New Books at a Glance

Gary Saul Morson, *Prosaics and Other Provocations: Empathy, Open Time, and the Novel*. Boston: Academic Studies, 2013. xxiii + 274 pp.

In this book, Gary Saul Morson presents and develops certain concepts which he considers fundamental to literature and ethics, the chief among them "prosaics." Morson repeats many ideas and arguments already discussed in some of his previous publications, such as *Hidden in Plain View: Narrative and Creative Potentials in "War and Peace"* (1987), *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of a Prosaics* (1990, coauthored with Caryl Emerson), and *Narrative and Freedom: The Shadows of Time* (1996). The present volume, however, is Morson's most extensive exposition of "prosaics" to date, placing it within wider philosophical and historical contexts.

The term *prosaics* expresses two related ideas. First, it indicates that "what matters most—in history and individual lives, in ethics and aesthetics—are the details," which "resist reduction to some overarching law" (3). The form of thought that best represents this prosaic view of life is the realist novel, and hence the second meaning of *prosaics* is "an approach to literature that, unlike 'poetics,' focuses on prose generally and the realist novel in particular [rather than viewing prose as some sort of fallen poetry]" (ibid.). The book's first part, "What Is Prosaics?," besides explicating the concept at some length, presents it as occupying a reasonable and productive middle ground between two extreme dogmatisms: that of the "semiotic totalists" (13), who assume that to understand any part of culture one must devise a system capable of grasping every part of it, and that of the "village relativists" (ibid.), who deny the very possibility of knowledge.

The book's second part and its longest, "What Is Open Time?," comprises two chapters: "Narrativeness" and "The Prosaics of Process." Morson claims

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that some views of the world require narrative by their very nature to "describe what is essential" (34), whereas others try to overcome narrative, in the sense that "the right theory and the requisite information make [it] dispensable" (ibid.). In other words, no "narrativeness" exists if everything can be known or determined in advance according to certain general rules; a real sense of narrative requires an element of contingency. Or as Morson also puts it, narrativeness requires "presentness"—the present moment must matter, in the sense that "it cannot be a mere derivative of early events or dictated by later events, that is, by the structure of the whole" (36). Such presentness is what produces open time.

Morson claims that since René Descartes, the history of Western thought has been increasingly dominated by the antinarrativist view, pointing to Newtonian mechanics and the Leibnizian concept of "sufficient reason" as its supreme examples and models for various disciplines. However, there has always been a countertradition that "regards the attempt to overcome narrative as a fundamental misunderstanding of the way things are" (34). The supreme representatives of this narrativist orientation, in Morson's view, are Charles Darwin's antiteleological theory of evolution (in the sciences) and Mikhail Bakhtin's idea of dialogism (in the humanities).

Within the study of literature, the "dominant tradition of poetics" tends to reflect "a view of the world that banishes contingency" (50), with structure being "the literary counterpart of providence" (53). But there is a countervision, which within literature itself is expressed by what Morson terms "processual works" (50), where contingency plays an essential role. To exemplify this type of work, Morson uses mainly novels by Leo Tolstoy and Fyodor Dostoevsky (his favorite authors, as his previous studies testify) but also works of English literature, such as Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* and Lord Byron's *Don Juan*. The aesthetics of such works leads to structures that may be flawed from the point of view of traditional poetics but are essential for conveying a sense of presentness and open time. For example, the way Tolstoy intentionally employed the serial publication format of *War and Peace* in order not to plan the whole work in advance, so that he himself would not know, while in the process of writing, how the plot was going to turn out, produced a distinctive effect of "formlessness" which significantly contributed to the novel's realistic effect.

The remainder of Morson's book reads like a series of appendixes to its main topic. The third part, "What Is Misanthropology?," focuses on ethical issues and is written under a different name—that of Alicia Chudo, "my dear friend and pseudonym" (6), as Morson characterizes her. The Chudo persona presents herself as the advocate of a new discipline—misanthropology, "the study of the cussedness of human nature" (126) and a counterdiscipline

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to anthropology. Chudo claims that traditional anthropology is guided by "a none-too-covert utopianism" (ibid.) despite its pretense of moral neutrality (for example, Margaret Mead's classic study of adolescent girls in Samoa serves as a portrayal of sexual freedom in an island paradise free of bourgeois repression). In contrast, misanthropology is guided by a considerably more skeptical approach to human nature, drawing (as its name implies) upon the tradition of misanthropy but also viewing misanthropy itself skeptically.

