当代外国文学

国家社科基金资助期刊

- 《露西》中的不可靠叙述与潜藏文本
- 苏格兰文艺复兴与苏格兰小说的多样化发展
- 以退为进
  ——论韦尔奇《印第安律师》中主人公的主观能动性
- 《安德鲁的大脑》解读：E.L.多克托罗访谈录

WINTER 2014
VOLUME 35
NUMBER 4
ABSTRACTS

Nihilism and Order Reconstruction in Joseph O’Neill’s Netherland
ABSTRACT: In Joseph O’Neill’s latest novel Netherland, the sport of cricket connects two immigrants from different ethnic backgrounds and functions as a means of order reconstruction in the post-9/11 era. From the perspectives of nihilism and identity theory, this paper contends that Joseph O’Neill’s “cricket strategy,” despite the possibility of failing in the face of nihilism and hegemony in contemporary America, symbolizes a utopian possibility of order reconstruction in the post-9/11 world.

Keywords: Joseph O’Neill, Netherland, 9/11, nihilism, order reconstruction
Authors: Zeng Gui’e <fowlerz@126.com> is an associate professor at the College of International Exchange, Shanghai University, Shanghai, China (200072), specializing in contemporary American literature and culture studies. Li Jingjing <sundaylj@163.com> is an MA student at School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai University, Shanghai, China (200444). Her research area is American literature.

Writing Historical Memories in Philip Roth’s Indignation
ABSTRACT: Indignation, one of Philip Roth’s representative works in the post 9/11 era, is unique in its exquisite composition of memory texts. Roth describes in detail the sense of helplessness in Marcus by way of the young man’s autobiographic memory as he lay dying in the 1950s. The novel also explores the extended impact of historical events on everyman’s life by depicting the psychological trauma of Marcus’s parents, especially his mother’s everlasting traumatic memory of her beloved son. It employs an anonymous heterodiegetic narrator to correct, as well as supplement, the unreliable memories of its characters, hereby bringing to light its historical truth and ethical implications.

Keywords: Philip Roth, Indignation, history, memory
Author: Piao Yu <piaoyu@jlu.edu.cn> is a professor at School of Foreign Language Education, Jilin University, Changchun, China (130012), specializing in American literature.

Reconciling the Conflicts between Ecological Ethics and Environmental Justice: Imagining Environmental Ethics in Linda Hogan’s Power
ABSTRACT: With environmental ethics, ecological ethics and environmental justice as its key conceptual tools, this article explores the environmental ethics presented in Linda Hogan’s Power. It argues that the novel, in which the protagonist Omishito witnesses Ama’s killing of the panther and the ensuing two trials on her, reveals the
conflicts between ecological ethics and environmental justice as well as their limited visions. By ending the novel with Omishito becoming Ama’s successor, Hogan advocates an environmental ethics that values care and stewardship, thus taking the position of weak anthropocentrism with its concern for both endangered species and disappearing peoples.

**Keywords:** Linda Hogan, *Power*, environmental ethics, ecological ethics, environmental justice

**Author:** Fang Hong <fanghong@nju.edu.cn> is a professor of English at School of Foreign Studies of Nanjing University, Nanjing, China (210023), specializing in American literature and culture studies.

**Narrative Structure and the Theme of Confinement in John Cheever’s *Falconer***

**ABSTRACT:** In *Falconer*, John Cheever establishes a unique narrative structure in which the exquisite details of the material world is explicitly revealed. It deals with the theme of confinement by means of expounding the main character Farragut’s perceptive feeling in the face of various kinds of incarceration. Cheever uses the motif of escape to symbolize man’s redemption from the journey of purgatory. For Cheever, the modern world is full of sin and crime, as elaborated in *Falconer*, and man must recognize his predicament and seek for atonement. The exploration of the theme of confinement demonstrates the author’s humanistic concern for contemporary American society.

