



and then proceeds chronologically, following Haizi's literary career from his early poems in 1983 to those written just before his suicide. Murphy skillfully replicates Haizi's free-verse stanzaic structures, aiming to capture the rhythm and imagery of Haizi's lines rather than striving to find English equivalents of the original Chinese poems' irregular slant rhymes and other sound effects. Evocative botanical images and other nature imagery predominate in these poems, with nocturnal and autumnal settings in China's exotic border regions quite common, in spite of Haizi's upbringing in rural central China (Anhui province). With rather enigmatic imagery and hardly any story lines, most of the poems evoke mood; this makes them somewhat difficult for the general reader. **Summing Up:** Recommended. ★★ Upper-division undergraduates through faculty and professionals.—*P. F. Williams, University of Montana*

Classical

48-4319 PA6519 377p CIP
Feldherr, Andrew. **Playing gods: Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and the politics of fiction.** Princeton, 2010. 377p bibl indexes afp ISBN 9780691138145, \$49.50

Feldherr's most influential work to date has shed light on how, in ancient Roman literature, narrative viewpoint constructs and reconstructs power relations in the real world. In his first book (*Spectacle and Society in Livy's History*, CH, Dec'98, 36-2300), Feldherr (Princeton) explored this dynamic where it might seem most germane, in a work of political history. In subsequent work, he has disclosed its power in narrative poetry, particularly Virgil's *Aeneid*. Now turning to *Metamorphoses*, the author contributes significantly to the growing body of criticism that reads Ovid's poem in terms of imperial Roman identity. In close readings of some of Ovid's principal myths (for example, Daphne, Philomela, Daedalus, and Pygmalion), Feldherr argues for an equivalence among writer, audience, and character as viewing personae, contesting the political interpretation of the spectacles of the poem: the religious and artistic performances, the chastisements of transgressors, the panoramas of war and urban devastation. He finds a reading of Ovidian fiction on this analysis, seeing the poet's frequent and showy challenges to his readers' belief as an instrument for reframing Roman readers' approach to other kinds of authority. **Summing Up:** Recommended. ★★ Graduate students and above.—*J. D. Reed, Brown University*

48-4320 PA6083 2009-54021 CIP
Form and function in Roman oratory, ed. by D. H. Berry and Andrew Erskine. Cambridge, 2010. 353p bibl indexes ISBN 0521768950, \$99.00; ISBN 9780521768955, \$99.00

In this carefully integrated compendium of papers (originally presented at a 2007 conference of the same name), several of the world's leading specialists in Latin prose explore form and function in Roman oratory, here understood as both free-standing speeches and oratorical presentations embedded in other distinct categories (e.g., historiography and philosophy). Although many of the 18 essays duly note the alliterative mantra of Chicago School architect Louis Sullivan—"form ever follows function"—Berry and Erskine (both, Univ. of Edinburgh, Scotland) adduce, as an important conclusion, the view that in literature "form does not merely follow function, but actively contributes to it." Detailed analyses of structure and argument, prose rhythm, movement and gesture, speech and silence, and rhetorical strategy in the speeches

of Cicero, Seneca, Pliny, and Tacitus (among others) are presented as categorically defined demonstrations of the dynamic interplay of form and function (here generously interpreted) in Roman oratory. An excellent resource for specialists in literary criticism, Roman oratory, philosophy, and historiography. **Summing Up:** Recommended. ★★ Graduate students through faculty.—*J. S. Louzonis, St. Francis College, Brooklyn, NY*

48-4321 PA6825 2010-70 CIP
Wilson-Okamura, David Scott. **Virgil in the Renaissance.** Cambridge, 2010. 299p index ISBN 0521198127, \$95.00; ISBN 9780521198127, \$95.00

This book explores two questions: "What did poets in the Renaissance know—or think they knew—about Virgil, and how did they interpret his major poems?" As Wilson-Okamura (East Carolina Univ.) amply demonstrates, the answers matter in studying Renaissance poetry, since current understanding of Virgil differs greatly from that of the Renaissance. To recover the Renaissance perspective, the author surveys the Latin commentaries on Virgil printed from 1469 to 1599, identifying which were most popular (i.e., most frequently reprinted), what beliefs about Virgil were most prominent, and which episodes from the *Aeneid* received the most attention. He notes both the consistencies of Renaissance interpretations with earlier periods and the differences, concluding with the Renaissance's incorporation of married love into the epic. Scholars will appreciate Wilson-Okamura's panoramic overview and his synthesis of previous criticism, and less-experienced readers will have no difficulty following his arguments, even when he refers to poets and epics they have not yet read. The book includes full bibliographical data in the footnotes (in lieu of bibliography) and appendixes ordering the Virgil commentaries alphabetically and by number of reprints. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.—*B. E. Brandt, South Dakota State University*