A basic premise underlying Chudo's discussion is that many of our characteristic responses to the world imply philosophical content. She begins with a consideration of voyeurism (interpreted as our delight in witnessing the suffering of others) and its implications about our self and its relation to others and then moves on to explore the philosophical significance of laughter and disgust. Throughout, Chudo uses many examples from Morson's favorite authors—particularly Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, as noted above—as sources of psychological and philosophical insight. This part of the book ends with the poem "An Onegin of Our Times," written in the same stanzaic form as Alexander Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* and satirically depicting a contemporary literary theorist.

The fourth part, "What Is Literary Education?," further develops both the critique of academia and the theme of the relation between self and others. Morson (himself a highly popular teacher at Northwestern University) dismisses the common complaints and warnings about the cultural repercussions of a "crisis" in the academic status of the humanities, claiming that the teaching of literature in the universities is mainly to blame, since it typically fails to convince students of the value of literature and inspire them to further reading. Literature is treated too technically, or judged as ideologically (and morally) deficient, or as no more than a document of its time. Instead, claims Morson, the teaching of literature should point to the special kind of knowledge or wisdom that great works of literature impart, and the way they teach us empathy and train us to practice it by revealing the subjectivities of other people (thus inviting us to inhabit their perspectives). Morson proposes thinking of literature as a special kind of thought experiment, which unlike experiments in other fields manages—at least at its best—to present a possible reality in all its prosaic complexity.

In the fifth and final part, "What Is Wit?," Morson considers wit as a special type of game. He discusses games as a way of imposing order on reality, since they are conducted within the framework of clear rules. In this context, he also returns to the theme of contingency, examining ways to inject various degrees of contingency into games—for example, by making spectators into participants in some types of improvisation or by allowing challenges to the game from outside (in what is termed "meta-games" [233]).

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Within this framework of discussion, Morson views wit as a form of play which dramatizes the mind's encounter with the world's contingency and its assertion of control over this contingency through the witticism.

Eyal Segal, Tel Aviv University,
Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics

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Werner Wolf, Walter Bernhart, and Andreas Mahler, eds., *Immersion and Distance: Aesthetic Illusion in Literature and Other Media*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2013. vi + 390 pp.

This, the sixth volume of the series Studies in Intermediality, is devoted to the concept of aesthetic illusion, "one of the most powerful . . . effects that representational media and genres can elicit" (v). It opens with a long introductory essay by Werner Wolf (largely based on several of his previous studies on this subject), who defines aesthetic illusion as "a feeling, of variable intensity, of being imaginatively and emotionally immersed in a represented world and of experiencing this world in a way similar (but not identical) to real life." Unlike delusional or hallucinatory states, this immersion is "counterbalanced by a latent rational distance, which operates owing to the culturally acquired awareness of the difference between representation and reality" (52). Wolf discusses at length the typical features of illusionist works and how they contribute to the effect of illusion. First, on the level of content, the represented world has a certain extension, complexity, and consistency; tends to be lifelike in the details of its inventory; and also is interesting to the recipient. Second, the use of medium and, generally, the level of transmission is comparatively inconspicuous; it serves mainly to transmit the represented world rather than attract attention to itself. Third, both the content and its transmission show a tendency toward seriousness. Finally, the works in question are predominantly heteroreferential (rather than self- or metareferential), that is, they appear to refer to something that exists independently of them.