**Keywords:** John Cheever, *Falconer*, narrative structure, confinement theme, escape motif

**Author:** Xiao Zhihong <931355655@qq.com> is an associate professor at Changsha Medical University. Her major academic interest covers American literature and translation studies.

**On the Ecological Vision of Lewis Thomas’s Science Writing**

**ABSTRACT:** The American science writer Lewis Thomas conveys a dialectical ecological vision through his essays in science. Emphasizing the symbiosis of natural beings, he argues for ecological holism and for the cultivation of an ecological conscience, which urges the coexistence and common prosperity of humanity and nature. By revealing the ties between social and environmental problems, he also advocates ideas of social ecology and propounds an ecological view of science and technology. The dialectical ecological vision has made his science essays excellent “green” works of literary non-fiction, indicating that science and technology, when properly used, can also promote eco-literature and participate in building a new eco-civilization.

**Keywords:** Lewis Thomas, science writing, ecological vision, dialectical

**Author:** Zhang Jianguo <scott523@126.com> is an associate professor at Centre for British and American Literature Studies, Zhengzhou University, Zhengzhou, China (450001), specializing in British and American literary non-fiction and ecocriticism.
Reading the Subtext: Unreliable Narration in Jamaica Kincaid’s Lucy

ABSTRACT: As a Caribbean-American woman writer, Jamaica Kincaid adopts first-person point of view to satirize white colonialism in her novel Lucy, a work often read politically as a prototype text of anti-racist feminism. A critical analysis of the narrative of Lucy nevertheless enables us to see two types of unreliable narration. One is the estranging unreliability which creates irony towards the narrator herself, for the narrator has lived too long in the shadow of colonial history to realize that the counter discourse of resistance has led her to indiscriminate rejection of love and beauty and, eventually, hindered her self-development. The other type of narration is the bonding unreliability, which means the narrative itself partly supports the postcolonial interpretation by exposing the chaotic life of the colonized and their internalized subordinate position in the white culture. Yet the novel repeatedly disrupts any fixed interpretative frame, encouraging the readers to go beyond racial and sexual politics for other possible interpretations. By reading the subtext in Lucy, this essay not only ventures another approach to the novel but also intends to rectify the dominant simplistic post/anti-colonial interpretation.

Keywords: Jamaica Kincaid, Lucy, unreliable narrative, subtext, fixed interpretative frame

Authors: Shen Changying <shenchangying@bfsu.edu.cn> is an associate professor at School of English and International Studies, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, China (100089), specializing in African-American literature, Caribbean literature, narratology, and urban and spatial studies. Wang Mianmian <wmm1988318@163.com> is a teacher of English in Zhejiang University of Media and Communications, Hangzhou, China (310018), specializing in American women writers, narratology and literary spatial studies.

Racial Hybridity and the American Dream:
A Review of The Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Reader

ABSTRACT: Basing his research on historical documents provided by the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, American Census, and DNA analyses, Henry Louis Gates, Jr. has published a bulk of essays and books focusing on racial, historical, and cultural issues, and has produced documentaries concerning African American individuals, their families and histories. His works consider questions such as where we are, how we got here and where we are going. A recent book, The Henry Louis Gates, Jr. Reader, collects representative writings of this leading African American critic, foregrounding his positive vision on racial hybridity and the American dream.

Keywords: Henry Louis Gates, Jr., racial hybridity, American dream

Author: Wang Yukuo <wangyk@njupt.edu.cn> is a professor of English at School of Foreign Languages, Nanjing University of Posts and Telecommunications, Nanjing, China (210023), currently working on the 20th-Century African American literary criticism.
Identity Performance in *The Buddha of Suburbia*

**ABSTRACT:** In *The Buddha of Suburbia*, Asian British writer Hanif Kureishi’s debut novel published in 1990, the main characters resort to identity performance to construct new identities for themselves and to combat ethnic prejudices and identity crises. Through identity performance, the first-person narrator Karim morphs from an emotionally perplexed second-generation immigrant to a successful actor in London, and his father Haroon is now respected by local suburban whites as the “Buddha”; and white man Charlie transforms from a lesser-known suburban singer to a successful rock-and-roll hero in New York. By narrating these success stories of identity performance, Kureishi seems to endorse Judith Butler’s theory of performativity in his ironical opposition to the essentialist conception of ethnic identity and in his insistence that ethnic identity is a cultural and political construct.

