



ABSTRACTS AND NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

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**Presidential Address for IASA 8th World Congress
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*The Borders of the Border
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Laredo is located in the vicinity of the Rio Grande/Bravo, in many senses the epitome of the border, of the frontier, of the “limen” in its etymological sense of “threshold,” “doorway,” or “limit.” The general theme of our reunion was “Marginalia: The Borders of the Border,” and the contributions the IASA members made addressed this theme from multiple perspectives, thus leading to most enriching discussions about one of the most written about topics in the scholarship of the last few decades. Such a topic has rekindled new interest, especially in the light of the recent political transformations in many regions of the globe, which are leading to revived feelings of essentialist nationalism and its atavistic fears of the other, call it the immigrant, the dissenter or, if you want, the barbarian. It is happening in Turkey, it is happening in Poland, it is happening in Britain, it is happening in the US. In this context, borders and walls, both physical and ideological, are being erected once again. *Marginalia*, in turn, is a Latin term that in its origins referred to the inscriptions that monks and other amanuensis made on the empty space surrounding the body of text inscribed on a parchment. Romance languages are largely the product of marginal inscriptions on Latin manuscripts. Thus, the first manifestations of the Spanish language are found in the glosses that monks scribbled on the margins of those manuscripts to clarify and comment on words whose meaning was already obscure for the medieval reader, and those annotations were made in the new romance language, which was nothing but macaronic Latin. By extension, marginalia refers

to those writings that do not belong in the canonical body of works of a culture or civilization, and is close in meaning to apocryphal. Furthermore, it can be understood as referring to the interstices that exist between two or more cultures, nations, or religions. In our usage of the term, marginalia refers to those areas of the world that are populated by displaced or uprooted individuals, limbic spaces in which mere survival may become an illegal activity. The present address seeks to explicate the essence of the basic concepts underlying—and driving—the theme of the Congress.

Keywords: IASA, International American Studies Association, the future of American Studies, borders, limits, society, ethics, Laredo TX, marginalia, US-Mexico border, *Bordelands*, Anzaldúa, Melville, Bartleby, Frost, Cavafis, Frontier(s), Migration

Manuel Broncano Rodríguez (PhD Salamanca 1990) is a Regents Professor of English at Texas A&M International University. He is currently the president of the International American Studies Association (IASA). Before moving to Texas, he taught for two decades at the University of León (Spain). Broncano has published a number of scholarly works on various American authors such as Flannery O'Connor, Willa Cather, Faulkner, Melville, Poe, etc. His latest book was released in 2014, *Religion in Cormac McCarthy's Fiction: Apocryphal Borderlands* (Routledge). Broncano has also kept an active agenda as translator. His latest translation is Giannina Braschi's *United States of Banana* (*Estados Unidos de Banana*, AmazonCrossing 2014).

ALBERTO MOREIRAS

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Notes on the Illegal Condition in the State of Extraction How Not to Be an Informant

We live, increasingly, in a state of extraction. My thesis is that we have not yet figured out the implications of a primary or fundamental logic of state extraction. We have not figured out its implications for our own predicament—for the predicament, that is, not of state functionaries as such, not of extractors and surveyors, which is a predicament of domination, but the predicament of those who would rather not be dominated, and who understand that giving up on domination is the logical price to be paid. These latter figures, those who refuse domination, those who prefer not to be dominated, hence not to dominate, they might in fact constitute the “borders of the border,” that fantastic fringe territory of the human this conference has decided to thematize and, in some sense, to honor. Let me then reserve that theoretical position, the position of border or hyperborder dwellers, to develop what follows. I will claim that the border of the border is today the site where infor-

mation will not be shared—an opaque site of silence and secrecy, a place of radical reticence concerning unconcealment.

Keywords: the US surveillance state, state extraction, information, domination, border