English & American

48-4322 PS3563 2009-44306 CIP
Albert Murray and the aesthetic imagination of a nation, ed. by Barbara A. Baker. Alabama, 2010. 249p bibl index afp ISBN 9780817316976, \$45.75; ISBN 9780817355937 pbk, \$25.00

Murray (b. 1916) set standards for consideration of African American centrality to American cultural identity, and Baker (Auburn Univ.) honors him with these 27 essays. The volume includes interpretations and reminiscences—e.g., by insiders John Callahan, Paul Devlin, Lauren Walsh, Roberta McGuire, Caroline Gebhard, Maurice Pogue, Bert Hitchcock, and Jay Lamar—and appreciations by Sidney Offit, Wynton Marsalis, Michael James, Gail Buckley, and Henry Louis Gates Jr. Essays explore Murray's relationship with Ralph Ellison and Romare Bearden; his time at Tuskegee Institute as student and faculty member; his interest in Thomas Mann and John Dewey; and concepts of "incontestably mulatto" American culture. Unexpected tidbits emerge: in a 1996 interview with Don Noble, Murray quips, "I have no particular interest in African culture simply because there is no great literary tradition there"; an interview with his daughter reveals him as a connection between Duke Ellington and Alvin Ailey in 1970. A "tribute as well as a critical examination," this volume will inspire readers to look again at Murray's remarkable offerings, e.g., *The Omni-Americans* (CH, Oct'70),



Train Whistle Guitar (CH, Jul'74), *Stomping the Blues* (1976), and *Trading Twelves: The Selected Letters of Ralph Ellison and Albert Murray*, ed. by Albert Murray and John F. Callahan (2000). **Summing Up:** Recommended. ★★ Lower-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers.—*T. F. DeFrantz, Massachusetts Institute of Technology*

48-4323 PR590 2009-46891 CIP
Baker, Samuel. **Written on the water: British Romanticism and the maritime empire of culture.** Virginia, 2010. 320p bibl index afp ISBN 9780813927954, \$49.50

Until 1990, literary historians agreed that the georgic, pervasive in the 18th century, went into eclipse in the Romantic period. Recent scholars—e.g., Kevis Goodman (*Georgic Modernity and British Romanticism*, CH, Feb'05, 42-3272)—have argued that the form thrived after 1800. Baker (Univ. of Texas, Austin) argues that a Romantic “maritime georgic” was the site at which the modern notion of “culture” was created. In all this recent scholarship, the term “georgic” has become so vague that one has difficulty determining to what it does not apply. For Baker, Wordsworth’s *Prelude* and *Excursion* qualify, as do many of his sonnets and other lyrics; Coleridge’s “Lime Tree Bower” fits. One need no longer detect the structure or rhetoric that distinguished earlier georgics; any work treating labor or cultivation, of any kind, qualifies, even if it embodies simply a “georgic turning and returning of conversation.” This book would be more useful if it dropped the word “georgic.” Baker has much to say about writers’ involvement in the developing British imperial project, but this study will be accessible only to those who already know the period, and recent criticism, intimately. Substituting learned playfulness for clear argument and forced analogy for persuasive reading, this book is not really about genre. **Summing Up:** Not recommended.—*D. L. Patey, Smith College*

48-4324 PS3503 2010-22395 MARC
Bellow, Saul. **Saul Bellow: letters**, ed. by Benjamin Taylor. Viking, 2010. 571p index ISBN 0670022217, \$35.00; ISBN 9780670022212, \$35.00