This introduction is followed by twelve essays divided into four parts, the first consisting of four essays that present theoretical perspectives. Katja Mellmann's "On the Emergence of Aesthetic Illusion" offers an evolutionary perspective. Mellmann claims that two core elements of aesthetic illusion can be linked to biological predispositions: "the ability to become 'illuded' (as deriving from a biological adaptation for play behavior in mammals) and the ability to take an interpretive, quasi-communicative attitude toward artifacts (which might be a by-product of the human capacity for symbolic cognition)" (67). Richard J. Gerrig and Matthew A. Bezdek, in "The Role of Partici-

pation in Aesthetic Illusion," present what they term a "participatory perspective" on narrative, namely, that "readers [or viewers] regularly encode the types of mental contents they would encode were they really participants in the narrative's events" (90). They offer a taxonomy of such participatory responses, which they have studied with film viewers as subjects—for example, emotional responses, self-projections (when viewers consider how they would act if they found themselves in a character's situation), or problem-solving assertions (when viewers express courses of action that they would like to see occur in a narrative)—and claim that the "participation" generated by these responses enhances the experience of aesthetic illusion.

Kendall L. Walton, in "Pictures and Hobby Horses: Make-believe beyond Childhood," connects the concept of aesthetic illusion to his own concept of "make-believe," as developed in his well-known study *Mimesis as Make-believe* (1990). Focusing on painting, Walton claims that "pictures are props in visual games of make-believe" (113), utilizing Ernst Gomrich's idea (presented in "Meditations on a Hobby Horse" [1966]) that pictures should be thought of as substitutes for the objects they represent. The final essay in this part is "Impossible Worlds and Aesthetic Illusion" by Marie-Laure Ryan, whose study *Possible Worlds* (1991)—particularly its discussion of "immersion" and "imaginative recentering" in a fictional world—has been very influential in shaping the approaches of Wolf and several other contributors to this volume. Ryan examines texts that create impossible worlds and thereby inhibit immersion and aesthetic illusion—by internal contradictions, ontological impossibilities (such as metalepsis), impossible space or time, or the description of impossible texts (such as Jorge Luis Borges's "Book of Sand").

The next three parts of the book include more concrete studies of aesthetic illusion in various media (thus justifying the title of the series of which this book is a part): theater and literature (part 2), visual arts (part 3), and other media (part 4). Most of these eight essays are based on the conceptual frame established in Wolf's introduction in terms of their understanding of illusion and of the factors operating for or against it. Andreas Mahler's "Aesthetic Illusion in Theatre and Drama" deals with both illusionist and anti-illusionist effects in the theater—the former illustrated by Shakespearean plays, the latter by Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1921). Especially interesting is his discussion of the play-within-a-play in the fifth act of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595). Mahler claims that this represented play significantly contributes to maintaining the illusion (despite what may be expected to the contrary due to the metatheatrical effect), because its theatricality is so pronounced that the world of the "main" play, in which this play-within-a-play is performed, seems more real by comparison.

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Wolf, in "Aesthetic Illusion as an Effect of Lyric Poetry?," discusses lyric poetry as a genre that, among the main divisions of verbal art, is the least affiliated with aesthetic illusion (compared to fiction and drama). He notes the "generic resistance" (183) shown by lyric poetry to aesthetic illusion due to some of its typical characteristics—such as its tendency to lay bare its medial nature as a verbal artifact or its brevity, which often leads to a high degree of vagueness or indeterminacy of the represented world. On the other hand, lyric poetry also contains an important element favoring aesthetic illusion (though of a somewhat different kind than that typical of fiction and drama), namely, the dominance of the speaker (or lyric persona), who provides a powerful center of an internal perspective that can trigger a process of illusionist participation.

The next two essays, "Aesthetic Illusion and the Breaking of Illusion in Painting" by Götz Pochat and "Willful Deceptions: Aesthetic Illusion at the Interface of Painting, Photography, and Digital Images" by Katharina Bantleon and Ulrich Tragatschnig, discuss illusionist and anti-illusionist tendencies in the visual arts. Pochat focuses on painting, whereas Bantleon and Tragatschnig discuss photography and computer-generated images as well in an attempt to show that "technical developments and advances, as well as the emergence of entirely new forms of . . . representation inevitably change the perception and reception of earlier and less technically advanced media products" (285). A phenomenon addressed by both essays is trompe l'oeil, which may be characterized as both illusion enhancing (in tricking the viewer into equating the representation with the real-life object[s] represented) and illusion breaking (when the viewer comprehends the trick).

