

Abstracts

1405 **Joseph R. Slaughter**, *Enabling Fictions and Novel Subjects: The Bildungsroman and International Human Rights Law*

With adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) in 1948, the United Nations conscripted, almost by default, the historically Euronationalist forms of the *Bildungsroman* and natural law to legitimate its vision of a new international order. This essay elaborates the conceptual vocabulary, deep narrative grammar, and humanist social vision that normative human rights law and the idealist *Bildungsroman* share in their cooperative efforts to articulate, normalize, and realize a world founded on the fundamental dignity and equality of what both the UDHR and early theorists of the novel term “the free and full development of the human personality.” Historically, formally, and ideologically, they are mutually enabling and complicit fictions: each projects, in advance of administrative structures comparable to those of the nation-state, an image of human personality and sociality that ratifies (and makes legible) the other’s idealistic vision of the proper relations between individual and society. (JRS)

1424 **John Bugg**, *The Other Interesting Narrative: Olaudah Equiano’s Public Book Tour*

This essay examines the pre- and posthistory of *The Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789). Opening with a reconsideration of Vincent Carretta’s influential claim that Equiano fabricated an African birthplace, I consider how Equiano’s strategies of self-fashioning inform his trail-blazing book tour of the British Isles in the early 1790s. If Equiano self-consciously designed his autobiography to become a best seller, his book tour performed the abolitionist manifesto that he was reluctant to put into print, as during his stops at cities and towns across the nation he worked to convert sympathetic readers into active abolitionists. Under the long shadow of the Pitt ministry’s suppression of political activism in the 1790s, Equiano formed alliances with working-class and radical figures in Britain and Ireland, drawing on Shakespeare’s *Othello* to develop a familiar public persona he could market during his book tour. (JB)

1443 **Russ Castronovo**, *Beauty along the Color Line: Lynching, Aesthetics, and the Crisis*

“What have we who are slaves and blacks to do with Art?” asked DuBois in his 1926 essay “Criteria of Negro Art.” In an era of lynching, art hardly seemed appropriate for political struggle. Nevertheless, DuBois and his colleagues at the *Crisis* risked making connections between lynching and art by putting aesthetics to democratic use even as the theatricality of ritualized violence gave lynching an aesthetic dimension. Starting with DuBois’s manifesto and reading in reverse chronological order every issue of the *Crisis* to its first issue in 1910, this article re-creates a critical narrative that traces the development of aesthetic theory among African American writers associated with the NAACP’s national magazine. Contextualizing DuBois’s work in the *Crisis* with fiction by Jessie Fauset and Walter White, I examine an alternative aesthetics that relies on propaganda to assail the ugliness of race relations. (RC)

- 1460 **Yung-Hsing Wu**, *Native Sons and Native Speakers: On the Eth(n)ics of Comparison*
 Why should comparison be an act laden with ethical obligation? Readers of ethnic literatures have long insisted that doing justice to these literatures must be a tenet central to work calling itself ethnic studies. I argue for a renewal of that sense of obligation: the difference of ethnicity is an occasion for articulating, juxtaposing, and reworking the relations among otherwise separate ethnic literary traditions. To the extent that difference follows a logic of intertextuality—one of crossing, exchange, and perpetual expansiveness—it enables reading ethnic literatures together even as it emphasizes the ethical difficulties of such a reading practice. From the disciplinary discourse of comparative literature to the metatextual commentary in Richard Wright’s “How ‘Bigger’ Was Born” and ultimately to the pragmatic context of an intertextual reading, this essay seeks to suspend ethnic difference from its position as a point of permanent untouchability. (Y-HW)
- 1475 **Joseph Metz**, *Austrian Inner Colonialism and the Visibility of Difference in Stifter’s Die Narrenburg*
 This essay reads the novella *Die Narrenburg* (1844; “The Castle of Fools”), by the Austrian germanophone writer Adalbert Stifter (1805–68), in terms of colonial and postcolonial theory. I argue that *Die Narrenburg* captures the moment when race becomes visible in a multinational Austrian Empire figured as inner colonial space. The novella also offers a challenge to the reality of race emerging into visibility and presents a strikingly modern picture of divided colonial consciousness, its desires suspended melancholically between the symptomatic maintenance of imperialist identifications and a sensitivity to the colonized that anticipates Frantz Fanon. The text thus exposes Hapsburg Austria as an unexpected symbolic locus for thinking about European racial and colonial discourse. It serves as a perceptive theorist of race and colonialism in a broad sense and suggests how we might read other seemingly peripheral works of central European literature for insights into intra- and extra-European colonial contexts. (JM)
- 1493 **Ramie Targoff**, *Traducing the Soul: Donne’s Second Anniversarie*
 Readers have long acknowledged John Donne’s lament for the decay of the world in the two *Anniversarie* poems commemorating Elizabeth Drury. What has not been acknowledged is the extent to which the second of these poems stages the reluctance of the soul to depart from the carcass of the earth so vividly depicted in the first. In *The Second Anniversarie*, Donne does something unprecedented in early modern literature: he gives voice to a soul that cannot bear to leave its earthly body behind. This essay argues that Donne represents a mutual longing between soul and body that stands in marked contrast to conventional Protestant depictions of the relationship between the two parts of the self. His explanation for such mutual longing, I contend, derives from his belief in the corporeal origins of the soul. (RT)