Taylor (The New School) selected 708 letters by Nobel laureate Saul Bellow (1915-2005) for this publication. This represents 40 percent of all Bellow’s letters, which are located in a multitude of libraries or held in private hands. The earliest letter dates from 1932 and the last from 2004, a year before Bellow’s death. Some early notices concerning the letters suggested they constitute the autobiography Bellow never wrote. But here Bellow’s voice is not that of the autobiographical narrator organizing the materials of a long life. Covering a span of 70 years, addressed to many scores of correspondents, and touching on myriad topics, these letters reveal a series of moments in the author’s life—as he wrote as friend, aspiring and then established novelist, and colleague. With its comments on life, culture, and literature, this interesting, sometimes surprising, book complements what serious readers of Bellow already know and have experienced of him through his work. The editor’s introduction, a chronology, and judicious notes enhance the volume. **Summing Up:** Highly recommended. ★★★ Upper-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers.—*S. Miller, Texas A&M University*

48-4325 PR2819 2010-25354 CIP
Brown, Guy Story. **Shakespeare’s philosopher king: reading *The tragedy of King Lear*.** Mercer University, 2010. 373p index afp ISBN 9780881461855, \$45.00

This is an odd book, out of step with current scholarly approaches.

Most of it is straightforward paraphrase and summary, sometimes with little alteration of the text of the play. For example, Lear’s line “Upon such sacrifices, my Cordelia, / The gods themselves throw incense” becomes, in Brown’s words, “[Lear] tells Cordelia that the gods themselves throw incense upon such sacrifices as these.” What analysis Brown (philosopher and literature, Lubbock Christian Univ.) provides tends toward the A. C. Bradley school of treating the characters as people and the plot as truth that must therefore be understood as coherent and logical (the author devotes quite a lot of space to discussion of various letters—for whom they are meant and when they are delivered). He also appears unaware of recent scholarship on original staging practices and makes some claims that treat the play as a novel, as when he argues that Edgar’s appearance while Kent is on stage in the stocks must mean that Edgar is essentially a dream. Although Brown offers the occasional interesting close reading of the text within a political or Christian framework, he does not include enough new material to make the book more useful than a SparkNotes release. **Summing Up:** Not recommended.—*A. Castaldo, Widener University*

48-4326 PR6023 MARC
The Cambridge companion to C. S. Lewis, ed. by Robert MacSwain and Michael Ward. Cambridge, 2010. 326p bibl index ISBN 9780521884136, \$90.00; ISBN 9780521711142 pbk, \$29.99

In his superb introduction, MacSwain (Univ. of the South) explains that the goal of this collection is to offer a fair, in-depth examination of Lewis’s body of work—perhaps for the first time. (According to MacSwain, US Evangelicals have a tendency to adore Lewis uncritically, whereas British literature professors and theologians tend to dismiss his work out of hand, in part because of its popular appeal.) MacSwain and Ward (Univ. of Oxford, UK) succeed in achieving this stated goal of critical evenhandedness. Readable both as individual essays and as part of a nuanced, book-length argument, the chapters offer an objective appraisal of Lewis’s scholarship, his theological writings, and the literary merit of his novels and poetry. The contributors are all US and British scholars of religion and literature. Among the best of essays are Ann Loades’s examination of Lewis’s views of female clergy and his postmarriage reflections of romantic love in *A Grief Observed*; Jerry Walls’s interpretation of *The Great Divorce*; and Judith Wolfe’s exploration of why writer Philip Pullman believes that the Narnia novels promote violence and imperialism. A truly wonderful collection. **Summing Up:** Essential. ★★★ Lower-division undergraduates through faculty; general readers.—*M. E. DiPaolo, Oklahoma City University*

48-4327 PS374 2010-13674 CIP
Cart, Michael. **Young adult literature: from romance to realism.** American Library Association, 2011. 242p bibl index afp ISBN 9780838910450 pbk, \$60.00

Young-adult literature, as a genre, has a relatively short history. In terms of sociology, the “young adult” period (roughly from age 12 to age 18) was identified and/or accepted in 1868, with the publication of Louisa May Alcott’s *Little Women* and Horatio Alger’s *Ragged Dick*. Times have changed, and those who deal with young-adult literature must change as well. With this book, Cart, a specialist in the genre, brings the study of young-adult literature firmly into the 21st century. He divides the 14 chapters into two sections, “That Was Then” and “This Is Now.” He tackles some topics that were formerly taboo—sex, homosexuality, and abuse, among others—and also addresses new topics, such as the comics, visual literature (graphic novels, manga, photo essays), and high-