ABSTRACTS

Sea Voyages into Time and Space: Postmodern Topographies in Umberto Eco's *L'isola del giorno prima* and Christoph Ransmayr's *Die Schrecken des Eises und der Finsternis*   by Beate Müller

The revival in contemporary fiction of **the sea voyage of exploration as a subject** must be seen in conjunction with postmodern attempts to overcome exhausted literary conventions. Voyages into time and space are functionalized for aesthetic, philosophical, and epistemological reflection, quests that result in a critical reworking of **the archetypal seafaring tale**. Umberto Eco's *L'isola del giorno prima* and **Christoph Ransmayr**'s *Die Schrecken des Eises und der Finsternis* exemplify two different postmodern strategies: while Eco employs ironic and playful, largely intra-literary, self-reflexivity, Ransmayr focuses on the relationship between history and fiction, as well as the representation of historiographic metafiction.

Three Ways of Going Wrong: Kipling, Conrad, Coetzee   by Douglas Kerr

This investigation of the theme of 'going wrong' in **colonial discourse** examines two Indian stories from **Rudyard Kipling**'s *Plain Tales from the Hills*, **Joseph Conrad**'s *Heart of Darkness*, and **J. M. Coetzee**'s *Waiting for the Barbarians*. A **myth of empire** is identified in the transgressive figure of the man who jeopardizes his own people's identity and prestige by becoming too closely involved in 'native life', and on his relationship with a second, more law-abiding figure who forms a misgiving bond with him. It is argued that the tension and the kinship between these **figures of law and transgression** indicate a fault-line in the nature of empire itself.

'The Rapture of Vertigo': Beckett's Turning-Point   by Paul Lawley

A creative turning-point for **Samuel Beckett** in summer 1945 resulted in his commitment to an 'art of failure'. Ranging across Beckett's post-war writing, this study identifies the **theme of self-abandonment** and investigates its connection with that aesthetic. Recurrent **images of falling and drifting** are linked by analysis with the familiar Beckettian **motif of the birth-into-death**. Beckett's immediate post-war decision to write in French is proposed as another form of self-abandonment, and the project of the art of failure is seen, with reference to **Schopenhauer's conception of the Sublime**, as a repeated attempt at self-birth in a (paradoxical) moment of simultaneous wholeness and annihilation.

Bodily Peril: Sexuality and the Subversion of Order in Jean de Meun's *Roman de la Rose*   by Sylvia Huot

This study examines representations of **gender, sexuality, and the human body** in **Jean de Meun**'s portion of the *Roman de la Rose*. Jean explores these fundamental themes through an extremely dense network of associated images and motifs, revolving around a series of interrelated binary oppositions: body and soul, letter and spirit, nature and culture, matter and form. Thus the female body, object of male desire and medium for the propagation of the male lineage, is analogous to the text that is glossed or decoded by the male reader, and to the natural world that is subjugated through the technologies of civilization. Jean's comic treatment of these issues results in a vision of heterosexuality as a force that threatens to subvert the very cosmic, natural, social, and semiotic orders to which it is none the less essential.

Medea, Poison, and the Epistemology of Error in *Phèdre*   by Amy Wygant

One tradition of reading **Racine**'s last profane tragedy, *Phèdre*, has been particularly influential: it argues that Phèdre's death both concludes the plot and allegorically concludes Racine's theatrical career by representing the death of his tragic muse and his confession before his Jansenist fathers. But a restoration of the concluding scene's polemical dimension, emphasizing Racine's attribution of

Phèdre's poison to the ancient with Medea, permits a new understanding of its ending as one whose error is necessary to its truth, whose recognition is overdetermined in Freudian terms, and whose status is that of **Pascalian apologetics** rather than that of criminal confessions.

Banville and his Three Sonnets on the Mythical Amazons   by Eileen Souffrin-Le Breton

Banville was always fascinated by the **Greek myth of the Amazon**s. This article is limited to an examination of his three sonnets on the subject. The first was inspired by a statue made by his friend, the sculptor **Jean Feuchère**, the second by a painting by **Rubens** and the poem by **Théophile Gautier** on that painting, the third by an engraving in **Abbé Guyon's** *Histoire des Amazones* (1740). My study reveals how knowledgeable Banville was concerning both **Greeks and Latins on the Amazons** and Greek sculpture representing the myth. I finish by drawing a comparison with **Mallarmé**'s 'antique amazone'. The study of a single Greek myth reveals clearly the variety of the sources of inspiration in Banville's poetry with their **symbiosis of art and literature**.

