in male-dominated societies. Further, while Muoneke is correct to assert that Beatrice marks something of a departure for Achebe, he does not address the somewhat ironical characterization of Ikem, through whom the reader discovers the novel's more enlightened attitude toward women. How, one wonders, does this irony affect what we learn from Ikem's epistolary celebration of Beatrice in particular, and women generally?

While Muoneke is sensitive to changes in Achebe's style and thematic concerns over the course of his career, and although Muoneke performs some insightful readings of the novels, his reliance on the three-part structure interferes with his ability to construct a total, coherent description of the work. Further, a certain religious sentiment appears at times to influence his judgment, particularly in his discussion of redemption and in his apotheosis of the writer. In his conclusion, for example, Muoneke hails the writer's (and Achebe's) ability to "utilize God's gift of understanding . . . to reveal divine mysteries to humanity and to dispense God's wisdom to mankind" (157). Achebe is a writer committed, above all else, to the improvement of society, to helping downtrodden people to "get up," as the Igbo expression has it. As such, Achebe's artistic concerns are far more secular than Muoneke suggests—even if on some level Achebe, like all writers, has much in common with the priest. This problem, too, arises from the overreliance on rigid categories to describe Achebe's work, particularly categories such as redemption, fraught, as it is, with nonsecular connotations.

MATTHEW MULLIGAN GOLDSTEIN

Sneja Gunew. *Framing Marginality: Multicultural Literary Studies.* Victoria: Melbourne UP, 1994. Pp. xiii, 158. $19.95.

While the explosion of theorizing in the past decade of cultural studies is exciting, newcomers to the field can be overwhelmed by the complexity of a theoretical canon which is further complicated by its interdisciplinarity. Sneja Gunew will calm such anxieties over theory with her survey of multicultural approaches to literary studies and her integrative analysis of Australian particulars, in *Framing Marginality: Multicultural Literary Studies.*

The text is as neatly split as the title suggests. The first half is a theoretical "talking" about marginality in literature, and the second a "doing" of theories in Gunew's readings of four different writers: Antigone Kefala, Ania Walwicz, Rosa Cappiello, and Anna Couani. *Framing Marginality: Multicultural Literary Studies* is part of an Interpretations Series intended to introduce "recent theories and critical practices in the humanities and social sciences" (n.p.). In Part One particularly, Gunew provides biographical and historical contexts that help to situ-

ate critics and their theories. Although capable of overdetermining a reading, Gunew's fondness for questioning can also provoke a more complex response:

> Why and when are certain cultures given a universal status, and what are the implications of this, for themselves and for other cultures? To what extent can we make room for competing cultures within a national framework? How can we represent the cultural difference of the "other" without appropriating it? (29)

In this first section, Gunew also examines terms of multicultural criticism that are easily taken as givens. She discards the label "ethnic writing" because its use renders invisible majority groups like Anglo-Celts in Australia. Favouring the more resonant "ethnic minority writing," Gunew stresses that this literature "needs to be seen always in relation to something designated (although rarely in any overt manner) as ethnic *majority* writing" (23). The power differential of this relative perspective means that writers considered marginal to (and by) an established academic majority stand in danger of being interpreted against majority standards that are maintained by the existence of what "ethnic minority writers" are not.

> Speaking pragmatically, we have to make sure that these writings are preserved, and that their extent and diversity are acknowledged in the various classifications and taxonomies to be found in national cultural institutions. (24)

Such entreaties can deny minority writers self-determination, granting their texts visibility only insofar as they are legitimated and absorbed by mainstream academia.

The issue, of course, is not only or simply what is done to minor texts. Certainly, the rigour of Gunew's analyses and her obvious enjoyment and critical regard for the texts she chooses challenge the image of a museum of literary theory. As well, fitting minority texts into major taxonomies does change categories, however slightly, although Gunew welcomes what she predicts would be the "deconstruction" (21) of the majority culture by the minority, a significant change that resists homogenization of either culture. Aware as she is though of how easy it is to "purport to analyse and deconstruct" (32) relationships with subjugated others while maintaining privilege, I am left puzzling over the selectivity of her challenge.

"The daughter of 'Displaced Persons' is not able to take anything for granted" (vii), Gunew confesses in her opening sentence. Yet from that paragraph on, Gunew writes as the "we" of a generic majority that relies heavily on the passive voice and a masterful, invisible, subject position. Gunew steels herself against "commonsense readings which perpetuate the production of unified subjects" (95); admits that the mainstream has only begun hearing voices that have been speaking for decades; and identifies the self-reinforcing effect of the centre's

positioning any writing as marginal. Yet the insistent eruption of sequence in her discussion of Cappiello's *Oh Lucky Country*, for example, situates Cappiello's cultural heritage in the past, and sustains an allochronic unity that blocks the postmodernist intertextuality which Gunew is advising. Here Gunew flirts with the nostalgia for origins she warns against in her discussion of Anna Couani's writing, thereby denying Cappiello the coevalness she would grant Couani.

