

for its generalizations about Canadian literature. While she is at pains to posit her texts as representative of Canadian postmodernism, Goldman does not adequately historicize specific postmodern moments or fully demonstrate the representativeness of these texts. Nor does she complicate Hutcheon's premise that Canadian postmodern writing is distinguished by 'ex-centric' perspectives. Could the unexamined notion of ex-centricity, or of a national literature, or even of postmodernism itself be implicated in apocalyptic logic? Goldman's book claims its novels unveil the ways apocalyptic violence permeates the discursive formation of the nation-state, but to fulfil the promise of this claim it should more fully problematize its own terms. (MANINA JONES)

Tseen Khoo and Kam Louie, editors. *Culture, Identity, Commodity: Diasporic Chinese Literatures in English*
 McGill-Queen's University Press. xiv, 313. \$75.00

Since the 1970s, Asian Americans and Asian Canadians have largely been studied in individual national contexts, as racial minorities within Canada or the United States. Over the past decade, however, scholars have increasingly viewed such populations as diasporas, linked by ancestral, cultural, and economic ties that cross national boundaries. This volume itself is evidence of the advantages of such transnational thinking: edited by two Australian academics, it contains essays by Canadian, American, and Australian critics, surveying authors of Chinese descent in all three countries.

Such juxtapositions can create greatly expanded intellectual contexts. The poetry of Chinese-Canadian poet Fred Wah is read in the light of Harvard professor Tu Wei-ming's theory of 'cultural China' and of Hong Kong director Wong Kar-wai's film *In the Mood for Love*. Chinese-Australian novelists Brian Castro and Simone Lazaroo are compared to American counterparts such as Amy Tan and Maxine Hong Kingston. From essay to essay, readers are encouraged to think beyond national borders, encountering new work by new writers that may provide a fresh perspective on their own research.

Based on this collection, it would seem that Canadian scholars are in the forefront of diasporic thinking. Essays by Lily Cho, Guy Beauregard, and Donald C. Goellnicht – all well-known scholars of Asian-Canadian literature – offer sophisticated accounts of what a concept of 'diasporic Chinese literature' can offer interpreters of Canadian writing. Cho links the poetry of Fred Wah to a broader trend in the diaspora towards 'deconstructing Chineseness,' while also finding in Wah a struggle towards diasporic connection, a 'longing for something that defies the binds of historicism.' Beauregard assesses the current 'problem of diaspora' and its confrontation

with ethnic studies, while arguing that Wah and video artist Richard Fung develop a 'poetics of diaspora' that emphasizes practical agency. And Goellnicht describes a shift in Asian-Canadian writing from 'immigrant' to 'diasporic' narratives, a shift that has also opened up Asian-Canadian literature to explorations of queer sexuality.

Elsewhere in the book, however, the concept of diaspora is theorized only tentatively. Few of the authors explain how the diasporic paradigm differs from the older mode of ethnic studies, or account for what is distinctively diasporic in their analyses. The majority of the essays focus only on one national literature, and many do not provide enough context to allow, say, a Canadian reader to understand the situation of a Chinese-Australian writer.

Perhaps this volume's greatest service to North American readers is its introduction of the work of Ouyang Yu, a provocative Chinese-Australian poet who is the subject of one essay by Wenche Ommundsen and is mentioned in at least two others. Ouyang, a relatively recent immigrant whose work includes fiction, criticism, and translation in both Chinese and English, has earned the label 'the angry Chinese poet' for his scathing critiques of Australian racism; but his rhetoric is also tinged with a moving, melancholy lyricism. If Ouyang Yu is the face of the new diasporic Chinese literature in English, the field has an exciting future indeed. (TIMOTHY YU)

Cynthia Sugars, editor. *Home-Work:
Postcolonialism, Pedagogy and Canadian Literature*
University of Ottawa Press 2004. x, 534. \$35.00

Home-Work: Postcolonialism, Pedagogy and Canadian Literature takes its place among a growing body of work on the application of postcolonial theories to Canadian literature. It provides a valuable companion to Cynthia Sugars's *Unhomely States: Theorizing English-Canadian Postcolonialism* (2004); where *Unhomely States* provides an overview of postcolonial Canadian criticism and theory from the mid-1960s to the end of the twentieth century, *Home-Work* provides a snapshot of the state of thinking about the relationships connecting (and the disjunctions separating) Canadian literature, national theory, postcolonial theory, and pedagogical practice at one specific point in time. It is a timely, relevant, and interesting collection, with essays that address issues of concern not only to scholars of Canadian and postcolonial literatures, but to everyone teaching in the Canadian academy.

Postcolonial theory, which negotiates the boundaries between cultures and critiques the cultural inequalities wrought by imperialism, would seem to lead logically into the practice of critical pedagogy, which reveals (and attempts to dismantle) similar inequalities in the classroom setting. Both