Towards a Revival of Borghini Scholarship: A Review Article   by J. R. Woodhouse

The present article assesses renewed interest in the revolutionary theories of literary, linguistic, and textual criticism promulgated by **Vincenzio Borghini (1515–80)**. It reflects the concerns of the informal Venice Colloquium on Borghini altruistically organized by **Gino Belloni** in 1997, a meeting which, in turn, followed an important Warburg Colloquium concerned with **Italian sixteenth-century academies** (which also highlighted Borghini's importance). That new interest also complements two important publications, here reviewed in detail: a **Censimento of Borghini's Carteggio** published by the Crusca in 1994 and edited by Daniela Francalanci and Franca Pellegrini, and Gino Belloni's own 1995 edition of the famously pioneering Borghini **Lettera intorno a' manoscritti antichi**.

The Problem of Theory in the Poetics of Andrea Zanzotto   by John Johnson

The poetry of **Andrea Zanzotto** (b. 1921) has often been interpreted in the light of concepts of language and being deriving from **post-structuralism**, the writings of **Jacques Lacan** and **Martin Heidegger** in particular. The poet's own agreement with post-structuralist principles is often cited in support of this methodology. Through a reading of Zanzotto's critical works, this article demonstrates that his attitude to theory is complex and often critical, as a consequence of his belief in the link between literature and personal experience. It concentrates on the following areas: his relationship with **psychoanalysis** both as a practice and as a literary discourse; his criticisms of Heidegger and post-modern thought in general; his views on the nature and purpose of poetry.

Renaissance Dialogue and Narrative Fiction: The *Viaje de Turquía*   by Thomas R. Hart

In the *Viaje de Turquía* Andrés Laguna skilfully combines the **Renaissance dialogue** with **Pedro de Urdemalas**'s narrative of his travels in the East. The *Viaje* reflects the moment when **saint's life**, **artisan autobiography**, **picaresque narrative**, travel report, and humanist dialogue come together on the path that leads to the modern novel. The best model for understanding Laguna's work is not autobiography or narrative fiction, which trace the development of a character as a result of his or her experiences, but the Renaissance dialogue, which juxtaposes opposed points of view at a brief and clearly defined moment of time.

Science and Myth in *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías*   by Xon de Ros

Lorca's *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* is reassessed by drawing attention to its specific historical context and arguing that the poem reflects the conflict of faith and science during **Spain's Second Republic**. The essay challenges previous critical readings of the poem by referring to the debates on **psychoanalysis and medicine** in Spain at the time, and by exploring the way the poem is affiliated to the **Orphic tradition**.

'Eine immerwährende Umwandlung der Ansichten': Narrators and Their Perspectives in the Works of Adalbert Stifter   by Helena Ragg-Kirkby

It is particularly striking that **Adalbert Stifter** posits one 'true' perspective from which humans will be able to comprehend the apparently incomprehensible aspects of their existence. It might seem that he uses his narrators to convey this perspective to the reader. However, a close reading exposes gaps in the narrators' accounts: their grand claims to knowledge invariably demonstrate their abiding ignorance. They are reliant on conjecture and uncertain hypothesis and can offer nothing more than their own perspectives on the stories they tell. This becomes a reflection of an unfathomable universe which exists for us only as interpretations and perspectives.

Anna Seghers, Friedrich Wolf, and the Austrian Civil War of 1934   by Andrew Barker

The **Austrian civil war of February 1934** was a key event in the unfolding tragedy of that country which culminated in the Anschluss of 1938. The literary response by Austrian writers was, however, very muted, in contrast to the response amongst English and exiled German Socialist authors. This paper examines the varied aesthetic responses to the civil war of two German Communist writers, **Anna Seghers** in her novel ***Der Weg durch den Februar*** (1935) and **Friedrich Wolf** in his drama ***Floridsdorf. Ein Schauspiel von den Februarkämpfen der Wiener Arbeiter*** (1936).

Brothers in Arms: The Changing Face of the Soviet Soldier in Stalinist Cinema by John Haynes

How did the cast-iron self-assurance of the **Vasil′ev Brothers'** hero **Chapaev** become the uncertain introspection of **Sergei Bondarchuk**'s Andrei Sokolov in ***The Fate of a Man***? This study explores the relationship between the male ego and the **patriarchal Stalinist state** through the **cinematic figure of the soldier hero** as the apogee of **dominant modes of masculinity**. At the same time it argues that the experience of the **Great Patriotic War** opened up gaps within which it became possible to question on screen the hitherto-assumed unified **subjectivity of the male positive hero**, with particular reference to **Mark Donskoi's *The Rainbow*** and **Eisenstein's *Ivan the Terrible***.