**Keywords:** Hanif Kureishi, *The Buddha of Suburbia*, identity performance, fluid identity

**Author:** Yin Xiaoxia <xxyin@scau.edu.cn> is an associate professor at School of Foreign Studies, South China Agricultural University, Guangzhou, China (510642), specializing in British and American literature.

---

The Cruel and Barbaric Game of “Terrible Boy”:
Sarah Kane’s *Blasted* and Postmodernism

**ABSTRACT:** The sexual narratives in Sarah Kane’s *Blasted*, having aroused great shock in the world of drama and criticism, visualizes the destruction of humanity and human morality caused by power and violence in the political context of postmodernism. The play aims to confront dehumanized sex and violence, to reveal people’s confusion and despair over existential dilemmas, and to reflect their helplessness when facing wars and violence in the post-modern society.

**Keywords:** Sarah Kane, *Blasted*, postmodernism, sex, violence

**Author:** Li Weimin <83517459@163.com > is a professor at Sichuan International University, Chongqing, China (400031). His research interest is in English literature and Shakespeare studies.

---

Performing Gender:
Drag Performance and Its Subversive Power in *Cloud Nine*

**ABSTRACT:** This essay uses Judith Butler’s concept of gender performativity to analyze drag performance and its subversive power in Caryl Churchill’s *Cloud Nine*. It argues that cross-dressing in this feminist play disrupts hierarchical power structure by interrogating gender and racial identities based on binary oppositions. The feminist ideas embodied in this play dovetail with Butler’s theory of gender performativity. Churchill’s political parody produces a Brechtian alienation effect to awaken subjectivity of the Other and deconstruct the system of “truth,” or binary opposition, of Western phallogocentrism.

**Keywords:** Caryl Churchill, *Cloud Nine*, drag performance, gender performativity,
Scottish Renaissance and the Diversity of Scottish Fiction

**ABSTRACT:** The Scottish Renaissance paved the way for prosperity and diversity of Scottish fiction. The paradoxical but comprehensive nature of Caledonian Antisyzygy was well represented in works of fiction during this period. What the Renaissance meant to fiction writers of the time lies more in literary personality and creativity than in political appeal of nationalism. Novels and short stories published at the climax of the Renaissance formed a defying contrast with the rural idealism of Kailyard fiction to represent, in various ways, Scotland’s national memories and the nation’s status quo. Scottish writers of later years have selectively inherited ideas of the Renaissance to achieve a breakthrough in Scottish fiction, featuring diversity in both form and content. This essay investigates fiction writing during the Scottish Renaissance and studies its influence on the diversity of contemporary Scottish fiction.

**Keywords:** The Scottish Renaissance, Scottish fiction, Caledonian Antisyzygy, diversity

**Author:** Lü Hongling <njlhongling@163.com> is a professor at School of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Nanjing Normal University, Jiangsu, China (210097). Her research interest is in British and American literature.

Approaching Ethnic Amalgamation and Culture Identity in *The Yellow Suitcase*

**ABSTRACT:** Marta Rojas is a journalist-turned-novelist who has been devotedly writing about the shaping of the Cuban nation and the colonial Cuban society. Her novel *The Yellow Suitcase*, based on the trafficking of Chinese indentured laborers in colonial Cuba, dramatizes the ethnic confrontation as well as amalgamation among white, black and yellow settlers to address the issue of Cuba’s cultural identity. With this novel, Rojas suggests constructing a Cuban national identity through tracing the cultural roots of Cuba as a nation.

