

established during the cold war continue to "... retain real power in the academy and therefore among those shaped by it, including, particularly, secondary school teachers of literature ..." (249).

What, then, is one to make of the finished product, the sum of the parts? There is much of worth here, but like gold, it must be dug out from the complicated prose and sheer density of knowledge being proffered. It is perhaps best taken in small portions, like rich chocolate cake. For those with the interest of a specialist, many of the essays will provide fascinating insights. From the perspective of an Americanist abroad, it can have an additional function. It can itself be viewed as an artifact of American culture – a window into the academic world of American Studies in the United States at the end of the 20th century.

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Øyvind T. Gulliksen, *Twofold Identities. Norwegian-American Contributions to Mid-western Literature*, New York: Peter Lang, 2004. 240 pages; ISBN 0-8204-6230-6; \$65.95.

Norwegian immigrants in the United States created a rich literary culture. A great number of publications were brought out for the rapidly growing market of Norwegian Americans in the second half of the 19th and the early part of the 20th centuries, and it seems safe to say that this literature was one of the richest among all American ethnic and immigrant groups. Over the years, a number of studies of Norwegian-American literature and culture have appeared by authors on both sides of the Atlantic, including, among others, Einar Haugen, Odd Lovoll, Dorothy Skårdahl, and Orm Øverland. The present book by Øyvind Gulliksen thus falls into a long and venerable tradition of scholarly interest in the cultural and intellectual life of the Norwegian-American community.

Immigrant literatures, such as Norwegian-American writings, can be studied in different ways. One is to focus on writings that deal with the topic of immigration or the circumstances of a particular ethnic group, which puts the immigration process at center stage. It would include materials published in both Norway and the U.S. and in both Norwegian and English. A second way is to study printed materials published in a particular language, such as Norwegian, in the United States. This definition does not insist that Norwegian-American literature should have an "immigrant theme" or ethnic component, but would encompass newspapers, periodicals, fiction, poetry, and non-fictional materials of a very varied kind, as long as it was published in the United States in the Norwegian language. A third way of looking at Norwegian-American literature would be to focus on the audience, and to study what Norwegian immigrants in America read, regardless of thematic content or language or place of publication.

Øyvind Gulliksen uses a fruitful combination of these three approaches in his analysis of Norwegian-American literature. He seeks to include a "broad range of immigrant texts" that "lend themselves to a critical, historical, and literary analysis" (11). Moreover, Gulliksen is also interested in examining how these "textual traces that immigrants left behind" helped shape a "double identity" among the authors and a "double consciousness" among their readers (12). His rich and stimulating book focuses on a group of authors whose writings in both Norwegian and English were read by Norwegian Americans. The authors include extensive treatment by such well known names as Ole Rølvaag and Waldemar Ager, but also discussions and analyses of less established names, such as Torbjørg and John Lie, Nils Rønning, and Andreas Ueland. Gulliksen also captures the breadth of Norwegian-American literature by including a variety of genres, such as novels, autobiographies, popular fiction, and religious literature.

Gulliksen's emphasis on the "double identity" or "double consciousness" is central to his analysis. In this way, he enters into a long discussion of the nature of immigrant and ethnic identities in the United States. To some scholars, the immigrants have been seen as isolated from their homelands and their original cultures, and, using Oscar Handlin's influential term from 1951, found themselves uprooted and at a cultural and literary loss in their new circumstances. This approach forms one basis for an assimilationist paradigm, suggesting little cultural continuity among the immigrant groups in the U.S.

By underscoring the "double identity" in the Norwegian-American texts he studies, Gulliksen clearly places himself in a scholarly tradition associated with a concern for both cultural maintenance and cultural production among immigrants in the U.S. In this line of thought expressed by, among others, Jon Gjerde and Werner Sollors, the immigrants are seen as active agents, whose identities are shaped and re-shaped through an interaction between the cultural patterns and traditions of the Old and the New Worlds. The coming together of these two cultural spheres did not impede or burden the immigrants, but made it possible to draw on the resources of two worlds.

Gulliksen's successful use of this concept can, for example, be seen both in his discussion of Nils N. Rønning's travel narrative *A Summer in Telemarken* (1903), which is an account of a return journey from Minnesota to his home district of Telemark. First published in English, but soon translated into Norwegian, the book draws on both the Norwegian and American cultural contexts, as it chronicles the cultural and social development of a Norwegian-American author. Similarly, the analysis of Waldemar Ager's religious writings *Kristus for Pilatus* (1910) translated as *Christ Before Pilate* in 1924 and *Hundeøine* (1929), translated as *I Sit Alone* in 1931, shows how Ager is able to combine Norwegian Lutheranism with an American tradition of Christian humanism. These authors are thus able to create something new out of the cultural contexts they find themselves, or in Gulliksen's words able to "write themselves out of Handlin's double alienation" (218). As Gulliksen also shows, this "dou-

bleness” makes it possible to see the texts at hand as Norwegian-American and as American at the same time.

The nature of the Norwegian-American identity was the subject of reflection by two Norwegian-American authors in particular, Waldemar Ager and Ole E. Rølvaag, and Gulliksen devotes particular attention to their views. His analysis of Ager’s *Paa veien till smeltepotten* (1917) and *Gamlrelandets sønner* (1926) is particularly interesting, and Gulliksen is able to show how *Paa veien till smeltepotten* should be seen in the context of a larger American discussion of the role of immigrants in American society during the first decades of the 20th century. The 1917 novel is a clear critique of the concept of the melting pot which Israel Zangwill had made so influential in his 1908 play *The Melting Pot*, and expresses similar sentiments that would characterize the movement for American cultural pluralism associated with Horace Kallen. Gulliksen’s chapter on Rølvaag criticism in the U.S. and Norway since 1930 is also very illuminating, and shows both the significance and usefulness of applying the double perspective in the analysis. Gulliksen can thus show that to many Norwegian critics, *I de dage* and *Riket grundlægges* were seen as tragic stories of Norwegian emigration by a Norwegian author, whereas some American critics have seen *Giants in the Earth* as a forward-looking American pioneer story of the frontier, without any strong ethnic dimensions.

Øyvind Gulliksen has written a well-conceived and stimulating book about Norwegian-American literature and culture. The book’s strength lies in its thematic focus and in its use of the concept of double identity. The author convincingly shows how Norwegian Americans were able to actively reflect upon and construct a new identity for themselves by drawing upon the cultural contexts of both Norway and the U.S. *Twofold Identities* should serve as an inspiration for studies of similar processes among other immigrant groups.

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Edward Ashbee, *Get Set for American Studies, Get Set for University*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004. 183 pages; ISBN: 0 7486 1692 6; £6.99.

Ashbee’s *Get Set for American Studies* is part of a series of books designed to introduce students to various fields of study. As such, it is geared toward the beginning student who may desire a very broad overview to either decide to choose that field of study or give some general context. It is divided into two parts. The first part addresses the field of American Studies; the second, basic study skills for students.

Within the first part, Ashbee’s first chapter poses the question, “Why Study the United States?” He provides the equivalent of an excellent introductory lecture to a survey course. He cites military and economic power, cultural, corporate, and demographic transference as justification. Without specifically mentioning those Euro-