The last four essays deal with aesthetic illusion in film, architecture, computer games, and music. Jocelyn Cammack's "Aesthetic Illusion and the Breaking of Illusion in Ambiguous Film Sequences" analyzes film sequences (from both commercial and experimental canons) whose immersive effects are disrupted through a range of metafilmic techniques. Laura Bieger's "Architectures of Immersion: The Material Fictions of the 'New' Las Vegas" discusses developments in the urban architecture of Las Vegas during the 1990s, which create what she terms "immersive architectures": "monumental compositions of iconic landmarks and elaborately scripted spaces [e.g., the Bellagio resort] that artfully toy with blurring the line between the material world and the world of images" (315).

Christian Wessely, in "Columns of Figures as Sources of Aesthetic Illusion," deals with the type of aesthetic illusion produced by computer role-playing games, which offer a consistent environment which—if one accepts their technical parameters and game rules—takes on lifelikeness for a certain period of time. Moreover, such an environment may integrate the player into

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a virtual sociological network. Finally, Walter Bernhart's "Aesthetic Illusion in Instrumental Music?" considers "pure" instrumental (rather than program) music as an art form that shows a particularly high degree of resistance to aesthetic illusion due to its nonrepresentational nature (comparable in this respect to abstract painting). Still, Bernhart claims that although instrumental music is not directly representational, it may "call forth representations" (373) by embodying—and activating in listeners—nonarbitrary experiential patterns, which may suggest a simulation of real-life experiences (especially of an internal, psychic nature).

Eyal Segal, Tel Aviv University,
Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics

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Lars Bernaerts, Dirk de Geest, Luc Herman, and Bart Vervaeck, eds., *Stories and Minds: Cognitive Approaches to Literary Narrative*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013. 223 pp.

This volume grew out of the international conference "Minds and Narrative" held at Katholieke Universiteit, Leuven, Belgium, in June 2009. In their introduction, the editors state that its aim is to offer "a sample of cutting-edge research in the field of cognitive narrative studies" (1) while staging a dialogue among cognitive, interpretive (or hermeneutic), and empirical orientations toward the study of literature.

The first of the book's three sections, "Minding the Reader," includes three articles by authors "well known for the way they integrate narratology, stylistics, and empirical study" (14). The first of these, by Marisa Bortolussi and Peter Dixon, deals with memory—"arguably the most important, but perhaps least understood, reading-related process" (23)—in the context of the literary text. They note that studies of memory have shown that it tends to involve reconstruction and is subject to many distortions and biases and claim that these findings are highly relevant to the study of literature, particularly from a pedagogical perspective. (What can teachers assume that their students remember of the texts they have read?) Bortolussi and Dixon map the extant research on three levels of memory representation, namely, the surface (verbal) structure, the semantic content, and the situation model (i.e., the state of affairs alluded to by the text), and consider how a literary context might affect the usual limitations of memory—for example, whether a foregrounded prose style can improve the ability to remember features of surface structure.

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Next, Catherine Emmott, Anthony J. Sanford, and Marc Alexander discuss how texts use stylistic devices to draw and manipulate the attention of readers. They focus on detective fiction, where the manipulation of readers' (in)attentiveness to certain items of information is crucial. They analyze stylistic techniques that Agatha Christie used in narratives both to "bury" important information (for example, by putting it in subordinate clauses) while setting up a puzzle and to direct the reader's attention toward false trails. In the final article of this section, Elaine Auyoung considers issues related to the manner in which a reader constructs a world (often with what appears to be a considerable degree of completeness) from a relatively small number of representational cues. Her illustrations come from Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (1876), with reference to Roman Ingarden's and Wolfgang Iser's theories of "concretization" as well as to various studies in cognitive psychology.