**Keywords:** Marta Rojas, *The Yellow Suitcase*, ethnic amalgamation, cultural identity

**Author:** Ding Lifu <dinglifu@163.com> is an associate professor at Foreign Language Department of Huainan Normal University, Huainan, China (232001), specializing in modern and contemporary literature and translation theory.

Spatial Writing and Diaspora in Mavis Gallant’s “Overhead in a Balloon”

**ABSTRACT:** The Canadian writer Mavis Gallant has recurrently depicted diasporic individuals in Europe in her works of fiction. This paper employs Henri Lefebvre’s
space theory as a point of departure to analyze Gallant’s short story “Overhead in a Balloon,” which demonstrates her artistic representation of diasporic communities by defining spatial and psychological boundaries. She explores how Walter and Rober differ in their spatial identification, revealing the former’s restlessness and disillusion generated from the unfathomable gap between Paris as an artistic projection in narration and Paris as an economic center in reality.

**Keywords:** Mavis Gallant, space, diaspora, identity

**Author:** Huang Furong <frhuang@hit.edu.cn> is an associate professor at School of Foreign Languages, Harbin Institute of Technology, Harbin, China (150001). Her research focuses on Canadian literature.

---

**On the Construction of Spaces in Jean Giono’s Works**

**ABSTRACT:** As a writer deeply rooted in his hometown Provence, France, Jean Giono often reflects on human society through the depiction of nature. His works demonstrate intentional construction of spaces, natural and urban, lowland and highland, real and representational. This paper explores the means of spatial construction in Giono’s works, addressing issues such as the spatial experience of living, relationships between man and nature, and ways of integrating literary imagination and reality. These investigations aim to contribute to a better understanding of the art and artistic value of Giono’s writings.

**Keywords:** Jean Giono, representational space, Provence

**Authors:** Lu Xun <luxun_univ_suzhou@hotmail.com> is a Ph.D. candidate at School of Foreign Languages, Nanjing University, Nanjing, China (210023) and a lecturer at School of Foreign Languages, Soochow University, Suzhou, China (215006), specializing in French literature and semiotics. Zhang Xinmu <xmzhang56@163.com> is a professor of French at Nanjing University, Nanjing, China (210023), specializing in French literature and semiotic studies.

---

**Narrative Viewpoint and the Myth of Place in The Enigma of Arrival**

**ABSTRACT:** Concentrating on the rhetorical relationship between the character-narrator’s visual experience of different places (England, Trinidad) and the theme of disorientation in V.S. Naipaul’s novel The Enigma of Arrival, this paper explores how Naipaul reveals displacement as a cultural and psychological product of decolonization. Through a close reading of the narrator-character’s double focalization of the English landscape as a symbol of Englishness and the Caribbean as a primitive place for agriculture, this paper argues that Naipaul, instead of representing disorientation as a historical trauma that should be resisted by “writing back,” presents disorientation as a fruitful starting moment to recognize the historical construction of identity as positionality in fluidity. With shifting viewpoints between the past and the present in its narration, the novel creates a recurring spatial image of the journey as both geographical and intellectual, which reconciles Naipaul the man with Naipaul the writer, forcing him to recognize that what has been missed in his fantasy about England has actually made him the writer as he is.
**Keywords:** *The Enigma of Arrival*, narrative viewpoint, place myth, identity
**Author:** Wang Liya <wangliya@bfsu.edu.cn> is a professor of English literature at Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, China (100089). She has been teaching Anglo-American fiction and has published scores of articles on narrative form and its rhetorical significance with respect to the representation of gender and ethnicity.