Alberto Moreiras is professor of Hispanic studies at Texas A&M University, where he has had an appointment since 2010. Before that he was the Sixth Century Chair in Modern Thought and Hispanic Studies at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland (2006–2010), the Anne T. and Robert M. Bass Professor of Romance Studies and Literature at Duke University, where he taught from 1992 to 2006, and an assistant professor of Spanish at the University of Wisconsin–Madison (1987–92). At Duke Moreiras directed a program in Latin American Cultural Studies, the Center for European Studies, and an Interdisciplinary Seminar in Race in the Americas; in Aberdeen, he directed the program Literature in the World Context. He has been a visiting professor at Emory University, Giessen University in Germany, Johns Hopkins University, Federal University of Minas Gerais in Brazil, University of Chile, and University of Buffalo. His work focuses on contemporary political thought, Latin American cultural history, and subaltern studies. He has published over 110 essays, and his books include *Interpretación y diferencia* (1992); *Tercer espacio: Literatura y duelo en América Latina* (1999), *The Exhaustion of Difference: The Politics of Latin American Cultural Studies* (2001); *Pensar en la postdictadura* (2001), *Línea de sombra: El no sujeto de lo político* (2007). He has also published about ten edited monographic collections of essays in journals or multivolume works. He is coeditor of the Latin American section of a multivolume *Encyclopedia of Postcolonial Studies*. Moreiras has been involved over the years in the creation of three journals, namely *Nepantla: Views from South*, *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies*, and *Política común*. He is coeditor of the last two. He is also coeditor of *Res publica: Revista de pensamiento político*, and coeditor of a new University of Texas Press book series entitled “Border Hispanisms.” He created and runs the Facebook group *Crítica y Teoría*, and is a founder of the Texas Research Group on Luso-Hispanic, Caribbean, and Latino/a Thought. He is or has been a member of the editorial boards of an additional 20 publishing ventures, from *Diacritics* and *Cultural Studies* to *Traces* and *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos*. He is a frequent reader of manuscripts for five major US academic presses and routinely reads essays for a dozen journals beyond the ones already mentioned.

MARIETTA MESSMER

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The Netherlands*

**Children and Youth
Disadvantaged and Disenfranchised
by the Current US Immigration Regime**

Focusing on undocumented immigrant children who were brought to the US by their parents at a young age (the so-called 1.5 generation) and US citizen children living in irregular or mixed-status immigrant fami-

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lies, this essay argues that the current US immigration regime is too strongly adult-centered and in this way not only systematically disenfranchises immigrant children but also structurally disadvantages US citizen children living with at least one undocumented parent because the parent's irregular status in practice tends to extinguish the child's citizen status. Analyzing the US's current immigration regime through the lens of under-age youth can thus function as an enabling prism to highlight the extent to which current US immigration laws and policies collide with both national and international legal practices and produce inherently contradictory or paradoxical situations; it can throw into relief the extent to which children (even US citizen children) lack sufficient agency and voice in current US immigration law; and it can foreground the deleterial consequences of the current immigration regime's prioritization of deterrence and deportation for one of the most vulnerable segments of the US population for whom not even DACA can provide sufficient protection.

Keywords: irregular immigrant children, 1.5 generation, limitations of DACA, constructions of illegality, US citizen children's rights, family unity, best interest principle

Marietta Messmer is Associate Professor of American Studies at the University of Groningen (The Netherlands). Her publications focus on the political and cultural relations between the US and Latin America; Mexican and Central American migration to the US; gender and violence in the US-Mexican borderlands; as well as theoretical debates on human rights, citizenship, and integration. Her current research project examines the US's ways of outsourcing and privatizing immigration control measures and the social, economic, legal, and ethical consequences this has for specific migrant and refugee populations, in particular children and adolescents. Her book publications include several co-edited collections on inter-American political, social, and cultural relations, including, most recently, *The International Turn in American Studies* (2015, with Armin Paul Frank) and *America: Justice, Conflict, War* (2016, with Amanda Gilroy). Messmer is managing editor of the peer-reviewed book series *Interamericana*, devoted to publications on the literatures, cultures, and societies of North, Central and South America (Peter Lang Verlag). She also served as President of the Netherlands American Studies Association (2011–2014), as executive board member and treasurer of the International Association of Inter-American Studies (2009–2012), and as Dutch representative on the board of the European Association for American Studies (2009–2016).

ALICE BALESTRINO*Sapienza University of Rome
Italy***Placing Time, Timing Space
Memory as Border and Line of (Hi)Stories
in Richard McGuire's Graphic Narrative *Here*.**

This article interrogates the Cartesian understanding of time and space in narratives grounded in memorial endeavors. It focuses on the lines that define the interconnectedness between these two dimensions in relation to the introduction of the phenomenological category of memory as a third element providing a perspective on reality and blurring the borders between present and past; here and there. This composite, operative category is tested in the analysis of Richard McGuire's graphic narrative *Here* (2014) that, both on the level of the format and on that of the story, outlines the porosity and the ultimate disappearance of the spatiotemporal borders by means of memories. This work conceives of a historical simultaneity that soaks a particular space in its past and of the margins of contingency that separate what pertains to History, what to individual stories and what gets forgotten instead—a representation which is studied against the background of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's speculations on memory in *A Thousand Plateaus*.

