



Iłona Dobosiewicz

The Changing Canon of American Literature  
and the Question of American Identity:  
Over Half a Century of Debates and Controversies

The article discusses the ways in which political and cultural revolution in the 1960s together with such social practices as university open admissions and affirmative action have changed the canon of American literature. It presents the factors that have led to the broadening of the canon and argues that the evolving canon of American literature no longer constructs a teleological meta-narrative of a unified tradition but instead reflects the ways in which multiple traditions and cultures engage in a dialog and influence one another.

Keywords: literary theory, cultural theory

Ewa Goczał

Exits: Avant-gardisation as an Incentive to Canonization  
(the Case of Różewicz the Poet)

The article aims at determining the specificity of the canonical character of the poetry of Tadeusz Różewicz – one of the most important Polish writers of the 20th and the beginning of the 21st century. The perspective is that of continual canonization, corresponding to the multiplicity and dynamism of modern canons, and, eventually, to constant avant-gardisation. The study is divided into four parts relating to four aspects of Różewicz's transgression. The first part contains a general description of the postulated category of canonical character in the context of Różewicz's work; the second part describes the type of avant-garde characteristic of the author of *Exit*; the third is concerned with negative poetics. The fourth part sums up the issue by discussing the most recent selection of Różewicz's poetry – *Znikanie [Disappearance]* edited and with a commentary by Jacek Gutorow, himself a poet and literary scholar. The problem of paradoxical continuation based on variability, poetic tradition, and the strategy of external canonization of the writer is discussed resulting in the creation of a new canon of his poems.

Keywords: avant-garde, canon, contemporary poetry

Kamila Kowalczyk

Is Everyone Familiar with Hansel and Gretel?  
The Issue of Fairy Tale Canon on the Example of the Fairy Tales  
from the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* Collection  
by Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm

The article considers the problems connected with the idea of fairy tale canon, with attention to the fairy tales from the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen (Children's and Household Tales)* collection by Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm. Instead of a primary fairy tale or canonical

fairy tale, the author proposes a concept of a fairy tale module – an imaginary structure consisting of multiple versions of a single fairy tale which functions in various registers of production and reception (traditional culture, written culture, technological culture). The article also contains a discussion of the fairy tale re-narration based on the contemporary texts of culture which modify those fairy tales and which are well-rooted in collective imagination. The fairy tales basically work as constructs whose shape is determined by other texts of culture and various media (literature, film, comic books, etc.). The article also notes the economic dimension of Grimm's fairy tales which have been present in culture for over 200 years and which still remain subject to constant changes – the fact particularly apparent in the area of popular culture.

Keywords: cultural theory, literary theory, fairy-tale theory, genealogy, postmodernity

**Tomasz Gnat**

Canon – Ideology and Mechanics

The Question of Canon in Interactive Entertainment

The analysis conducted in the paper focuses on the role, the reason, and interpretations of canon in the medium of interactive entertainment. The notion of canon is analysed from two perspectives. In the first part, the author interprets canon as an ideological foundation and investigates the influence of such a structure on the problem of digital preservation. In the second part, the mechanical application of canon (understood as overarching narrative structure) is examined. The discussion focuses on the analysis of attempts at reconciling this fixed structure with the necessity to introduce interactivity, an innate characteristic of the medium in question. The author does not encourage or discourage any attempts to form a video game canon; he is rather interested in the actual results and reasons for forming such constructs. The aim of the analysis is not only to emphasise certain specific circumstances concerning the question of canon in this medium, but also to improve our understanding of the issue of canon in post-modern media.

Keywords: interactive entertainment, narration, preservation and protection of cultural heritage, canon

**Agnieszka Szczap**

Women's Education in the 17th- and 18th-century England  
and the Attempts at Surmounting the Canon

The paper focuses on the opinions of two women thinkers: Mary Astell (1666–1731) and Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–1797), whose modern views have been influential since the second half of the 20th century. The aim of the paper is to foreground the originality in their way of thinking against the background of philosophical views as well as social and cultural situation in the 17th- and 18th-century England.

Keywords: feminism, education, Mary Astell, Mary Wollstonecraft, cultural practice of 17th and 18th century England

## Patrycja Austin

### Jhumpa Lahiri's Impossible Canon

The article aims at examining the canonical categorization of Jhumpa Lahiri's works, the trajectory of which makes such a categorization difficult if not impossible to establish. The author also focuses on the positive and negative aspects of the emergence of the ethnic canon in the United States, especially on the political and economic facets of literary production. The analysis begins with the theories by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Edward Said, and Homi Bhabha, and proceeds to a more detailed examination of the ethnic canon by David Palumbo-Liu and Graham Huggan.

