

## Abstracts

- 641 **Gregory S. Jackson**, “What Would Jesus Do?”: Practical Christianity, Social Gospel Realism, and the Homiletic Novel

This essay makes the historical case for an unrecognized genre of fiction—the homiletic novel. Drawing on traditional Protestant interpretive practices, Social Gospel authors fused forms of spiritual identification rooted in Protestant homiletic exercises (catechisms, interactive allegories, conversion dramas) with practical Christianity’s emerging ethic of social intervention, attaching older modes of readerly identification to new sites of literary culture. Homiletic novels democratized pastoral guidance and legitimized fiction as a repository of ethical experience. Through interactive fictions offering virtual models of spiritual agency in the material world, evangelicals prepared for real forays into urban poverty to intervene in human suffering. The homiletic novel became the most popular literary form of the Progressive Era and continues to flourish in the present-day American political, cultural, and religious environment. In tracing its rise and pervasive influence, this study revises conventional histories of literary genre by suggesting an alternative origin for American literary realism. (GSJ)

- 662 **Amy S. Wyngaard**, *The Fetish in/as Text: Rétif de la Bretonne and the Development of Modern Sexual Science and French Literary Studies, 1887–1934*

This essay examines the role of Rétif’s writings in the development of the concept of erotic fetishism and in the formation of the French literary canon in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Rétif explored foot and shoe fetishisms more than a century before the phenomena were medically recognized, anticipating the modern psychosexual use of the term *fetishism* and making important contributions to the invention of the theoretical concept. Rétif’s works were accorded a privileged place in early pathologies of fetishism, which provoked a series of polemics among German and French medical doctors and literary scholars centered on notions of national supremacy and literary value. Marked as bad literature, in both senses of the term, Rétif’s writing was subsequently excluded from the French literary canon on moral grounds and became a kind of fetish object in the French literary corpus. (ASW)

- 687 **Juniper Ellis**, *Tatau and Malu: Vital Signs in Contemporary Samoan Literature*

In two contemporary Samoan works, Albert Wendt’s short story “The Cross of Soot” (1974) and Sia Figiel’s novel *They Who Do Not Grieve* (1999), tattooing produces and proclaims the psychological and social place of the tattoo bearer. The tattoo signals the splitting or doubling of subjectivity, a mechanism by which the individual human subject is produced continually and repeatedly. The Samoan *tatau* creates not only Samoan subjects but also the English word *tattoo* and the French *tatouage*. Wendt and Figiel treat the production and movement of the tattoo in the Pacific and the world; they thus invite a cross-

cultural critique of Lacan's theories of subjectivity, which present the tattoo as constitutive of the subject. Whereas Lacan's tattoo is disembodied and non-localized, Wendt and Figiel account for the tattoo's material and corporeal effects, its origins in Oceania, and its function in inaugurating a collective Samoan subject. (JE)

702 **Paul Acker, Horror and the Maternal in *Beowulf***

Grendel's mother projects Anglo-Saxon cultural anxieties about weaknesses in the system of feuding and revenge. Killing off one opponent (Grendel) will only trigger the appearance of another (Grendel's mother) as long as the system of revenge by kin is in place. That she is an avenging mother may have seemed particularly monstrous, in ways that resonate with Julia Kristeva's comments on abjection and the maternal. Grendel's mother attacks to avenge her son shortly after Wealhtheow has attempted to weave the ties of kinship on behalf of her sons. By contrast, women in Old Norse literature often incite men to vengeance or on rare occasions take vengeance themselves. Seen from the social world of the Anglo-Saxon hall, however, a maternal avenger can only be imagined as monstrous or subhuman, carrying the male hero to the threshold of death. The abjected mother returns, with a vengeance, to haunt the patriarchal stronghold. (PA)

717 **Andrew Galloway, Laʒamon's Gift**

Laʒamon's *Brut*, from a moment in English literary and cultural history whose sense of tradition is particularly difficult for us to comprehend—a century and a half after the Norman Conquest, at the beginnings of Middle English—has a notoriously complex relation to England's past and traditions. This essay focuses on how *The Brut* takes a traditional social and literary preoccupation in pre-Conquest England, the lordly gift exchange, and expands it to explore a new range of spiritual gifts (or deceptive claims to them), including professional knowledge, counsel to the powerful, and literary fame. This expansion of the gift corresponds to broad cultural shifts as well as to more topical matters in King John's reign, the probable period of the poem's composition. The poem fashions itself as a gift in these volatile terms, repeatedly embracing an unknown literary future while it accurately limns some fundamental new features of Middle English literature. (AG)

735 **Elizabeth Bearden, Painting Counterfeit Canvases: American Memory *Lienzos* and European Imaginings of the Barbarian in Cervantes's *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda***

I propose a new reading of the intersection of image and text as a site for re-workings of barbarian identity in Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's last work, *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda: Historia setentrional* (1617). Through

narrative manipulations of the half-barbarian character Antonio *el mozo*'s relation to painting, Cervantes crafts complex interrelations among American pictographic language, European alphabetism, and colonial models of barbarian identity to demonstrate the adaptability and ingenuity of indigenous people. I analyze the function of ekphrastic passages that reflect American pictographic language and demonstrate the influence of Mexican painting on the literature of the Spanish golden age. Descriptions of paintings in the *Persiles* ultimately provide a metafictional critique of European paradigms of graphic representation and challenge the authority of European colonial rationalizations of power dynamics in the New World. (EB)

753 **Wail S. Hassan**, Agency and Translational Literature: Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love*

In the space between translators and translated, there are texts that straddle two languages, at once foregrounding, performing, and problematizing the act of translation. They participate in the construction of cultural identities from that in-between space and stage many of the concerns of contemporary translation theory. I call such texts translational literature. While all bilingual and multilingual discourse dramatizes the interaction of languages, translational texts lay special emphasis on translation as an essential component of cross-cultural contact. As such, translational literature treats translation in several registers—formal, thematic, linguistic, and discursive—raising questions not only about technical aspects of linguistic transfer but also about cultural (un)translatability, discourses of difference, and ideologies of domination. This essay elaborates the notion of translational literature and offers the exemplary case of Ahdaf Soueif's *The Map of Love* (1999). (WSH)

769 **Mike Goode**, Blakespotting

This essay argues that our inability to map the circulation of William Blake's proverbs in contemporary Anglo-American culture is critically and politically instructive. Opening historicist literary criticism and reception study out to each other, I contend that mainstream citations of the proverbs today point the historicist critic to the radical political potential that Blake's poetic form possessed (but never successfully unleashed) in the original historical contexts in which Blake wrote. Understanding the proverb form and its centrality to Blake's poetry sheds light on how and why his work resists analysis through familiar literary-historical categories like text, corpus, reader, and reading formation. Recognizing this resistance clarifies in turn how, through its use of proverbs and proverblike sentences, his poetry constituted a heterogeneous regulatory challenge to the regulatory power of systems of laws—common, religious, and divine. (MG)