The book's second section, "Experiencing Minds," comprises three articles dealing with readers' experiences from a philosophical viewpoint. Marco Caracciolo tries to integrate narratological and philosophical models by appealing to the enactivist school in the philosophy of perception. His narratological point of departure is Monica Fludernik's theory of "experientiality" as the basic defining feature of narrative; however, he takes issue with Fludernik's approach for putting too much weight on the representation of consciousness on the level of the storyworld and too little weight on the reader's consciousness. In this context, he claims that the consciousness the reader "finds" in narrative texts is enacted in the reader's own imagination. This claim is illustrated by readings of passages from José Saramago's *Blindness* (1995), a novel thematically appropriate to Caracciolo's argument, since he compares the operation of the reader's consciousness in relation to the storyworld to that of a "blind person's cane" (93).

Anežka Kuzmičová also highlights the importance of the reader's (embodied) mind, focusing on the sensorimotor aspect of the reader's participation in the fictional storyworld. She makes a phenomenological distinction between "verbal presence" and "direct presence" (110) and discusses strategies used in literary texts (particularly Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* [1857] and Alain Robbe-Grillet's *La jalousie* [1957], two novels steeped in sensorimotor detail) to arouse in the reader a sense of the latter type of presence.

Maria Mäkelä warns against an exaggerated tendency in the cognitivist study of narrative to "naturalize fictional minds" (129) by applying to them the same cognitive frames that we use when coping with our everyday lives, and tries to redirect attention to the "textuality" of these minds and more generally to the specific literariness of texts and readerly responses to them. To illustrate her claims, Mäkelä analyzes two short stories from the collection

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A Multitude of Sins (2002) by Richard Ford which resist a smooth naturalization into everyday frames due to the strangeness of their manner of narration. This narration is characterized by a mixture of questionable reliability, a high degree of self-reflexiveness, and problematic relations between the temporal perspectives of the narrating- and the experiencing-I.

The book's third and final section, "Minds and Cultures," puts some of the questions raised in earlier chapters regarding the interactions between reader and narrative text in a cultural and anthropological perspective. Roy Sommer works toward bridging the gap between cultural studies and the study of narrative and cognition by showing two cases in which these approaches can be productively combined. The first case relates to what Sommer terms "intercultural narrative" (156), that is, a fictional narrative that stages intercultural encounters of characters from diverse backgrounds or the clash of different, subculture-specific values and beliefs within a single community. As an example of intercultural narrative, Sommer analyzes Ayub Khan-Din's play *East Is East* (1997), a portrayal of gender trouble and generational conflict within a family of a mixed-race (English and Pakistani) couple. The second case relates to pedagogical issues, specifically to "cross-cultural reading experience" (164), namely, the experience of a narrative by readers unfamiliar with an important part of its cultural background (norms, references, allusions, and so forth). Here Sommer describes the difficulties experienced by a monitored group of German students in understanding the Nigerian novel *The Famished Road* (1992) by Ben Okri as well as the cognitive strategies employed by these students to deal with their difficulties.

Next, Bart Keunen views narrative from the perspective of folk (or commonsense) psychology, which explains and predicts the behaviors and mental states of other people by ascribing to them intentions both to make sense of these people and to evaluate them in moral terms. In this context, Keunen distinguishes between "minimalist" and "maximalist" causality attributions (181)—the former type being more schematic and rigid, the latter more complex and individualized—as two action models, generated by Western narrative culture, which can help explain the differences between various narrative styles, genres, and/or periods.

The book concludes with an afterword by David Herman. He tries to provide a general outlook on the approaches underlying all the articles, the issues they raise, and how these can be mapped in relation to the current state of cognitive narrative studies.

Eyal Segal, Tel Aviv University,
Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics

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Daniel Stein and Jan-Noël Thon, eds., *From Comic Strips to Graphic Novels: Contributions to the Theory and History of Graphic Narrative*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013. vi + 416 pp.

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This volume studies graphic narrative from a narratological perspective. In their introduction, the editors note that such a study is of special value, since this is a medium that suffered from low cultural esteem until not long ago (roughly the 1990s) and so was relatively neglected by criticism. Thus, a study of graphic narrative can productively broaden narratology's corpus of media.