Keywords: literary theory, literary canon, postcolonial cultures, ethnicity, Jhumpa Lahiri

## Marcin Borchardt

### Viennese Actionism – Transgression as an Art of Social Negation

An act of creation, as a form of human activity whose aim is to bring new value into the world of art is of processual character. Transgression is one of many possible forms of this process. It is defined as a violent, radical, irreversible act of creation, an emanation of the artist's freedom which consists in disturbing, transgressing, and breaking social rules, laws, or cultural norms – willfully or not – in order to cause a certain artistic effect whose consequences are unpredictable and remain completely outside of the creator's control. In the second half of the 20th century, a group of radicals calling themselves Wiener Aktionsgruppe began to dangerously balance on the verge of crime. Art, based on the acts of transgression, acquired a role as a tool of social critique, a total negation of the values represented in the "society of dwarves," a resistance towards a dysfunctional reality. Aesthetic terrorism was a weapon of provocation, a manifestation of a revolt, an attempt to make any kind of change, or simply a distinct approach to aesthetic value. The paper analyses the creative attitudes of Rudolf Schwarzkogler, Günter Brus, Hermann Nitsch, and Otto Muehl, and the causes and consequences of their transgressions. The author also investigates the evolution of the reception of the Viennese Actionists as an example illustrating the dangerous process of getting accustomed to transgression in the course of a slow assimilation of all artistic extremisms inspired by political interest.

Keywords: Viennese Actionism, cultural anthropology, transgression, social critique

## Sonia Front

### "I'm My Own Grandpa"—Spatialization of Time in Michael and Peter Spierig's *Predestination*

Spatialization of time, that is, presenting time in the categories of space, measuring and rationalizing it, was a very significant social process at the end of the 20th century. The "spatial turn," as it is called by Fredric Jameson, is connected with a postmodern individual's immersion in a perpetual present. The separation of the individual from the past and the future, which has resulted in the deconstruction of the subject's temporality, was caused

by the processes characteristic of late capitalism. Spatialization of time in postmodernism expresses the integrity of space and time, the changing relations between them and their new conceptualizations. These changes are reflected in post-classical cinema that is quite often characterized by modular temporality. The plots of those films are divided into spatio-temporal modules whose order is rearranged into a non-chronological *syuzhet*. Simultaneously, those films depict multifaceted human experience of time and the temporalization of space. Michael and Peter Spierig's film *Predestination* (2014) blends the spatialization of time, characteristic of classical cinema, in which space and time are static entities, with post-classical nonlinear arrangement of the plot. Presenting space-time as static modules allows the directors to show subjectivity governed by the categories of space, rather than by the continuity over time. According to David Lewis, the identity of the protagonist, a time traveler, and his/her psychological continuity must be described by means of the differentiation between external time and personal time, because his/her identity relies on operating in spatialized time.

Keywords: space, time, spatialization of time, spatial turn, Fredric Jameson, Michael and Peter Spierig's *Predestination*, cultural practice

## Paweł Jędrzejko

Shapes of Time: Science – Literature – Reality  
(A Reflection upon Sonia Front's Quantum Consciousness)

The article offers a reflection upon Sonia Front's work oriented towards working out adequate intellectual instrumentarium to address quantum fiction: a phenomenon inspired by the philosophical ramifications of crucial developments in physics in the 20th and 21st centuries. Revolving around her recent monograph titled *Shapes of Time in British Twenty-First Century Fiction* (2015), the argument of the article aims at shedding light on how Sonia Front arrives at the postulate of a certain order countering chaos within a great hermeneutic circle: a wheel in motion, propelling the constant return from the quantum reality to the reality of discourse, a return in which the overwhelming General impacts the ungraspable Detail and the Detail decides about the shape of the General, the great hologram. Front does it in full awareness of the temporariness of such an order, but despite its transience, she decides to formulate an academic statement, to tell a „truth” about the world, time, and human experience: an experience that inescapably becomes her—and our—share. Presented in such a perspective, quantum consciousness, as postulated by Sonia Front, seems to offer a new promise for the research practice of contemporary scholarship.

Keywords: quantum mechanics, literary studies, quantum fiction, cultural practice, methodology

## Marta Dybowska, Adam Dyrda

By What Right Do Ships Sink?  
On W.K. Clifford's *The Ethics of Belief*

The article contains an introduction to the Polish translation of William Kingdon Clifford's famous essay *The Ethics of Belief*. It focuses on the Victorian origins of Clifford's thought and its relations to other major figures of the time. The historical elements are followed

by a reconstruction of Clifford's main points, including his major evidential thesis according to which "it is [morally] wrong always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence." The most fierce critic of Clifford was William James; his arguments are presented and briefly commented upon with regard to their contemporary relevance. Clifford is usually accused of radicalism by uncharitable readers and critics; the article proposes possible defence against such accusations.

Keywords: British philosophy, epistemology, William Kingdon Clifford, *The Ethics of Belief*, philosophical criticism, cultural practice