

The literary critic is always a guide of sorts, intent on directing the reader's attention to this or that text, to this or that discursive feature therein. And, secure in their knowledge, and empowered by it, the tour guide and literary critic alike can be imperious, perhaps even a little condescending, on occasion. However, more traveling companion than intrepid pathfinder, Eco is a guide of another stripe in *Six Walks*. Wearing his considerable erudition lightly, he moves through a number of popular and canonical texts—Nerval's neglected fiction, *Sylvie*, is a personal favorite of the author's—offering various insights on generic conventions, inter-textual relations, and the ontological status of stories and storytelling. Overall, Eco's essays achieve an immediacy and charm that are not invariably present in academic lectures.

*Six Walks* provides a readily accessible overview of Eco's ideas on reader-response and narrative semiotics as they have emerged over the last few decades. Further, the book serves as a loose critical complement to Eco's own novels and those of other innovative writers whom Eco admires, people like Sterne, Joyce, and Borges, not to mention his late friend, Italo Calvino, fellow Italian and presenter of the 1985 Norton Lectures. Buttressed by imaginative illustrations drawn from literature, film, and historical sources, *Six Walks* succeeds in capturing both the enthusiasm and wit of its author.

Lee A. Daniel, ed.

*Cuentos de Beyhualé: Doce cuentos de Joaquín Bestard Vázquez*

Fredericton, N.B.: York Press, 1994. Pp. 101. \$15.95

Reviewed by Martín Rodríguez Pérez

As stated in the "Advertencia," the purpose of this book is to introduce Joaquín Bestard Vázquez to a North American readership (4). The anthology includes twelve stories about the fictional Yucatecan town of Beyhualé and the fate of the also fictitious Bech family. Even though most of these stories had been published in book form back in 1987 as *Los tiempos dorados de Tránsito*, two are being published for the first time and one is taken from another one of his novels. Other outstanding works by Bestard dealing with the Yucatan are *De la misma herida* (1985) and *Ocasos de un mar de cobre* (1992), the latter as the official literary contribution of the province to the celebration of the 500th Anniversary of the Discovery of America. Bestard's choice for the latter project reasserts his role as the peninsula's prophet, as he has come to be widely known, for giving those who are on the fringe and apparently voiceless a dignified stance as they face some of life's most adverse situations.

In the "Prologue" to the anthology, Bestard tells of the total attraction the Yucatan and its people have had on him, and he relates that his main concern has been to portray them faithfully on paper (6). Indeed, Bestard has changed radically our perception of this region, from being picturesque and quaint to tragic and compelling. This new vision is a complex one. To attain it, Bestard has relied on

his knowledge of contemporary literary techniques, history, mythology, anthropology, sociology, and his own experience. These statements apply as well to other regions Bestard has explored just as carefully, namely, Mexico City (where he lived for twenty-seven years) (*La calle que todos olvidan*, 1982), the "Bajío," the area northwest of Mexico City (*En la piel del agua*, 1992), and Latin America as a whole (*La obsesión de Germán Ortega*, 1990).

In general, the stories deal with the Bech family in twentieth-century Beyualé along with other topics, which range from the conflict between so-called progress and the traditional Mayan way of life ("A distancia de una señal") to the federal Mexican government's lack of tact with the provinces ("El manatí"). Also, there are stories about misunderstanding the uniqueness of some minorities living on the peninsula, such as gypsies ("El viejo rodar de los gitanos") and Orientals ("Legado de dragón"). In addition, "El candor del cielo" deals with a flabbergasted non-Mayan whose wife's kidney stones have been successfully cured by a healer, a so-called *curandera*. Finally, readers will find "Los fantasmas de Simona" deliciously sensual. All in all, the stories are of high quality and should undoubtedly prove interesting to undergraduates and graduate students.

Besides the stories and their summaries, Daniel provides us with an introduction to Bestard's Beyhualé, a classification of Bestard's total output from 1966 to 1993, a handy glossary of regional terms, and a selected bibliography which should prove priceless to anybody interested in Bestard.

This anthology is a most welcome achievement in the development of the currently fledgling but extremely promising study of Bestard and Yucatecan literature in North America. This book is recommended to any library with an interest in Mexican literature, contemporary Mayan culture, and ethnic relations.

Alwin Fill et al., eds.

*New-Found-Lands: Festschrift für Harro Heinz Kühnelt zum 70. Geburtstag*  
Tübingen: Narr. 1993. Pp. 274. DM 58

Reviewed by Axel Knoenagel

*New-Found-Lands* is a Festschrift honoring Harro Heinz Kühnelt, Professor of English at the University of Innsbruck, Austria. As such, its contents encompass the themes and research interests that have marked Kühnelt long and distinguished career: the relationship between literature and other art forms, the place of British and American literature in Germany and Austria, and the role of Austrian authors in England and America. With one exception, all of the articles in this collection were written by students or colleagues of Professor Kühnelt.

In his essay, "The Style of Exiles," Manfred Markus attempts to salvage Arthur Koestler's novel *Arrival and Departure* from the traditional negative critique. He points out that Koestler was not only expressing himself in a foreign language—as many exiles did—but also aiming at something different from high