
Abstracts

David M. Bethea, Exile, Elegy, and Auden in Brodsky's "Verses on the Death of T. S. Eliot" 232

During the last three decades the in memoriam genre has come to occupy pride of place in the work of the exiled Russian poet Joseph Brodsky. Through his belatedness (which is not necessarily Bloomian), his permanent exile status at the edges of two empires, and his profound poetic speculations on death as the ultimate border crossing, Brodsky now embodies the elegiac tradition in his homeland as no one has since his high-modernist precursors, Osip Mandelstam and Marina Tsvetaeva. And yet—and herein lies his distinct contribution to Russian verse of this century—Brodsky has constantly sought out other, nonnative precursors to mediate the dead letter of his primary Soviet culture. In "Verses on the Death of T. S. Eliot" he adopts the "mourning tongue" of Auden's "In Memory of W. B. Yeats" while speaking of the death of Eliot in his own distinctive Russian elegy. In this way, not only does he keep "the death of the poet . . . from his poems," he keeps death from the door of his own ailing tradition. (DMB)

Peter Scotto, Prisoners of the Caucasus: Ideologies of Imperialism in Lermontov's "Bela" 246

Lermontov's "Bela" (the first part of *A Hero of Our Time*) is deeply connected to the realities of Russian expansion into the Caucasus during the nineteenth century. The mistreatment of the story's heroine, Bela, by its Russian heroes, Grigoriy Pechorin and Maksim Maksimich, has its roots in the culture and ideologies of Russian imperialism. (PS)

Andrew Wachtel, Resurrection à la Russe: Tolstoy's *The Living Corpse* as Cultural Paradigm 261

This essay explores the sociocultural ramifications of a literary theme—fake suicide and resurrection—in Russia through an analysis of Tolstoy's drama *The Living Corpse*. Written in 1900, the work illustrates Tolstoy's theory that a play must have a central thematic "knot." The knot Tolstoy chose was central not just for his play but for Russian culture in general. This knot engages four kinds of subtexts: it derives from a contemporary trial, it polemically attacks Chernyshevsky's notorious novel *What Is to Be Done?*, it marks a dialogue with the religious philosopher Fedorov, and it represents a development of ideas that Tolstoy had been exploring for almost fifty years. Subsequently, Tolstoy's reworking of the suicide-and-resurrection theme served as a point of departure for such twentieth-century authors as Mayakovsky, Erdman, Nabokov, and Bulgakov. (AW)

Lynn R. Wilkinson, *Le cousin Pons* and the Invention of Ideology 274

The questions raised by an early daguerreotype of a Parisian boulevard serve as the point of departure for a discussion of Balzac's *Le cousin Pons* and the famous definition of ideology in Marx and Engels's *German Ideology*. Taking issue with Walter Benjamin's essays on mechanical reproduction, I argue here that both works represent responses to the new technology that emphasize its critical potential. (LRW)

Elizabeth Langland, Nobody's Angels: Domestic Ideology and Middle-Class Women in the Victorian Novel 290

This essay focuses on a central strand of a complex process: the intersection of class and gender ideologies in an icon of Victorian fiction, the "Angel in the House," who

comprises and is constituted by her ideological other, the servant. A wife, the presiding hearth angel of Victorian social myth, actually performed an important and extensive economic function. Prevailing ideology held that the house was a haven, a private domain opposed to the public sphere of commerce; but, in fact, the mistress managed her husband's earnings to acquire social and political status and thus served as a significant adjunct to his commercial endeavors. Several discursive practices coalesced in the 1830s and 1840s to give middle-class women unprecedented power, so that running the bourgeois household became an exercise in class management, a process both inscribed and exposed in the Victorian novel. (EL)

Helen Sword, *Leda and the Modernists* 305

Read as a fable of divine inspiration, the myth of Leda and the swan offers a model of creativity that is both compelling and problematic; while it affirms the visionary poet's privileged position as mediator between a divine force and humankind, it does so only by insisting on the artist's victimization and feminization. Apparently well aware of this paradox, Yeats, Rilke, Lawrence, and HD, in their revisionary accounts of the myth, all foreground the dialectical relation between passivity and authority—between spiritual annunciation and literary enunciation—that informs their own, and indeed any, visionary poetics. At the same time, however, these modernist poets resist a strong identification with Leda herself, disassociating themselves from her role as victim even while seeking to participate in her revelatory “knowledge” and “power.” (HS)

William Lyne, *The Signifying Modernist: Ralph Ellison and the Limits of the Double Consciousness* 319

Recent critical variations on Du Bois's formulation of the African American double consciousness provide new ways of examining Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* in relation to both modernism and the double consciousness itself. Read next to texts like *The Art of the Novel* and *The Waste Land*, *Invisible Man* shows a “signifying” stance toward modernism. At the same time, Ellison's book performs a profound critique of such double-voiced strategies as signifying and the blues. (WL)

Kun Jong Lee, *Ellison's Invisible Man: Emersonianism Revised* 331

This essay elucidates Ellison's complex relation to Emerson, an issue that has not been adequately addressed in the criticism of the “most read” novel in the African American tradition, *Invisible Man*. Although in his fiction and critical writings, Ellison consciously claims his namesake's cultural vision, he sees the apparently universalist Emersonianism as circumscribed by an inherent racism that expels the African American from its sphere. Consequently the novelist affirms the promise of Emersonianism while neutralizing its racist aspect, resocializing its spiritualized premises, and reinterpreting its dogmatic implications. Ellison's appropriation and redirection of Emerson are especially manifest in his variations on the Emersonian senses of self-reliance, representativeness, and social organicism. Paradoxically, by “signifying” on Emerson's project, Ellison becomes a truer American scholar in the Emersonian tradition, which, by its internal logic, asks for critique and reinterpretation in each age. (KJL)
