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action (60-62); and the pre-Renaixença Aribau was “el que más aportó a crear ese trasvase de información puntual desde Europa que enlaza con una tradición ilustrada ya existente en la sociedad catalana del siglo xviii” (63). In the aggregate, all five men participated in a project in which Europe, Enlightenment, Liberalism and Modernity were fused together to form an organizing ideal of progress in the midst of tumultuous political change. Sprague does an admirable job repositioning the journal within these parameters. Her Introduction also reminds readers that during the Liberal Triennium, Barcelona was perceived by other Europeans as a beacon of modernity, precisely because liberalism seemed to flourish there while it was very much on the retreat elsewhere.

Reframing *El Europeo* within the discourses of modernity is a salutary enterprise, and after this edition it will no longer be possible to entertain vague generalizations about *El Europeo*. At the same time, for many readers the interpretive template Sprague proposes will no doubt raise a familiar set of questions concerning the historical particularities that in fact underpinned modern universalizing. Throughout much of the nineteenth-century, in Barcelona and elsewhere, “the universal”, for example, was mostly limited to white, propertied, men of letters. Similarly, what separated *exaltado* liberals from their *moderado* counterparts was precisely disagreement over *how universal* liberal freedoms and rights should be. The *moderados* opted for a more restricted understanding, and much of Spain’s nineteenth-century history was subsequently marked by *moderado* political hegemony. Such topics, however, fall outside of Sprague’s critical purview. Her aim is not to analyze or critique the discourses of modernity as such but rather to provide a descriptive reconstruction of the conceptual universe of *El Europeo*’s editors. On this front she does a superb job, making clear that, although short-lived, the journal was an important vehicle for disseminating the cultural discourses of European modernity in Barcelona. In short, Paula Sprague has brought *El Europeo* out of the archives in a highly useful and welcomed edition. Coupled with an extensive and meticulous critical apparatus—extremely useful indexes, author attributions, and erudite notes for each article—this edition will no doubt become a standard reference in nineteenth-century studies.

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FELDMAN, Sharon G. *In the Eye of the Storm. Contemporary Theater in Barcelona*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2009. 411 pp.

Sharon G. Feldman’s study puts forward the view that the Barcelona stage is at the core of Catalan theatre’s hurricane-like activity of the 1980s and posits that it is a “nucleus that, although not immune to problems of financing and feasibility, is overflowing with vitality and creativity” (12). In order to prove this, she pref-

aces her analysis with a panoramic of contemporary Catalan theatre homing in on the highly emblematic Sala Beckett, a venue founded by José Sanchis Siniserra in 1989, and which “nurtured and stimulated in varying degrees the careers of several prominent Barcelona actors, directors and playwrights” (13), some of whom are then studied in the later part of the present volume. The Introduction that follows studies the resurgence of Catalan theatre in democratic Spain, once again focusing on two venues: the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya and the Teatre Lliure. Here Feldman develops the concept of “Catalunya invisible”, that is, the elusive presence of anything directly linked to Barcelona or Catalonia or to any cultural specificity in the text-based plays of the 1980s and 1990s in contrast with the cutting irony used by the performance-based Catalan groups before the eighties and since. Chapter 1, “From the Political to the Spectacular”, not only traces the transformation undergone by the independent theatre group Els Joglars from the years of Franco’s repressive regime to its post-transition firmly established professional status, but also the changes and tensions within it and its controversial success as a theatre of resistance, even within the emerging modern Spain. Chapter 2, “An Aspiration to the Authentic”, addresses the evolution of La Fura dels Baus highlighting their fascination “with the rapport between the human being and his or her post-industrial surroundings” (77) in their search of authenticity. It looks at how the group has excelled in setting up unmediated experiences such as acts of violence, obscenity, etc. and become “an innovative branch of the experimental theatre scene” (80), descending from the 1940s theatre of Joan Brossa but also epitomizing “the counter-cultural language of the *movida*” in Madrid (84), given the intensely participatory nature of their spectacles which gave the spectators “the sensation of being plunged into a barrage of activity” (85). Chapter 3, “A Phenomenological Gaze”, centres on the work of Josep Maria Benet i Jornet (1940) and his interest in popular genres as well as in many mostly-contemporary literary sources, which have developed in him “a penchant for melodrama, a theatrical paradigm that he has repeatedly cultivated, betrayed, undermined and explored” (108). Often isolated from his contemporaries, his more recent involvement with TV series as screenwriter and producer and as lecturer at the Institut del Teatre are seen by Feldman as reasons for his more recent plays’ “inwardly direction to reflect upon an individualized or interior world” (119). Chapter 4, “Theatre of Pain”, studies the work of Sergi Belbel (1963), offering an account of his artistic trajectory and of the circumstances that gave rise to his relentless investigation “of the rapport between visibility and invisibility, between what is representable and what is not” (167). The detailed analysis of his key plays places him at the forefront of his theatrical generation, especially when his concerns the process of communication. Chapter 5, “The Theatre of Enigma”, on Lluïsa Cunillé (1961), describes her productions as having “seemingly unassuming and delicate aesthetic lines, frequently inspiring a vast degree of doubt, hesitation, and even suspicion on the part of the spectator” (231) and producing either complete acceptance or total rejection because of their totally literal approach to theatrical realism. Chapter 6, “European Land-

