Helena Karlsson writes on the work and public persona of Jonas Hassen Khemiri, focusing on his engagement with questions of multiculturalism, racism, and identity, using Slavoj Žižek and Homi K. Bhabha in a particularly strong theoretical contribution to the volume. In the other of the collection's two collaborative articles, Katrina Müller and Stephan Michael Schröder offer a more long-view look at three different Danish writers, Helle Helle, Herman Bang, and Vilhelm Topsøe, in an attempt to make connections and distinctions between the impressionistic realism of Bang and Topsøe and the contemporary realism of Helle Helle.

Poetry is mentioned fleetingly in several parts of the collection, but given more dedicated attention in a pair of chapters. Kristina Madsen offers a survey of contemporary Danish poetry, emphasizing the diversity of voices and dialogic qualities in much of it, and also its socially engaged, "*kritiske potentiale*" [critical potential] (81). Thorstein Norheim surveys contemporary Norwegian poetry, considering the institutional perspective as well as more avant-garde forms, especially ones that encourage more conceptual styles and the use of different media. He rounds out his contribution with an in-depth consideration of *Solaris korrijeret* by Øyvind Rimbereids, highlighting both his "*episk-narrativ form*" [epic-narrative form] (229) and use of "*en translingvistisk praksis*" [a translinguistic practice] (229).

Five chapters provide broad summaries of trends in the literature of different national groups within the Nordic Region, including some that are often underrepresented in the broader Nordic context. Åsta Stenwall-Albjerg writes on Finnish and Finland-Swedish prose, highlighting the differences in the two traditions. Per Thomas Andersen offers a sweeping overview of contemporary Norwegian literature, with a special emphasis on the dissolution of the traditional family and the national state. Kim Simonsen introduces contemporary Faeroese literature as a both socially-engaged and internationally-aware literature. This chapter presents more extended contextualization, looking back to the 1960s and forward from there, and thus considers national trends in modernism and as well as postmodernism. Erik Skyum-Nielsen's chapter on Icelandic contemporary

literature is especially strong in its taxonomical breakdown of Icelandic literature. He considers magical realism (or surrealism) and also presents Icelandic literature's strong connection to tradition mixed with an interest in hybrid genres and cross-cultural narratives. Kirsten Thisted gives a summary of Danish-Greenlandic literature starting several decades back, but the bulk of her argument centres on the role of the transitions in Greenland's colonial history, particularly using the example of Hans Jakob Helms's *Hvis du fløjter efter lordliet* (2011) [If You Whistle at the Northern Lights] as both a participant in and critic of the national narrative of Danish exceptionalism in regards to colonial power.

For the most part, this book lives up to its promise of providing a broad Nordic perspective on literature in the first dozen years of the 21st century. The overwhelming variety of the topics and authors covered is just a *smagsprøve* [sample taste] that, if anything, leaves us wanting more—a chance to read those as yet unwritten articles that would fill in the gaps on the areas where topics could not be covered in the first instance. It is a very welcome contribution to the field.

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