



Andrew Hammond, ed. *The Novel and Europe: Imagining the Continent in Post-1945 Fiction*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016. *Palgrave Studies in Modern European Literature*. xiv, 361 p. ISBN 9781137526267. US\$ 99.99 (hardcover).

The title under review is a volume in the Palgrave Studies in Modern European Literature series, affiliated with the University of Kent's Centre for Modern European Literature. This series broadly aims to promote new approaches to reading and studying European literature by interrogating traditional critical approaches to comparatively well-known European authors and works as well as through analyzing and exposing the work of lesser-known writers working in European and other contexts since the Second World War. *The Novel in Europe* offers 16 essays utilizing both approaches to various authors writing about Europe from diverse national, social, and religious contexts preceded by a learned and illuminating editor's introduction.

In his introduction, Andrew Hammond lays out the ambitions and scope of the project. The essays gathered in this volume focus on "seven guiding concerns: namely, ideas of Europe, conflict, borders, empire, unification, migration, and marginalization" (7). The extent to which each contribution explores any or all of these issues varies, but on the whole, the collection is impressively consistent in its consideration of these guiding concerns, particularly in respect to the idea of Europe itself and how writers from underrepresented groups, especially refugees and immigrants, grapple with historical assumptions and representations of the continent which are at odds with their own experiences. Other essays explore how the



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experience of being colonized or of European descent complicates notions of identity and privilege in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East.

A few of the authors and works considered in these essays originate from countries and traditions situated beyond Western Europe and the European Union, including Ismail Kadare (Albania), Semezdin Mehmedinović (Bosnia), and Emine Sevgi Özdamar (Turkey). A primary consequence of living outside the center or on the periphery of the EU is a heightened awareness of borders as well as skepticism regarding ideas about a “European mainstream.” Most of the selections in this volume explore the theme of borders and how recognizing oneself as an insider or outsider, or perceived as either by others, applies social and existential pressures that sometimes manifest themselves in violent ways. Some of the essays in this book complicate these ideas by analyzing the cultural and personal displacement experienced by Western European writers, such as W.G. Sebald and Elizabeth Wilson, attempting to come to terms with historical brutalities such as the Holocaust, the Cold War, and atrocities committed since.

Other contributions consider legacies of European imperialism. Ama Ata Aidoo (Ghana), Chika Unigwe (Niger), and Amara Lakhous (Algeria) articulate in their work post-colonial experiences both on the continent and in former outposts of empire. In “Images of Conquest: Europe and Latin America,” Peter Beardsell explores how several Latin American authors approach the issue of identity for people who belong to communities conquered by Europeans as well as Latin Americans of European descent. In “Borders, Borderlands and Romani Identity in Colum McCann’s *Zoli*,” Mihaela Moscaliuc’s reading of the Irish novelist’s novel underscores how the itinerant Roma maintain identity through the preservation of cultural and linguist borders that are not rooted in or affiliated with a single geographical location.

*The Novel in Europe: Imagining the Continent in Post-1945 Fiction* advances literary scholarship of post-Second World War European fiction in new and necessary ways. By juxtaposing essays on authors and works that have received varying degrees of critical attention, readers come to appreciate Europe’s complicated status as a profound and far-reaching theme. This well-documented volume’s bibliography and index serve as excellent resources for literary scholars as well as fiction readers seeking new authors and works in which to immerse themselves.

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