The difference in her treatment of Couani's writing is that Gunew refigures nostalgia as a literary tool in the theorizing of an "Australian" literature, which does facilitate intertextuality and contemporaneity for "minority" literary voices. "What is then rendered uncanny are precisely the traditional renditions of the home/mother/land for which the referent is arguably an 'Australia' always mediated by somewhere else . . ." (118). The "Australia" that emerges from such a reading exists only in the allegories migrants bring with them. This analysis may do little to accommodate literatures by Aboriginal Australians, but Gunew does suggest that theorizing the marginalization of these texts has benefited from poststructuralist and postmodern philosophies. The ill-fit of some texts to Gunew's analyses says as much about ontological and epistemological (un)certainty as it does about any particular theoretical choice. Gunew takes pains to expose the inadequacies of theory and the folly in applying it wholesale to a diverse group of writing. She cautiously refracts texts through a variety of theories, conscious that a focus on cultural differences exposes theoretical exclusions (52). And yet an authentic ethnic purity is implicit in her assertion that "diasporic languages and cultures serve to deconstruct a nationalism based on those exclusive imaginaries which are structured around heritage in terms of kinship and genealogy, common descent and language" (21). At this point, Gunew (relying on Anna Yeatman's model in *Postmodernist Revisionings of the Political*) posits a "customary" state nationalism that is challenged by communities styled on "conventionalist" principles of difference rather than shared lineage (21). This relationship de-emphasizes the "customary" structure of many diasporic communities that are, in turn, deconstructed by displacement and/or the encounter with another nationalism.

Further, to stress, as Gunew does, that considering the writings of diasporic cultures as more important than "speaking to or appointing some of those self-styled community spokespeople" (21) is to substitute privileging the literary for the privileging of oral histories Gunew criticizes elsewhere in the book. This emphasis on artistic production —"often at odds with the concept of community" (22)—could be seen to diminish social justice issues articulated by community activists, in favour of literary issues that relate to the mainstream. Gunew is concerned not to construct differences "as mere addenda to the dominant culture" (22). By tempering its dismissive tone, this passage would seem more consonant with her position.

Nonetheless, in her text Gunew consistently challenges dominant perceptions of marginality, especially the notion that "ethnic minority texts" stand only as sociological and historical evidence of someone else's social reality. *Framing Marginalities* is a helpful addition to this series, especially in its expansive approach to theory and its dexterous critical attention to works that trouble placid imaginings of "Australia."

MARILYN IWAMA

Zailig Pollock. *A. M. Klein: The Story of the Poet.* Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1994. Pp. 324. $25.95 pb.

"Design was it or forgetfulness? It was the spirit of prophecy."
A. M. KLEIN, *The Second Scroll*

This comprehensive bio-critical study takes its proper place alongside several other works produced by members of the A. M. Klein Research and Scholarship Committee over the last two decades. Extensively researched and well written, *A. M. Klein: The Story of the Poet* offers an intimate look—through his poetry, fiction, and journalism—at the life of one of this century's most significant and complex poets. Recent scholarly editions of Klein's poetry, literary essays, editorials, reviews, and previously unpublished papers have made accessible a rich variety of essential primary materials. As editor of Klein's *Complete Poems* (1990) and co-editor of *Notebooks: Selections from the A. M. Klein Papers* (1994), Pollock brings to the present work an intimate knowledge of Klein's writings. In *A. M. Klein: The Story of the Poet,* he draws significantly from many sources to create an intriguing portrait of an enigmatic figure.

Pollock's central thesis is that all of Klein's writings tell his life story, which begins in the 1920s and remains essentially the same, although it assumes a variety of different forms, over the next three decades, only beginning to change substantially in the last years before his eventual withdrawal and silence in the late 1950s. The story follows Han "archetypal" pattern (4) grounded in two significant metaphors: "the metaphor of unfolding" (7) and the "counter-metaphor" of "remembering" (8). The "metaphor of unfolding" assumes an integral and inviolable centre, essentially a vision of the "One in the Many" (3), from which the story in its various forms, all traceable back to the centre, is unfolded. Militating against the unity implied by this metaphor, however, are the facts of history, those external forces that resist and often shatter such constructions of individual integrity. Thus, as Klein unfolds his story of the One in the Many, and as it continually breaks against historical realities, he finds himself seeking various means of "re-membering," piecing together, the fragments of this story