"exceptional moment in history"; theory now claims to capture a transhistorical phenomenon associated with a regional essence, or "another example of Latin American culture surviving the assault of foreign cultures" (78).

Appropriating Theory provides us with a valuable study of the intellectual trajectory of one of Latin America's most important critics. The book underscores Rama's efforts to dialogue with critical theory while also remaining attentive to how local particularity informs the appearance of the concept in its universality. González moves critical discussion beyond *criollista* celebrations of Rama's work as exemplifying an inward-looking Latin American intellectual production presumed to be unencumbered by external debts. This is also what makes his book a timely intervention into Latin Americanist debates about theory.

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EDUARDO LEDESMA. *Radical Poetry: Aesthetics, Politics, Technology, and the Ibero-American Avant-Gardes, 1900-2015*. New York: SUNY Press, 2016. x + 348 pp.

Eduardo Ledesma's study successfully negotiates an uneasy relationship between body, technology, and politics, reflected in the ever-changing, yet stable nature of the Ibero-American avant-garde poetry. The avant-garde, Ledesma argues, has a cyclical nature: it is reincarnated in different forms to reflect the current social and political conditions. The avant-garde, and in particular experimental poetry, does not completely reinvent itself with each passing historical period, but rather adapts to it and uses its principal characteristics as a means of poetic expression. Often, these characteristics appear to be in conflict with the nature of the avant-garde. Ledesma explores an uneasy relationship between technology as a tool of capitalist production and therefore a symbol of oppression, and technology as a means of protesting against this oppression. Ledesma also highlights the fleeting nature of avant-garde poetry and the paradox that it figures among the key subjects of current academic research and study, even though one would think that its marginalized character would be a barrier to its inclusion into the mainstream corpus of literary studies.

Ledesma recognizes the limitations of his undertaking and chooses not to go down the well-trodden path of including the analyses of Octavio Paz's "signs in rotation," Vicente Huidobro's poetry, or the works of Ferreira Gullar. Instead, he focuses on the much less explored pieces by José Juan

Tablada, Joan Salvat-Papasseit, Olga Delgado, and others, dedicating several chapters to the contributions by Brazilian avant-garde poets. While by no means all-encompassing, this study presents a well-informed, lucid reading of experimental poetry, with some intriguing close readings of Ana María Uribe's work and a detailed examination of the Catalan experimental writers, among other often overlooked areas of the Ibero-American avant-garde. The inclusion of Brazilian and Catalan poetry is particularly welcome, since both are all too often excluded from the mainstream corpus of Hispanic literary studies. And it goes without saying that by bringing Latin American and European authors together in one volume, Ledesma takes a step towards helping merge the two sides without forcing either into a subjugated position.

The analysis opens with a consideration of the role of metaphor in the avant-garde. Early in its existence, avant-garde movements saw metaphor as a bridge between various art forms; later, in particular during the neo-avant-garde of the 1960s-1970s, metaphor was eschewed as a tool of the dictatorial regime because it obscures its meaning, just like the dictatorship's rhetoric obfuscates its wrongdoings. However, aspects of metaphor continued to underlie avant-garde production, suggesting a tenuous truce between the movement's aesthetic and political roles. Ledesma traces this change in the avant-garde's approach to metaphor through the works of Clemente Padín.

Metaphor re-appears and is revived (and re-constructed) in the works of digital poets, such as Olga Delgado and Jordi Pope; their works use various modes of expression and presentation to add layers of meaning made accessible to different types of readers. For example, wheelchair users will recognize references to wheelchair manufacturers in Pope's "Nomenclature and Symbols of the System," whereas the same references will carry a less precise meaning for those unfamiliar with these names.

Close readings of experimental poetry, including digital works, combined with detailed socio-historical and political contextualization of the movement, allow for a deep exploration of experimental poetry both as artistic expression and as a means of presenting social critique. Although it is obviously difficult to present a moving text as a static image, detailed descriptions of the pieces give the reader a clear picture of the poem, such as Ana María Uribe's marching H's in "Disciplina."

The study does not sacrifice the discussion of the aesthetics of poetry in favour of the value of its political or social commentary, nor does it use the poets' political stances as an excuse for badly written pieces. Careful handling of the analyses that does not slide into authoritative patronizing or overzealous social commentary allows the reader to spend quality time with the poems, to consider every minute detail and enjoy the process. I would

offer the examination of Eduardo Kac's digital poem "Não!" (272-78) as an example of this engaging type of analysis. The poem presents what would appear to be a collection of nonsense words, like "ECARASEMP" or "RAOCONTRAO." Ledesma demonstrates how the nonsense words make the sentence: the breaks between words are removed in the poem as the words scroll across the screen and a series of letters form the sentence "O POETA ESSE CARA SEMPRE VAI DE CARA CONTRA O CORO DO SIM" ("The poet [is] that guy who always goes against the choir of yes" [273]). The analysis does not stop at decoding the sentence, but continues to delve into the meaning behind it, the technology used to create it, and the nature of the light producing it on the screen. Ledesma's conclusion brings us back to the idea of avant-garde poetry as a fluid form that re-creates itself, directly and metaphorically speaking.

Some of the works included in the study may be perceived as affected, pretentious, or downright pointless: the Lettrist writings of Joan Brossa could serve as an example. However, close readings of these pieces are underpinned by a detailed historical contextualization, which reveals the dissident nature of what otherwise would be seen as an example of kitsch art.

Well researched, clearly written, and with many illustrations, this book is a valuable addition to the corpus of the Ibero-American literary and cultural studies.

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ELENA DE LORENZO ÁLVAREZ, COORD. *Ser autor en la España del siglo XVIII*. Gijón: Ediciones Trea, 2017. xiv + 526 pp.

This volume brings together eighteen critical essays on authors and the concept of authorship within Spain's eighteenth-century "Republic of Letters." Its chronological sweep spans from Juan Álvarez de Toledo (1662-1714), whose life straddled the culture of the late Baroque and the new stirrings of the *novatores*, to Manuel José de Quintana (1772-1857), a figure who also lived across two centuries and the profound changes that marked them. In between these two men, the list of authors gathered together offers a fairly well-established repertory of eighteenth-century Spanish letters: Gabriel Peralta Barnuevo, Benito Jerónimo Feijoo, Fray Martín Sarmiento, Eugenio Gerardo Lobo, Diego de Torres Villarroel, Ignacio de Luzán, José Antonio Porcel, Ramón de la Cruz, Nicolás and Leandro Fernández de Moratín, José Cadalso, Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, Tomás de Iriarte, Juan