scapes", is on Carles Batlle (1963): a playwright, professor, theatre critic and dramaturge for whom "the notion of locality—both its presence and absence—can communicate certain anxieties and preoccupations with regard to cultural identity" (256). In this respect, Feldman sees Catalunya and contemporary Europe as "continually reconfigured and redefined" (256) in an unstable dialectical impulse, developing what Batlle calls a "relative drama", that is, a "non-affirmative" one which requires "an active spectator who is compelled to create stories to navigate his or her way through subjective fragments of plot, slices of interior reality and shreds of exterior landscape" (259). Chapter 7, "Scenes of Miscommunication" shows Josep Pere Peyró (1959) as a top example of the seamless integration of acting, directing and playwriting, as well as working in TV screening and teaching. His originality is presented as stemming from "the discursive dilemmas that exist when men and women attempt to communicate with each other" (209) and identifies his quasi-poetic discourse as the primary form of dramatic action. The book closes with the epilogue "New Spaces and New Visions", putting forward some ideas on current trends and future developments. Here Feldman describes the changes endured by the Catalan theatre scene in the last twelve years, including the demise of key figures, the closure of key venues and the emergence of new groups and initiatives outside the Catalan capital, but going back to Barcelona's new venues and promising new names, declares her hope that the project of creating a Council of Art in Catalunya will ensure a stable arena within which Catalan theatre can thrive. All in all, one can say that Feldman's study, which does not purport to be a history of contemporary Catalan theatre, does go to great lengths to contextualize all its analysis and capitalizes on "the process of communication (the degree to which language determines dramatic action) and the phenomenology of theatrical space (the relationship between physical space and invisible, subjective, psychic realities)" (14), which are what give her approach its originality. Feldman offers us not only clear and concise information, but also her long experience as a sharp analytical mind, an assiduous and discerning theater-goer and an accomplished translator. And if that was not sufficient, the Catalan translation of the book will be published by Editorial l'Avenç this autumn.

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FRANCÉS DÍEZ, M. Àngels. *Literatura i Feminisme: L'hora violeta, de Montserrat Roig*. Tarragona: Arola, 2010. 318 pp.

In her prologue, Isabel-Clara Simó mentions the major axes of this comprehensive study: intertextuality, a broad feminism and the feminine, multiple points of view, and women's creativity. The prologuist is well chosen and apt,

since Simó herself is a writer and was a friend of Roig; Simó's comments are cited frequently within the text.

The study is broader than the subtitle suggests. Francés divides the work into three sections: the first echoes the title of the book and constitutes a comprehensive analysis of feminist criticism from Simone de Beauvoir's *The Second Sex* (1949) to the present. Francés had access to Roig's archive near Barcelona and offers the reader Roig's comments on her own holdings: she preferred the Anglo-Saxon approach to the French, considering the former more practical, less theoretical and elitist, but her library and her work reflect an amalgam of many points of view. Imbued with Marxism as well as feminism, Roig sees the latter as an ideology, equivalent to any other. Roig seeks to develop the three phases described by Julia Kristeva: criticism of the male canon; a search for female literary tradition in a reevaluation of women's work; and an analysis of gender differences in writings by men and women. Francés considers *L'hora violeta* (1980) as the point of convergence of a crisis of values, which reflects conflicts between Marxism and feminism, socialism and Catalanism, silences and polyphony, and she underscores Roig's efforts to describe and create solidarity among women throughout her work.

The second section is called "Les primeres obres", and offers a detailed study of *Molta roba i poc sabó...i tan neta que la volen* (1971), *Ramona, adéu* (1972), and *El temps de les cireres* (1977). While Francés rightly sees these works as precursors to *L'hora violeta*, she gives them a comprehensive analysis in their own right. The first book of related stories introduces characters, themes, and techniques that will continue in Roig's later works—the use of testimonial literature such as diaries and letters, multiple voices and points of view—but offers a cyclical structure that nonetheless leads to a unitary whole. In this section as well as in those to follow, Francés offers the reader graphs and outlines to indicate relationships among the many characters and to identify voices, points of view, and sources within the texts. In *Ramona, adéu*, the emphasis is on fragmentation, parallelism, and repetition, and Francés sees these techniques as a way to analyze intersections of class, religion, and sexism. *El temps de les cireres*, written five years later, reflects the influence of popular culture, especially music and film, which point to the ongoing conflict between the independence women seek and their continuing search for romantic love, along with a need to mask themselves in various ways. The heteroglossia of earlier works is less evident here, but it still aids in the construction of the identity of characters, while at the same time looking to the possibility of change, of building another world.

Francés considers *L'hora violeta* a turning point that culminates "un procés de construcció intertextual que enllaça les quatre primeres obres de Roig, i significa un punt d'inflexió envers una nova vessant literària, que obres com *L'òpera quotidiana* o *La veu melodiosa* s'encarreguen de confirmar" (201). The novel represents a unification of Roig's previous work, and Francés rightly emphasizes the writer's efforts to concentrate on a single theme in order to study it profoundly. The novel begins with a frame in which the protagonist /