**Women, Family and Culture in Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye***

**ABSTRACT:** As a leading African American woman writer in the contemporary world, Toni Morrison has made a great contribution to African American literature by representing in her works black females mostly ignored in the past. Her first novel *The Bluest Eye* analyzes the psychological life of African Americans, especially African American women, to reveal the mental persecution they suffered in a white-dominated society and the tribulations black families experienced for estrangement from the black culture and for habitual self-denial. Morrison thus sheds a new light on the African American quandary and suggests that the dominance of white culture has put black culture in crisis. The novel, by representing three black women and their families, examines the historical trauma of cultural erosion from various perspectives to argue that African Americans should maintain their ethnic culture while seeking for equal political and economic power.

**Keywords:** Toni Morrison, *The Bluest Eye*, cultural erosion, black female, family

**Authors:**
- Chen Xu <chenxu@hdu.edu.cn> is a professor at Foreign Languages College, Hangzhou Dianzi University, Hangzhou, China (310016), specializing in British and American literature.
- Chen Qianqian is a postgraduate student at Foreign Languages College, Hangzhou Dianzi University, Hangzhou, China (310016), specializing in American literature and American culture.

**Alice Munro’s Memory Writing**

**ABSTRACT:** Alice Munro’s stories partially originate from her own experiences and memories. This paper draws on memory theories to analyze how Munro’s short stories evoke and enliven a community’s collective memory, cultural memory and national memory through the sharing of personal memories, everyday memories and family memories.

**Keywords:** Alice Munro, memory writing, collective memory, cultural memory, national memory

**Author:** Ren Bing <bengrace@163.com> is a lecturer at School of Foreign Languages, Northeast Forestry University, Harbin, China (150040). Her major research area covers American and British literature.

**On the Definition of Culture**

**ABSTRACT:** Culture, a pivotal term in contemporary critical discourses, has yet to find a widely accepted definition for itself. Most statements about what culture is remain vague and ambiguous. Theoretically differentiating culture from custom, this paper addresses the issue of defining culture and argues that the term should not apply
to all actions and all phenomena of human society.

Keywords: culture, custom, comparative study

Author: Zhang Qi <zhangqi440x@sina.com.cn> is an associate professor at the Institute of Foreign Literature, Nanjing University, Nanjing, China (210093). Her research work focuses on Western literary theory and criticism, as well as British and American literature.

Reconstructing 20th-Century Russian Literature:

A Review of Wang Jiezhi’s A History of Modern Russian Literature

ABSTRACT: Wang Jiezhi’s recently published book A History of Modern Russian Literature, aims to provide an objective and accurate description of 20th-century Russian literature. Combining perspectives of social history, history of thoughts, aesthetics and arts, the book traces the trajectory of Russian literature’s evolution in time and expansion in space during the past century, updating literary historiography with solid scholarship and keen insight.

Keywords: Russian literature, literary criticism, literary history

Author: Xia Yuling <xyl_china@126.com> is a Ph.D. candidate at School of Chinese Language and Literature, Nanjing Normal University, Nanjing, China (210097), and a lecturer at Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology, Nanjing, China (210044). Her research work mainly covers comparative literature and world literature.

Kuprin Studies in 21st-Century Russia

ABSTRACT: New trends have emerged in Kuprin studies in Russia since 2000 despite the presence of traditional approaches to his works. With some previously little-known archives now available to the public, for one thing, researchers have conducted a more comprehensive study of Kuprin’s life and his creative process, fruitful especially in the study of his political writings and works he penned in exile. The new century has also witnessed an increasingly interdisciplinary tendency in recent Kuprin scholarship, showing influence by theories in such fields as culture studies, linguistics and comparative studies. The expanded horizon not only enriches Kuprin studies in Russia but also provides a valuable reference for one to read Russian classics in the new era.

Keywords: Kuprin studies, Russia, interdisciplinary, multiple perspectives

Authors: Yang Yubo <zhuoyayubo@126.com> is a lecturer at School of Slavic Languages, Harbin Normal University, Harbin, China (150025), specializing in Russian literature and translation studies. Gao Jianhua <gaojianhuanihao@126.com> is an associate professor at College of Liberal Arts, Harbin Normal University, Harbin, China (150025), specializing in world literature and comparative literature.