

rendering the Gower accessible only through multiple imaginative frames. Similarly, Sinclair's Welsh landscapes are always relativized: Gower gravestones "under a wash of lichen" appear "brighter than the markings on a London Overground carriage". Leylines stretch from Oxwich to the London Orbital, from the seaside village of Horton to Sinclair's "home" (away from home) in Hackney.

Black Apples of Gower is also a love letter to Sinclair's wife. As a record of a companionable Gower journey, set against a destabilizing awareness of deep time, it is offered – like Richards's "loose-wristed" drawings in the margins of his copy of Dylan Thomas's *Collected Poems* – as "a charm against dying".

DAMIAN WALFORD DAVIES

Philosophy

Linda Martín Alcoff

THE FUTURE OF WHITENESS

200pp. Polity. Paperback, £15.99 (\$19.95).
978 0 7456 8545 8

In an impending demographic shift, white European Americans are set to become a minority in the United States within the next twenty-five to thirty-five years. How will Americans adapt to this change? On the one hand, racial awareness is on the rise: the number of racial hate groups has increased during Barack Obama's presidency. On the other, there is the phenomenon of race avoidance: the notion that race is an illusion and it would disappear if everyone would cease making so much of it. If we follow this latter argument, it might seem that the coming demographic changes around white identity will have little impact, if any.

The philosopher Linda Martín Alcoff disagrees, and argues that the concept of whiteness is not about to disappear anytime soon. She calls whiteness an "identity-formation" that is constructed historically and socially, constantly reinterpreted and contested. According to Alcoff, now is a good moment to understand how whiteness is lived and not just how it is rep-

resented and manipulated ideologically.

Alcoff questions one mainstream left-wing view that tends to separate class and race. Incorporating first-person accounts of the experiences which inform her alternative understanding of the interrelation between these two things, she illustrates how race and class are deeply integrated in structures of oppression. She argues that white workers are misled to believe in an imagined race solidarity rather than in a real class solidarity, and in this way race works as a mechanism for the division of the poor.

Unlike attempts to understand whiteness from a sociological perspective, such as Steve Garner's *Whiteness: An introduction* (2007), Alcoff's is a philosophical approach, sharing more in common with the work of philosophers such as George Yancy's critical whiteness studies. *The Future of Whiteness* seeks to develop a set of concepts for the future, rather than a sociological methodology and analysis. The discussion gravitates towards European and Anglo-American philosophers, but not exclusively: Alcoff gives generous space to the Argentinean political philosopher Enrique Dussel. Of more than fifty books by Dussel, few have been translated into English, making Alcoff's work on Dussel here a real treasure. Her book is captivating and should appeal to anyone interested in contemporary politics and culture.

CARRIE GIUNTA

Poetry

Richard Hamer, editor

A CHOICE OF ANGLO-SAXON
VERSE

256pp. Faber. Paperback, £10.99.
978 0 571 32539 9

In his revised and expanded edition of *A Choice of Anglo-Saxon Verse*, Richard Hamer tweaks and polishes his translations from forty-five years ago. There are no drastic revisions – mostly minor changes to word choice, punctuation and syntax – but the changes do make for slightly smoother, more