

## Abstracts

- 299 **Robert Stilling, An Image of Europe: Yinka Shonibare's Postcolonial Decadence**  
 In 1891 Oscar Wilde argued that "Lying, the telling of beautiful untrue things, is the proper aim of art." A hundred years later, the Anglo-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare MBE takes up where Wilde left off, arguing that "[t]o be an artist you have to be a good liar." This essay explores how Shonibare reinvents Wilde's antirealism for a globalized, postcolonial world. Building on Leela Gandhi's notion of "interested autonomy," I argue that in works such as his 2001 photo series *Dorian Gray*, Shonibare turns to Wilde's aestheticism as a means of upending the relation between realism and politics found in Chinua Achebe's critique of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, rediscovering the disparate racial and sexual geographies at stake in Wilde's novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray* and in Albert Lewin's 1945 film version of it. Shonibare's postcolonial decadence, I argue, demonstrates how decadent aestheticism may become central to postcolonial imaginings of the real. (RS)
- 322 **Michael Collins, "Ali Even Motivates the Dead": The Pursuit of Sovereignty in Norman Mailer's *The Fight***  
 Norman Mailer was haunted by the specter of social death—a specter created for him by living as a Jew between the parentheses created by the Holocaust and the prospect of nuclear Armageddon. As an antidote to social death, Mailer sought its opposite—sovereignty within and beyond his writer's sphere. In the boxer Muhammad Ali, Mailer found an exemplar of the seizure of sovereignty within and beyond a sphere. *The Fight* chronicles the heavyweight championship battle between Ali and George Foreman in Zaire, a country treated like a private bank account by its dictator, Mobutu Sese Seko. I argue that Mailer regrettably failed to emphasize fully the fact that Zaire was exhibit B (the Vietnam War being the writer's inevitable exhibit A) in the case Mailer passionately made that the Cold War brutalized the American psyche. (MC)
- 337 **Benjamin Kohlmann, Awkward Moments: Melodrama, Modernism, and the Politics of Affect**  
 The modernist privileging of irony and detached contemplation frequently combined with a recognition of the social and artistic significance of affect. The relation between melodramatic structures of feeling and modernist innovation is evident in two plays of the interwar years: Bertolt Brecht and Elisabeth Hauptmann's *Happy End* and W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood's *On the Frontier*. Scholars need to develop a vocabulary that complements the customary critical emphasis on modernist "irony," "estrangement," and "difficulty" and that can be used to reconstruct the full force of the modernist uses of affect. Instead of estranging melodrama to make it palatable to an audience trained in high modernism, the negotiations between sentimentality and avant-garde aesthetics in *Happy End* and *On the Frontier* trigger a backward

dialectical movement in which the modernist rallying call to “make it new” blurs into the established patterns of melodrama. (BK)

353 **Olivia C. Harrison**, *Cross-Colonial Poetics: Souffles-Anfas and the Figure of Palestine*

From the mid-1960s onward, Moroccan, Algerian, and Tunisian writers have turned to the question of Palestine as a model of political and aesthetic innovation. Taking the Moroccan cultural journal *Souffles-Anfas* as an early, paradigmatic example of the literary turn to Palestine in the Maghreb, I argue that writers such as Abdellatif Laâbi and Abdelkebir Khatibi used Palestine as a springboard for “cultural decolonization,” reactivating global anticolonial discourses in order to articulate a relational, cross-colonial Maghrebi identity. Focusing on discussions of language, poetic form, and cultural autonomy, I show that Palestine served as a point of reference in debates on postcolonial Maghrebi culture. Without muting the ethical pitfalls inherent in representing a heterogeneous anticolonial struggle in a postcolonial context, I take this example of cross-colonial poetics as an invitation to rethink along multidirectional, transnational lines the way we approach Maghrebi and, more generally, postcolonial literature and culture. (OCH)

371 **Erik Gray**, *Come Be My Love: The Song of Songs, Paradise Lost, and the Tradition of the Invitation Poem*

The invitation poem, in which the beloved is urged to come away to an idealized place, is among the most enduring genres of European love poetry. The tradition begins with the biblical Song of Songs, which sets several important precedents: a dialogic framework, a close association of lover and landscape, and a sense of love as exile. Medieval and Renaissance invitation poems follow the Song of Songs but shift its emphases toward monologue, materialism, and importunity. Milton thus inherits a dual tradition of invitational poetry, both aspects of which figure prominently in *Paradise Lost*. Recognizing the traditional features of the genre therefore illuminates significant moments in the epic, including, notably, Eve’s final speech. The invitational tropes in this passage reveal how Eve reconceives of exile as homecoming and how she reestablishes a sense of radical mutuality with Adam by completing a dialogue that began before the Fall. (EG)