The book comprises sixteen essays distributed among four parts, four essays in each part. Part 1, "Graphic Narrative and Narratological Concepts," is concerned with how fundamental narratological concepts (such as the story/discourse distinction, narration, or focalization) can be applied to different kinds of graphic narrative. Silke Horstkotte, in "Zooming in and Out: Panels, Frames, Sequences, and the Building of Graphic Storyworlds," examines the strategies that allow graphic narratives to represent storyworlds. Focusing on the meaning-making activities involved in the reading process, she claims that criticism tends to overemphasize the sequentiality of this process while failing to do full justice to the "architecture of the page, which calls for a simultaneous reading" (38). Karin Kukkonen, in "Space, Time, and Causality in Graphic Narratives: An Embodied Approach," also deals with how readers reconstruct the storyworlds of graphic narratives. Analyzing Winsor McCay's *Dreams of the Rarebit Fiend* as a case study, Kukkonen employs an "embodied" approach to cognition that has gained traction in cognitive narratology over the last decade; in particular, she claims that readers of comics "experience bodily echoes of motions and actions they observe" (53).

Jan-Noël Thon, in "Who's Telling the Tale? Authors and Narrators in Graphic Narrative," discusses issues of narration and their medium-specific aspects, claiming that "the verbal-pictorial representation of a graphic narrative can usually be attributed not to a (fictional) narrator, but to the author or author collective" (87). Kai Mikkonen's "Subjectivity and Style in Graphic Narratives" focuses on issues of point of view, particularly the graphic representation of characters' subjectivities—for example, how various graphic styles and colors are metaphorically attributed to characters, connoting their worldviews, experiences, or emotional states.

Part 2, "Graphic Narrative beyond the 'Single Work,'" addresses, as its title suggests, general issues in the poetics of graphic narrative; these include nonfictional narrative(s), seriality, and inter- or transmediality. Nancy Pedri, in "Graphic Memoir: Neither Fact nor Fiction," examines complex forms of nonfictional representation in recent graphic works, which show a tendency to self-reflexivity and the employment of metafictional strategies (based, for

example, on the commingling of cartoons and photographic images in ways that encourage reflection on the medium). Daniel Stein's "Superhero Comics and the Authorizing Functions of the Comic Book Paratext" deals with issues of "authorization" in serial publication and reception of superhero comic books, focusing on the example of *Batman*. Stein considers how authorship is negotiated to manage the complexity and inherent tendency toward proliferation of long-running popular series, mainly through paratexts such as letters pages and fanzines (fan magazines).

Gabriele Rippl and Lukas Etter, in "Intermediality, Transmediality, and Graphic Narrative," focus on the intermedial dimension, identifying five prototypical forms of text-picture relationships and discussing their narrative potential. Greg M. Smith's "Comics in the Intersecting Histories of the Window, the Frame, and the Panel" is concerned with a comparison of comics and film. Smith traces how the development of these two media relates to the history of the three concepts mentioned in the essay's title throughout the history of Western visual arts. In this connection, Smith claims that comics present "an alternative reconfiguration of time and space" (232) to that of the cinematic model, the latter being predominant in the thought of such influential figures as Walter Benjamin and Gilles Deleuze.

Part 3, "Genre and Format Histories of Graphic Narrative," introduces some important formats and genres—comic strips, albums, and graphic novels—from both a historical and a theoretical perspective. Jared Gardner's "A History of the Narrative Comic Strip" traces the development of the American newspaper strip, focusing especially on changes from single-panel cartoons to sequentially structured strips. Pascal Lefèvre's "Narration in the Flemish Dual Publication System: The Crossover Genre of the Humoristic Adventure" discusses how narrative form was influenced by the intersection of two publication formats common in Flanders during the 1950s and 1960s: daily strips and albums, the former produced with the purpose of a later release in the latter format.

Christina Meyer, in "Un/Taming the Beast, or, Graphic Novels (Re)Considered," deals with the terminological controversies surrounding the label *graphic novel*. She examines the problem through the example of *The Unwritten*, an ongoing American comic book series by Mike Carey and Peter Gross which displays a strong awareness of its status and position within the generic tradition of the graphic novel. Henry Jenkins's "Archival, Ephemeral, and Residual: The Functions of Early Comics in Art Spiegelman's *In the Shadow of No Towers*" discusses the critically acclaimed response to 9/11 published in 2004 by Spiegelman (best known as the author of *Maus*), especially his use of reprints of turn-of-the-twentieth-century comic strips within a contemporary context.

