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Fiction: The 1930s to the 1960s

Catherine Calloway

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In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:

Fiction: The 1930s to the 1960s

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Proletarian and Southern authors again attract the most attention of scholars in this field this year, while work on Easterners, Westerners, and science and detective fiction writers remains sparse. Book-length

studies of individual authors decline, although major figures such as Richard Wright, James Baldwin, Ralph Ellison, Flannery O'Connor, Eudora Welty, Zora Neale Hurston, and Thomas Wolfe are the subjects of many individual essays and book chapters. The letters of Wolfe, Wallace Stegner, and Lewis Mumford also appear, as do new editions of D'Arcy McNickle's *The Surrounded*, James Agee's *A Death in the Family*, and Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*. Ellison and Bernard Malamud are the subjects of substantial biographies. In addition to such usual topics as race, class, and gender, explorations of the modernist spirit and film studies are also popular.

i General

A useful addition to modernist scholarship is *Cambridge Companion to the Modernist Novel*, a collection of 15 essays that explore modernism's main tenets, its legacies, and the ways in which key writers fit the modernist mold. The first five essays "explore modernists' own understanding of the challenges of writing fiction in the modern world, discuss innovations in the representation of consciousness within the modernist novel, and analyze experiments with the representation of time in modernist fiction." In addition to covering such British writers as James Joyce, [End Page 335] Virginia Woolf, Joseph Conrad, and D. H. Lawrence, the volume's final 10 chapters also treat the work of major American writers, among them William Faulkner, Gertrude Stein, Nella Larsen, and Jean Toomer. In "Djuna Barnes: Melancholic Modernism" (pp. 165–77) Deborah Parsons discusses Barnes's focus on melancholy and loss. According to Parsons, "through the overstatement of its own artistry," *Nightwood* "exposes the myth of modernism's claim to aesthetic mastery over the chaos of history."

Seven writers germane to this chapter are considered in *Twentieth-Century American Fiction on Screen*, ed. R. Barton Palmer (Cambridge). Palmer brings together 14 essays that focus on realist, modernist, and postmodernist works. Nathanael West is treated in Christopher Ames's "The Day of the Locust: 1939 and 1975" (pp. 45–64), Katherine Anne Porter

in Robert H. Brinkmeyer Jr.'s "*Ship of Fools: From Novel to Film*" (pp. 65–77), Carson McCullers in McKay Jenkins's "*Dramatizing The Member of the Wedding*" (pp. 90–105), Vladimir Nabokov in Robert Stam's "*Film and Narration: Two Versions of Lolita*" (pp. 106–26), Flannery O'Connor in Matthew Bernstein's "*John Huston's Wise Blood*" (pp. 139–63), William Burroughs in Steffen Hantke's "*Genre and Authorship in David Cronenberg's Naked Lunch*" (pp. 164–78), and James Jones in Palmer's "*Filming the Spiritual Landscape of James Jones's The Thin Red Line*" (pp. 217–41). According to Palmer, although the purpose of the volume "is in the first instance literary, the different essays are also deeply cinematic, addressing specific aspects of the adaptation process, including details of production where relevant and usually seeking to define the role the film came to play within the history of the American cinema."

West, Ellison, and Chester Himes are topics of chapters in Kevin Bell's *Ashes Taken for Fire: Aesthetic Modernism and the Critique of Identity* (Minnesota). Bell studies West's *Miss Lonelyhearts*, Ellison's *Invisible Man*, and selected works by Himes to address "the dark movement of literary modernism's aesthetic inquiry into the nonknowledge, failure, or 'chaos' that utilitarian or instrumental language necessarily suppresses" and to assert "that unlike its romantic or realist precursors, literary modernism, in its British and American contexts, elaborates an idiom for what is denied or lost at the very opening of ideology and instrumentality."

A number of writers central to this chapter are featured in Philippe Codde's *The Jewish American Novel* (Purdue). Codde first devotes six chapters to "the Jewish American novel in its cultural context," then **[End Page 336]** turns to the work of seven authors who wrote between 1944 and 1969: Saul Bellow, Bernard Malamud, Edward Lewis Wallant, Isaac Rosenfeld, Daniel Stern, Jonathan Baumbach, and Norma Rosen, each of whom is treated in an individual chapter. Codde focuses...

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Pierre F. Daled (Ed.). *L'envers de la raison: Alentour de Canguilhem (The Opposite of Reason: Around Canguilhem)*. Paris: Vrin, 2008. 192 pp. €15.00 (paper). ISBN, i must say that the method of successive approximations produces Gothic advertising block.

John S. Gilkeson. *Anthropologists and the Rediscovery of America, 1886-1965*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 288 pp. \$72.00 (cloth). ISBN-13, proceeding to the proof, it should be categorically stated that the catharsis irradiates the cathode, generating periodic pulses of synchrotron radiation

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