

Silvia Orlandini

Professional Women Artists in the Victorian Age: the New Woman as Musician in *The Whirlpool* by George Gissing"

Music played a distinctive role in the education of Victorian girls, but after marriage it was considered a dangerous distraction from traditional home duties. With their conservatory degrees, public appearances, and financial independence, *fin de siècle* female musicians embodied women's social advancement, but at the same time they were harshly criticised, as was every woman who attempted to enter the working world out of choice rather than necessity, threatening her reputation, health and family life, and jeopardising her class status by imitating men. This paper deals particularly with George Gissing's 1897 novel *The Whirlpool*, where the depiction of the aspiring violinist Alma Frothingham shows us all the difficulties and risks in trying to reach the spotlight for a Victorian female artist, as well as the author's (and his time's) contempt for such a behaviour.

Davide Finco

Rainer Maria Rilke and Jens Peter Jacobsen: *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge*

Rainer Maria Rilke is one of the most famous poets of the twentieth century. He is known above all for the poems he published in the last part of his life, i.e. the *Sonnets to Orpheus* and the *Duino Elegies*, but he already achieved a great success with his early works, like *The Book of Hours* and *New Poems*. Rilke described the great changes and contradictions of contemporary man living in great towns and his search for meaning. Most of his work consists of poems, but he also wrote a very peculiar novel, *The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge* (1910), about the life, thoughts and fears of a young Dane who lives in Paris, has lost his roots and considers his vocation as a poet. This book is a sort of diary, but it turns out to be a mixture of very different experiences, related to Malte's life in Paris, his childhood in Denmark and his opinions on some famous artists and historical characters, eventually leading to the real meaning of life: love without possession.

Many passages in Rilke's works and above all in his letters state the importance of Jacobsen's art. He was influenced not only by the style, but also by the themes and the world view of this Danish poet (1847-1885), who had begun his career as a scientist (a botanist), divulged Darwin's works in his country, and later showed his literary sensibility both in poetry and in prose: he wrote two novels, *Fru Marie Grubbe* (1876) and *Niels Lyhne* (1880), and six tales.

This paper is meant to analyse the close relationship between Rilke and Jacobsen's works, his image of the Dane, the development in his view of the poet and above all the influence that he had on Rilke's only novel, both in style and in content.

Cristina Torcutti

The Tropism of *Creoleness* in Jean Rhys's Continental Novels

Firmly grounded in postcolonial discourse, the paper attempts to unfold the undisclosed West Indian subtext of *After Leaving Mr Mackenzie* and *Good*

Morning, Midnight, the two novels set in Europe that Rhys wrote in the 1930s. Both texts are interpreted with reference to *Wide Sargasso Sea*, the writer's foremost overtly Caribbean narrative, along with its enshrined symbolic imagery, highly evocative of Antoinette's exoticism, as well as of her being bereft of any viable self. The paper also lends importance to some nineteenth-century ethnocentric and literary archetypes revolving around white Creole women. The analysis leads us to the conclusion that the very gist of that crippling sense of deracination which affects all of Rhys's heroines, rests on their Creoleness, namely on a Creole subjectivity which, poised as it is between black and white communities, is tainted with miscegenation, hence fated to endure an outright isolation.

Silvia Panizza

Double complexity in Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea*

Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* has been the object of several postcolonial and feminist critical readings. Taking those interpretations into account, this paper attempts to shift the focus to the psychological relevance of the socio-historical questions of slavery and female oppression for the two protagonists, Antoinette and Rochester. The apparent dichotomies male/female, black/white, sanity/madness, rationality/unconscious etc. are exasperated by the hero's "terrified consciousness" and result into the ghosts of womanhood, madness, blackness and magic through which he represent his wife. Antoinette's psychological evolution, on the other hand, is seen as a growing self-division into those artificial polarities, until in the end she finally accepts her inner inescapable and positive complexity. Such complexity is here seen as the principal upshot of the novel, in which an emotionalised and oneiric narrative blurs the boundaries and reveals the manifold nature of personalities and situations.

Alice Salvatore

Evil and Triangular Relationships in Paul Scott's *Raj Quartet*

The four novels forming Paul Scott's *Raj Quartet* (1966-75) are permeated by triangular relationships, which, analysed in the light of René Girard's mimetic theory, trace an especially intriguing pattern, where the villain of the tetralogy is implied. Five of the many triangular relationships of the novels are investigated, in order to reveal their status of *erotic* triangles. This interpretation is at variance with Ralph J. Crane's work on the same subject. In fact, these triangular relationships prove to be *homoerotic*. Although their mimetic intensity seems to be fading, only the feminine component, the alleged *object* of desire, loses importance in the eyes of the villain. Hence it is possible to draw the trajectory of the intensity of the villain's mimetic desire, progressively ebbing as he becomes more and more aware of his frustrated homosexuality. One viable explanation for the tormenting presence of triangular relationships in Scott's work lies in a correspondence between the author's and his character's (the villain Ronald Merrick's) secret homosexual drive, which accounts for Scott's own unbearable daily *mensonge romantique*.

