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Abstracts

Khaled Aljenfawi, Mahomet and Mustapha: George I's Turkish Servants as Surrogate Targets

Though the Turk in general may have represented what many eighteenth-century Britons saw as the abomination, deception, and apostasy of Islam, this usually exoticised figure has also served as a means by which contemporary political, social and cultural power could be reenacted, reinstated and re-empowered. The essay examines the function of George I's two Turkish servants in the cultural, political, economic and social environment at the beginning of the Hanoverian reign. Its argument is that the king used them as surrogate targets to evade and redirect British domestic criticism from his court, while at the same time the wider political discourse used the presence of the Muslim Other at court to create surrogate targets for criticism of what was considered, in some circles, a corrupt monarchy and government. The Muslim Other, in fact, problematised the treatment of many contemporary issues, while at the same time disrupting the structure of the texts in which it is treated as an object of desire, hatred, disgust and exoticism.

Emily Anderson, "A Mere Tale of Spectres:" the Ontology of Shelley's *Frankenstein*

Issues of doubt and representation coalesce in *Frankenstein*, a text deeply anxious about the reliability of language. Most critics who have considered the gothic nature of Mary Shelley's novel draw conclusions about gender, nationality or her biography. This essay focuses instead on the philosophical questions that a gothic form allows Shelley to raise. With the central event in the novel—the creation—she resists the pragmatic approach that the more realistic novels of the time, Austen's and Scott's, take toward ontological questions. Furthermore, it demonstrates that once the reader accepts the possibility of the creature's coming to life, the novel must provide both the reader and the novel's characters with witnesses who can attest to the truth or falsity of this unnatural event. But in giving their testimonies, the novel's witnesses muddy rather than clarify the events they would explain, and do little more than give rise to a sort of juridical doubt about whether an account of an event can ever be trustworthy. In fact, the structure of the novel revolves around the possibility of witnessing, and just as the characters in the novel remain unconvinced of the creature's true nature, the reader is finally unable to trust any of the novel's three narrators. As the novel progresses, it becomes clear that the more unnatural the premise, and thus the more necessary the witnesses, the less likely it is that any account could suffice. It is argued that in *Frankenstein* language is incapable of representing the most subjective of states.

Ayse Naz Bulamur, The Dialogical Zone in Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette*

Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette* can be read as a sentimental novel with a traditional seduction plot: rejecting the respectable suitor Reverend Boyer, Eliza Wharton has an affair with the charming, "reformed rake," Major Sanford, and dies as she gives birth to her illegitimate baby. Based on this seduction narrative, *The Coquette* can be labelled as a moralistic novel that represents the downfall of a woman who fails to follow the ideals of virtue and reason in late eighteenth-century American society. However, using Bakhtin's *The Dialogic Imagination*, this paper examines how the "dialogic" nature of the novel resists a didactic reading that merely justifies Eliza's tragic death. *The Coquette* is not a sugarcoated pill that encourages eighteenth-century women readers to follow the conventions of society but a dialogic novel that gives voice to multiple viewpoints of women in Foster's times.

Robert Carley, Money's Gest: or the Postmodern Materialism of Fictitious Capital Formations

Arguably the greatest of Karl Marx's economic discoveries was that labour was the sole value-producing commodity. It was also, at the same time, ontologically prior to Marx's philosophical thinking. Attempts to "rationalize" the labour process actually represent an attempt to stem this ontological power of labour through the introduction of machines or administrative techniques that reconstruct the labouring body as a machine. This paper explores both the ontological and economic side of the rationalization of labour. Using Marx, Heidegger, David Harvey, and Bertolt Brecht's work it considers the destructive and irrational path that capital takes as it gives rise not simply to a postmodern aesthetics, but also to a postmodern kind of finance. Contained within this ethereal money form is a kind of ontological effect. Brecht's technique of the social gest gives us not an explicit way to read this money form but rather links ontology to it in a way that is modern or contemporary on the one hand, and on the other hand brings us back to ontology via Marx's dual notion of labour.

