

Abstracts

- 455 **Jane O. Newman**, *The Gospel according to Auerbach*
 Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis* (1946) can usefully be read in the context of the Christian existentialist thought to which Auerbach was exposed during his years as a professor at the University of Marburg between 1929 and 1935–36. Specifically, placing Auerbach's account of Peter's denial of Christ as related in the Gospel of Mark in conversation with the work of Auerbach's Marburg colleague Rudolf Bultmann (1884–1976) helps us to understand Auerbach's indebtedness to Bultmann and to see *Mimesis* in new ways, as a project with a longer collaborative history that concerns not only literary "realism" but also the *dargestellte Wirklichkeit* ("represented reality") of the finitude of the human condition. Acknowledging the importance of early-twentieth-century Christian existentialism in Germany for Auerbach's work helps explain the affective hold that *Mimesis* has had on lay and professional readers alike. (JON)
- 474 **Matthew A. Taylor**, *Life's Returns: Hylozoism, Again*
 In the midst of the earth's sixth mass extinction, there has been a turn to the redemptive power of biological life in various new materialisms, neoanimisms, neovitalisms, and affirmative biopolitics. In this essay I outline a series of historical and conceptual cautions against staking our lives or others' on such reconsiderations of life. Exploring the fascination with hylozoism (the theory that all matter is alive) in turn-of-the-twentieth-century biology, philosophy, and fiction, I demonstrate a recurring link between theories of universal life and eugenic racism that troubles any attempts to base political and ethical norms on supposedly biological ones. An examination of Mark Twain's "Three Thousand Years among the Microbes" reveals an alternative philosophy of life that uncouples hylozoism and imperialism but does so at the cost of a deadening nihilism. Such examples suggest that we look elsewhere than to life for our animating principles. (MAT)
- 492 **Sara Kippur**, *Robbe-Grillet in America: The Nouveau Roman Meets the Language Textbook*
 How could American students of intermediate French be the catalysts for a work of avant-garde French literature? This article centers on *Le rendez-vous*, an intermediate French-language textbook that combined a novel written by the French New Novelist Alain Robbe-Grillet with grammatical exercises written by Yvone Lenard, a prominent textbook author and instructor of French in the United States. Focusing on previously unexamined archives of this publication, from its release in America to the publication of Robbe-Grillet's novel in France under the title *Djinn*, the essay reveals an unknown literary history of transnational collaboration and exchange and places new emphasis on Robbe-Grillet's formative involvement with American higher education during his literary career. Through close reading of manuscript drafts and publishers' papers, the essay demonstrates how the dynamics of global publishing and shifting trends in language pedagogy aligned to condition the production of what would become Robbe-Grillet's most commercially successful novel. (SK)

- 511 **Matthew Kilbane, A Speech-Musical Modernism: Harry Partch's Lyric Media**
Recent work at the intersection of literary history and sound studies has taught us to regard lyric poetry as a sonic medium in its own right, but what sort of medium is it? This article unfolds lyric's intrinsic intermediality by way of the American composer Harry Partch and his brief collaboration with William Butler Yeats. Rekindling Yeats's turn-of-the-century dream of a new art uniting word and music, Partch's experiments setting poetry to microtonal music involved notating the subtle melodies of speech with new scales and instruments—homemade lyres, in fact. Built to compete with the phonograph, these new-old media pressed lyric to its absolute limit as a symbolic medium, clarifying both lyric's intermediality and its sensitivity to technological change. When Partch, who spent several years as an itinerant “hobo” in the 1930s, transplanted his Yeatsian speech-music to the transient shelters of the Depression-era West and began notating migrant voices, this compositional practice heralded unprecedented possibilities for the literary inscription of speech. (MK)
- 530 **Sarah Wasserman, Ralph Ellison, Chester Himes, and the Persistence of Urban Forms**
This essay investigates the treatment of what I call infrastructural racism in fiction by Ralph Ellison and Chester Himes. Ellison's *Invisible Man* (1952) and Himes's Harlem Cycle novels (1957–69) chronicle vanishing urban objects and changing infrastructure to show that even as Harlem modernizes, the racist structures that undergird society do not. Ellison and Himes use ephemeral objects like signs, newspapers, and blueprints to encapsulate Harlem's transience and to suggest to readers that the neighborhood itself is a dynamic archive, continually changing yet resistant to overarching narratives of cultural loss or social progress. Himes and Ellison write about permanence and loss in mid-century Harlem in terms that disrupt the social realism associated with the novel of detection and the psychological realism associated with the novel of consciousness. Such a reading prompts a reconsideration of the critical categories—genre fiction and literary fiction—that have, until now, kept these two writers apart. (SW)