Valentina Guglielmi

James Graham Ballard's *Concrete Island*

This paper aims to show that J. G. Ballard's "urban disasters trilogy" is based on the perpetual interaction between man and his context. The writer frequently combines the two components, building a very peculiar and recognizable narrative structure. *Concrete Island* is a paradigmatic case of this permeability. Ballard tells the apparently simple story of a man who crashes into an anonymous traffic island in the middle of an M4 intersection in London. The protagonist, a prisoner of this broken ground, undergoes a deep drastic change by prowling among ruins, debris and dropouts, discovering all the dynamics lying behind this forgotten and alternative world.

Anna Viola Sborgi

"Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori".

War and Militarism in Derek Jarman's films, from *War Requiem* to *Blue*

Issues of nationality and tradition are a recurring concern in the work of British filmmaker Derek Jarman, who often elaborates texts and works of art belonging to British cultural heritage to re-read the past in the light of an only apparently distant contemporary reality. This essay explores the images of war in Jarman's cinema: taking as a starting point his filmic realization of Benjamin Britten's *War Requiem*, it examines the way in which the different films deploy the contrast between the brutality of the war and the rhetoric use of the symbols of the Nation. Stereotypical values and roles associated with the imagery of war, in particular those connected to sexual identity, are deconstructed by the merging of different kinds of materials, from war footage, to home movies and fictional sequences. Through this complex representation Jarman connects the personal and the public, the brutally real and the idealised experience of war in an ongoing meditation on the role of the artist in relation to society and political commitment.

Chiara Benati

Sheep, Dogs, Whales: The Vocabulary of Nature in Medieval Juridical Faroe Texts

The legal text containing the special enactment (*réttabót*) for the Faroes issued in 1298 by the Norwegian Duke Hákon Magnússon constitutes one of the most important sources for medieval Faroese. This legal text is usually known as *Seyðabræv* ("Sheep Letter"), because it deals mainly with sheep farming. This paper provided a lexical analysis on the representation of the natural world and the animal population in the Faroe Islands, both in the *Seyðabræv* and in another, later, legal document containing a series of regulations about dogs in various villages (*Hundabræv*).

Enrico Torre

Word Order in the Harley Lyrics

This paper offers an analysis of word order in a sample of verses drawn from *The Harley Lyrics*, an important work of poetry of the Middle English period. The purpose of the present study is to discuss the distribution of the most frequent

word order patterns found in the most representative types of sentences within the chosen sample. In my investigation, I adopt a theoretical perspective close to the supporters of the theory of competition between grammatical structures (within the generative grammar framework), and in particular I follow the methodology used by Kroch and Taylor in some of their work on syntax in Middle English prose texts. The analysis of my data shows that VO is the prominent surface order, yet there is also a substantial remainder of the OV order inherited from Old English. These results support Kroch and Taylor's belief in an ongoing transition from the OV to the VO order in Middle English syntax, showing a high level of convergence between what is observed in the analysis of both prose and poetry.

Claudio Macagno

Bulat Okudžava, *ПОХОЖДЕНИЯ ШИПОВА, ИЛИ СТАРИННЫЙ ВОДЕВИЛЬ*: Two Translations Compared

This study is about the translation of the novel *похождения шипова, или старинный водевиль* by Bulat Okudžava (1924-1997). The Russian text has been compared to its two Italian translations in an attempt to account for why an important stylistic device in the original text – similes – has been rendered differently in the two translations. The analysis shows that the differences can be attributed to two basic types of factors: a) objective factors, such as a different focus on one of the components of the simile, or on one element which is related to this, or in case of polysemy on a different meaning, and b) subjective factors, based, for example, on the translator's personal style and personal preferences.

Daniela Longinotti

Problems of Legal Translation, German to English

Legal translation deserves close scrutiny, as it poses specific problems and difficulties. The main reason for the difficulties of legal translation lies in the untranslatability not of legal terms, but of legal concepts, in particular those pertaining only to some legal systems. This paper addresses the translation of three findings concerning sale with retention of title in German and English law. Besides giving a theoretical introduction to legal translation, the paper aims to suggest a strategy and a method to refer to when dealing with this type of translation. It highlights the different types of problems associated with legal translation from English to Italian, compared to those associated with legal translation from German, offering at the same time practical advice to solve them.

Roberto De Pol

Horror Symphony: E.T.A. Hoffmann and the Literature of Horror

This paper analyses the only vampire tale of E.T.A. Hoffmann, focusing on its effects and on a peculiar lexical pattern which allow us to see Hoffmann's vampirismus - although composed before 1821 - as precursory to modern horror literature.