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The fourth and final part of the book, "Graphic Narrative across Cultures," traces the cultural breadth of graphic narrative by reflecting on various influential traditions of storytelling: Anglo-American (Julia Round), European (Jan Baetens and Steven Surdiacourt), and East Asian (Jaqueline Berndt). Particularly interesting is the essay by Baetens and Surdiacourt, who highlight the dependence of certain landmarks in the history of European graphic narrative on cultural and technological developments—for example, how the graphic storytelling of Rodolphe Töpffer, widely considered the founder of comics, was influenced by the development of the autolitographic technique and the daguerreotype in the nineteenth century, or how the *ligne clair* style created by Hergé in the early twentieth century was shaped by the context of modern mass communication with its heterogeneous audience, since this style could appeal to a large variety of readers (younger and older, more and less educated). In the final essay, "Graphic Narrative as World Literature," Monika Schmitz-Emans uses the term *world literature* to highlight both "the fact that artists from various countries and different cultures create generically similar works of graphic storytelling" (388) and the mutual (graphic) literary influences between different countries and cultures.

Eyal Segal, Tel Aviv University,
Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics
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Amanda Anderson and Harry E. Shaw, eds., *A Companion to George Eliot.* Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013. xiii + 517 pp.

This companion offers a wide-ranging collection of essays on George Eliot's life and work edited by Amanda Anderson and Harry E. Shaw. In their introduction, the editors emphasize Eliot's view of her literary efforts as "actively in dialogue with a broad range of contemporary developments" (1) and claim that for this reason her work remains responsive to a particularly broad range of scholarly and critical questions and highly relevant to contemporary concerns in the humanities. The volume includes thirty-four essays, ranging from eleven to seventeen pages, and is divided into four main parts.

Part 1, "Imaginary Form and Literary Context," includes five essays which address questions of literary history and form. Two essays focus on narration. Monika Fludernik, in "Eliot and Narrative," aims to characterize the narrators in Eliot's novels (and their functions) more concretely than the clichéd attributes of being "omniscient" and "intrusive," focusing on *Adam Bede* as a case study. Fludernik's basic claim is that Eliot's realism is not one of descrip-

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tive detail but rather one "of ethical concern and pragmatic life experience" (33). Thus, she creates narrators who invite us to share their perceptions and values, their mixture of judgment and sympathy toward the characters within the fictional world. Robyn Warhol's "'It Is of Little Use for Me to Tell You': George Eliot's Narrative Refusals" explores the importance in Eliot's novels of two kinds of moments (on the mimetic level) that are "unnarratable": either because they are "subnarratable" (51), that is, fall beneath the dignity of deserving narration, or because they are "supranarratable" (56), that is, rise so far above the mundane that they become ineffable.

Eliot's masterly use of metaphor has often been commented upon, and this is the topic of the essay "Metaphor and Masque" by Michael Wood. Wood's focus is on the mimetic level: how metaphors help Eliot's characters grasp the reality around them and understand—or misunderstand—the world, thus making metaphors useful but also potentially dangerous. An example of the latter case is how Casaubon in *Middlemarch* entangles himself in error and self-deception when he imagines passion in fiscal terms (as constantly accruing interest when left unused) rather than as a spring that may in time dry up.

Caroline Levine, in "Surprising Realism," argues that an essential role in the strong effect of realism produced by Eliot's novels is played by narrative surprises that move the minds of characters—and readers—beyond the limits of the self (for example, when Gwendolen reacts to Daniel's explanation of his plan to journey to the Holy Land in the closing pages of *Daniel Deronda*). Such surprises can be seen as leading to the sharing of viewpoints between narrator and reader, in a similar vein to that which Fludernik attributes to Eliot's use of her narrators' voices. John Plotz's "Two Flowers: George Eliot's Diagrams and the Modern Novel" deals with the place of Eliot's fiction in the history of the English novel, claiming that it should be seen not only as an end point to Victorian realism (in the spirit of Henry James's well-known pronouncement in his 1873 review about *Middlemarch* setting the limit to the "old-fashioned English novel") but also as a link to modern fiction, particularly in terms of the relations between the characters' self and society as depicted in her novels.

