

hispanica” (143). El autor analiza primero los textos de Domingo de Salazar, Gaspar de San Agustín y Juan José Delgado, afirmando que estos religiosos “plantean interrogantes respecto a la justificación de la conquista” (150). Luego, se abordan las obras del patriota filipino José Rizal, entre las cuales se privilegian las menos canónicas, a saber, su edición de los *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas* (1890) de Antonio de Morga (1609) y su correspondencia personal. Ellis arguye que estos escritos manifiestan a la vez el “rechazo [de Rizal] al colonialismo” (186) y un “sesgo occidental” (187), particularmente en su descripción un tanto “orientalista” (183) de Madrid que “demuestra lo arraigados que tenía él mismo los discursos imperialistas que se proponía cuestionar” (182).

Mientras la introducción aporta una necesaria contextualización, en el epílogo se establecen similitudes entre los documentos estudiados: “La mayoría de estos autores ... expresan un profundo interés por las identidades culturales asiáticas y europeas y una preocupación por la relación del yo con otros seres humanos” (189). Además, Ellis sugiere pistas de investigación futura y provee una breve pero precisa exploración de la asianografía hispanica postcolonial, observando cómo la obra de Jaime Gil de Biedma sobre las Filipinas evoca, más allá de “una historia común de conflicto” (194), la posibilidad de “imaginar la reciprocidad” hispano-asiática (194).

Conviene agregar que cada capítulo contiene una enorme cantidad de información biográfica, datos históricos, ilustraciones en blanco y negro, así como referencias a varios críticos e historiadores relevantes como Gil (1991), Brewer (2001), Hsu (2010), Keevak (2011). Aunque las reflexiones sobre conceptos teóricos como los de Edward W. Said y Alain Badiou habrían podido expandirse, el trabajo de Ellis logra mostrar, desde un enfoque interdisciplinario, la complejidad del discurso colonial español sobre Asia. En suma, se trata de una lectura imprescindible para cualquiera que se interese por las primeras olas de globalización y su legado actual.

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SARAH THOMAS. *Inhabiting the In-Between: Childhood and Cinema in Spain's Long Transition*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2019. xii + 240 pp.

Sarah Thomas in her book, *Inhabiting the In-Between: Childhood and Cinema in Spain's Long Transition*, investigates children in Spanish film of the 1970s and early 1980s. The author defines the “Long Transition” as the era of the late Franco Regime into the early years of subsequent Spanish democracy.

She describes it as “a period of radical political and cultural change for the nation” (9). Her assessment complicates the era of Transition, often simplified as a definitive break between dictatorship and democracy. It is in “the ongoing, lengthy, dilated nature of transitional time and process” in which Thomas places her study of children in Spanish cinema (9). Like the era of Transition in Spain, she argues that these filmic children are complex and nebulous. Pointing to this multifaceted identity, the author writes: “the child in the Long Transition is marked by his or her ability to embody contradictions and doublings as both subject and object, self and other, child and not child” (9).

Thomas’s contribution to film and childhood studies follows several recent publications, including Sarah Wright’s *The Child in Spanish Cinema* (Manchester UP, 2013). Thomas distinguishes her book through its close reading of the work of four filmmakers over the span of a broad era of Spanish history (20). Included are Spanish directors Carlos Saura, Antonio Mercero, Víctor Erice, and Jaime de Armiñán. Although Thomas argues that her choice of directors offers “a diverse cross-section of Spanish film,” she recognizes the monolithic maleness of the filmmakers, explaining that their female counterparts’ work was excluded from the “mainstream” of cinema during the era in question (9, 21). In four chapters, Thomas considers two films from each director, all of whom produced work in Spain during the Long Transition. In the Introduction she offers her analysis of an additional film, Narciso Ibáñez Serrador’s *¿Quién puede matar a un niño?* (1976), suggesting that “the child’s otherness or difference from the adult [and] the fraught relationship between adults and children,” serves as a blueprint for the remainder of her study (8).

The author lays out her interpretation of childhood during the era of the Transition beginning with two of Carlos Saura’s New Spanish Cinema films, *El jardín de las delicias* (1970) and *La prima Angélica* (1974). The author offers a compelling reading of Saura’s young protagonists, arguing that “the child can therefore be seen as the adult’s other in terms of emotion, cognition, knowledge, and beliefs” (41). In Chapter 2, a study of two films by Antonio Mercero, Thomas asserts that the cinematic trope of childhood innocence mirrors the simplification of the Transition. Both cases, she contends, are decidedly more complicated. The child protagonist in Mercero’s films, played by Víctor Manuel García, is a “performative animal ... a pre-social creature, a blank slate” signaling his innate difference from civilized adult society (68). Likewise, Mercero’s film *La guerra de papá* (1977) unsettles the era of the Transition. Featuring the tension between a young boy and his Francoist father, the film “evinces deep anxieties about the past and future of the nation, especially its reinvention as a modern global democracy in the post-Franco period (68).”

Chapter 3 considers Víctor Erice's haunting film *El espíritu de la colmena* (1973) as well as his later production *El sur* (1980). Thomas concludes that the enigmatic child protagonist in these films both encourages a reassessment of the past and points to the impossibility of fully understanding it (144).

The final book chapter, which assesses adolescence in film, offers the strongest examples of the ambiguity of childhood and the era of the Transition. Thomas convincingly asserts that "the liminal state of child and adult subject positions" in Armiñán's films mirrors the instability and duality of the era of Transition in Spain (147). By nature, in-between, adolescence, like Spain in the 1970s and 1980s, struggles to fit any one category. Thomas writes, "the adolescent character is allied with both the potential of adult futurity and the incapacity of childhood, straddling a boundary between the im/possibility of change and continuance of the status quo (153)." Thomas further argues that the young character in Armiñán's film *El nido* (1980) plays both "villain and protagonist" pointing to a gray area of "the authoritarian past and the possible democratic future (183)."

While Thomas indicates that the young protagonist in Armiñán's film "resist[s] binary classification as either strictly a child or not-a-child," the binary of gender is not fully explored (147). Her assessment stops short of explaining the varied experiences based on gender and fails to offer a more nuanced reading of the Transition. For example, when Thomas asserts that the female adolescent in Armiñán's film is "more mysterious, inscrutable, and threatening than the male adolescent," she might interrogate the hegemony of traditional gendered expectations during the Transition (166). With a thorough exploration of the implications of gender and youth, Thomas's study might provide further insight into larger questions of continuity or change during the Long Transition.

Though Thomas's book recognizes the fluidity of the years of the Transition, it lacks the historical narrative needed to explain the significance of the era. She is right to point to new research that problematizes these crucial decades in Spain. Recent historians, such as Nigel Townson in *Spain Transformed: the Late Franco Dictatorship, 1959-75* (2010) or Pamela Radcliff (2011, 2017), have offered great insight into the Transition. Some of these studies reassess the Transition's ability to firmly end the authoritarianism of Franco and replace it with democracy. Spain's near forty years of dictatorship beginning in the 1930s after a brutal civil war distinguished its historical experience as did the anticlimactic ending of the Franco regime. A reader without knowledge of the uniqueness of Spain's twentieth-century trajectory, can only trust Thomas when she argues that the era was complex and liminal. The overall argument of the book would resonate more if the

author explained the historical context which made the Transition a seminal and singular moment in the twentieth century experience of Spain.

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