Chu-chueh Cheng, Chic Clichés: Reinvention of Myths and Stereotypes in Kazuo Ishiguro's Novels

This essay is concerned with the process by which Ishiguro transforms banal conceptions into innovative representations. The texts considered are *A Pale View of Hills*, *An Artist of the Floating World*, *The Remains of the Day* and *When We Were Orphans*. The study identifies in each novel the preconceived assumptions that Ishiguro intentionally ironises, unveils how these assumptions deviate from the original connotations, and explains by what rhetorical strategies clichés are reinvigorated. Ultimately, this essay concludes that in defiance of generic conventions, societal practices, and gender expectations, Ishiguro has turned myths into cultural mockery, clichés into chic ideas, and stereotypes into subversive characterisation.

Sanna Dhahir, The Dreadful Faces of Earth: Feminine Archetypes in V. S. Naipaul's *In A Free State*

Naipaul's *In a Free State* is seen as a group of fictions in which threatening feminine archetypes are used to produce situations in which the male ego is slighted, wounded, and cut down to size. This forms part of a pattern in Naipaul's oeuvre, reflecting a preoccupation with the failure of the male quest for more fulfilling worlds, as the turn to the feminine, associated with nature and the land, produces not security but earnest of death. No less preoccupied with safety, security, and rebirth than are his fictional characters, and troubled like them by the fear of extinction, Naipaul, the traveller, has likewise searched for a benign place that could provide him with psychological shelter, but as in the fiction, a host of unmistakably life-negating attributes clearly speaks of the dreadful cycle of life and death.

Christopher Funkhouser, Irregular Solid: John Cayley's Cybertextually Engineered Digital Poetry

For more than a decade, British poet and translator John Cayley has constructed a series of cybertexts under the title of *Indra's Net (or Holography)*. These works intrinsically reflect one another and aesthetically progress over time, but have not hitherto been given a close, concerted reading either in print or online. This essay surveys in depth Cayley's artistic works and process through the course of his career thus far. Concepts crucial to his unique compositional style, such as collocation and holography, vital towards building an understanding of complexities inherent to digital poetry, are introduced and illuminated.

Samar Habib, The Historical Context and Reception of the First Arabic Lesbian Novel, *I Am You*, by Elham Mansour

Female homosexuality is a misrecognised concept on the culturally discursive level in the Middle East. This paper sketches the present popular epistemology of female homosexuality in the Arabic Middle East by examining the first lesbian-centred Arabic novel *I Am You* and its reception by reviewers. While the novel demonstrates a rather surprising and ethnic brand of homophilia which renders the narrative exceptional as well as unusual and promising, many reviewers in the Middle East were unable to recognize or engage with this "new" form of discourse in which homosexuality is *not* an aberration or an act of immorality. The cultural significance of *I Am You* is then examined within a larger socio-historical contextualisation of the novel and the period within which it is set.

J. Gill Holland, Teaching Narrative in the Five-Character Quatrain of Li Po

Li Po (701-762) wrote lyrical stories within the strict limits of the "Ancient Style" five-character quatrain. "Autumn Cove" and "Night Thoughts" are two quatrains that demonstrate the poet's delight in up-and-down verticality, parallelism, and the quick movement from chaos to resolution. Allusions to T'ao Ch'ien (365-427) create a dialogue over centuries which is typical of Chinese poetry. The poetics that informs these poems

includes both reading a classical Chinese poem as a matter of re-experiencing the creative act that brought it into being, and considering Chinese as a hieroglyphical language based on natural forms not bound by letters or words (S. T. Coleridge). This quatrain form has proven to be an inspiring model for student creative writing.

Iftekhar Sayeed, “Freedom and *Freedom*”

Individual freedom has been a recurring theme in western literature and society. The essay argues that the word *freedom* connotes individual freedom in western culture and literature because of the experience of slavery. Since Asia lacked this experience, *freedom* in the sense of individual freedom has no meaning here. In Asia the word *freedom* connotes collective freedom in keeping with its colonial experience. Present day implications for the cultural and political transmissions taking place are profound.