Part 2, "Works," is devoted to Eliot's individual writings. Of its ten essays, seven concern the novels: *Scenes of Clerical Life* and *Silas Marner* (by Stefanie Markovits), *Adam Bede* (Rae Greiner), *The Mill on the Floss* (Adela Pinch), *Romola* (David Wayne Thomas), *Felix Holt* (David Kurnick), *Middlemarch* (Andrew H. Miller), and *Daniel Deronda* (Alex Woloch). The remaining three essays deal with parts of Eliot's oeuvre that have received less attention: her poetry (Herbert F. Tucker), her essays (Jeff Nunokawa), and the final work she authored, *Impressions of Theophrastus Such* (James Buzard).

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Especially interesting is Woloch's on *Daniel Deronda*, "Late Form, or, After *Middlemarch*." Woloch views Eliot's last novel as an exemplary instance of novelistic "late style" (167) because of its highly conscious and problematic relation to Eliot's previous works—most of all *Middlemarch*, its immediate precursor. Since *Middlemarch* was such a supreme artistic achievement, Woloch believes it put a strain on the composition of *Daniel Deronda*, which is particularly noticeable against the background of certain basic similarities between the two novels' designs (for example, the multiplot structure, the division into eight books, and the insistent chapter epigraphs). This perspective, Woloch argues, is illuminating with regard to some of the excesses and internal imbalances that characterize the narrative structure and content of *Daniel Deronda*.

Part 3, "Life and Reception," contains four essays. James Eli Adams surveys major trends in Eliot's reception from her own time to the present. Lynn Voskuil discusses the manner in which Eliot consistently fashioned for herself "life apart" (233): breaking with her father's religion, thus causing a rift between them that never fully healed; living with George Henry Lewes, to whom she was not married, in defiance of social convention; and creating a persona that was occasionally on intimate terms with followers but also wrapped in an intimidating mantle of greatness. Alison Booth views Eliot in the context of feminism, both in her own days and in ours, particularly with regard to her influence on American women writers. Finally, Daniel Hack explores Eliot in the context of issues of race, both in her own writings (the "Jewish" plot of *Daniel Deronda* and her review of Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel *Dred*) and with regard to how African American writers responded to her, in particular to her long poem *The Spanish Gypsy*.

Part 4, "Eliot in Her Time and Ours: Intellectual and Cultural Contexts," is the longest in the book, comprising fifteen essays on a great variety of topics. As the editors note in the introduction, this wide range reflects the way Eliot herself, "a polymath and a reader of extraordinary range, . . . engage[s] a wealth of intellectual, historical, and broadly humanistic concerns" (10) through her writings. The topics covered here include sympathy (as opposed to general principles) as a basis for morality (T. H. Irwin); the influence of Baruch Spinoza's *Ethics* (Isobel Armstrong); Eliot's thinking about—and narrative treatment of—the law (Jan-Melissa Schramm) and finance (Nancy Henry); Eliot's political views in the context of her emphasis on the interrelated aspects of social life (Carolyn Lesjak) and her liberalism as expressed in a powerful conception of civic virtue (Daniel S. Malachuk); her portrayal of rural and village life (Josephine McDonagh); her presentation of women, gender, and sexuality (Laura Green); her attitude toward cosmopolitanism (Bruce Robbins); her relation to the Continental philosoph-

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ical tradition (Hina Nazar); her secularism (Simon During) and engagement with the critique of religion in the context of Ludwig Feuerbach's philosophy (Amanda Anderson); and finally, her work discussed from the perspectives of the sciences of mind (Jill L. Matus), evolutionary psychology (Jonathan Loesberg), and the broader history of the human sciences (Ian Duncan).

Eyal Segal, Tel Aviv University,
Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics

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