Keywords: Spacetime as a narrative category, Richard McGuire, *Here*, the American border

Alice Balestrino is a PhD candidate in American literature at "Sapienza" University of Rome. She holds a BA and an MA in Modern European and American Literatures from the University of Turin. Her research focuses mainly on Holocaust fiction published in the aftermath of 9/11. She has published on Jewish-American Holocaust literature and post-memory: "Living in the Presence of an Absence. The Puzzling Holocaust Legacy of the American Post-Holocaust Generation" in *Ricognizioni. Rivista di Lingue e Letterature Straniere e Culture Moderne*; and "'Radiant Darkness Leaked out Through Her Crack:' Cracked Families and Leaking Trauma in Michael Chabon's *Moonglow*" in *CoSMo - Comparative Studies in Modernism*. She has also written on the literary genres of alternate history ("Alternate Geographies for Alternate Histories. The Diagonal Space in Michael Chabon's *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*," upcoming for *Iperstoria*) and dystopia ("From Atwood to Trump: Female Bodies in the Age of Political Reproduction," upcoming for *Costellazioni*).

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CHIARA GRILLI

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**The Canvas and the Maze
Deconstructing the Wall and the Frontier
in Contemporary American Science Fiction**

This paper analyses how Denis Villeneuve's movie *Arrival* (2016) and the TV series *Westworld* (2016) challenge the evocative symbol of the wall and the myth of the American frontier by turning them respectively into a canvas, conceived as the primal source of communication between two cultures, and a maze, metaphorically alluding to the search for new, inner spaces. Both works express the need for new forms of introspection and interaction with the Other, giving the individual the chance to wander through visionary predictions of the future and hallucinatory mirages of the past, and to re-build his/her own self-narrative.

Keywords: science fiction, wall, American frontier

Chiara Grilli is an independent scholar and was awarded her PhD at the University of Macerata (Italy) in April 2018 with a dissertation in Italian American and Diaspora Studies. She was awarded several international fellowships offered by associations such as EAAS and BAAS. She has published essays about Italian American writers, Opera, cinema, and TV series. She is also fondly interested in Science Fiction, comic books, and pop culture.

ANTONIO DANIEL JUAN RUBIO AND ISABEL MARÍA GARCÍA CONESA

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**The New School for Social Research
as a Patron of European Scholars**

The New School for Social Research was founded as an institution where intellectuals and artists could openly exchange ideas and theories, free from censure or political pressure. The school's founders believed that in a world engulfed by political turmoil and modern warfare, the free exchange of different ideas regarding politics, aesthetics and other intellectual pursuits was key to ensuring a just and sane world. Since its inception, The New School has maintained close ties with European ideas and philosophies of Rousseau, Kant, Goethe, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud, among many others. Sensing a dire need to provide safe haven for many of Europe's scholars and intellectuals, Alvin Johnson established a new graduate department in 1933 (coinciding with Hitler's appointment to German Chancellor), called the University in Exile. with the financial assistance of the Rockefeller Foundation and other

philanthropy groups, the University in Exile was founded as a new graduate division within The New School and, more importantly, as a rescue program. Nearly two hundred European scholars and professors received visas and teaching jobs in the US from the University in Exile. While many of them taught at The New School, there was never any stipulation from the University in Exile that they were required to do so. Alvin Johnson's main goal was simply to get people out of harm's way.

Keywords: European scholars, patronage, rescue program, interdisciplinary pursuits

Antonio D. Juan Rubio has a degree in English Studies from the University of Murcia and a PhD from the National University of Distance Education (UNED), being given the Extraordinary Doctorate Award. He is currently working as a professor at the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena in Spain. His main research interests include: cultural studies in the United States; gender issues associated with the role of women; the teaching of English from a historic perspective.

Isabel María García Conesa has a degree in English Studies from the University of Alicante and a PhD from the National University of Distance Education (UNED), being given the Extraordinary Doctorate Award. She is currently teaching in the Universidad Politécnica de Cartagena in Spain. His main research interests include: the role of women in the literature and culture of the United States, and the study of the history of the teaching of English.

FABRIZIO TONELLO

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**“We are sliding into uncharted territory, and we are alone in this”
A New Look at Political Disorientation**

In the United States and in European democracies most citizens feel disoriented when required to vote, as shown by high electoral volatility, reduced turnout, and the successes of unconventional candidates, or brand-new parties. The purpose of this article is to look at political disorientation under a new angle, as a phenomenon that has striking similarities with the physical disorientation created by an alien landscape.

Keywords: disorientation, political communication, political participation, political parties, neoliberalism

Fabrizio Tonello is an Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Padua. As Fulbright scholar, he taught at the University of Pittsburgh and was a visiting fellow at Columbia University. His main research interests are neoliberalism, the his-

tory of the American political system, and political communication. His most recent books are *Desolation Row* (Fondazione Feltrinelli, 2017) and *La Costituzione degli Stati Uniti* (Bruno Mondadori, 2012).

CARLO MARTINEZ

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**"The thin delights of moonshine and romance"
Romance, Tourism, and Realism in Hawthorne's *The Marble Faun***

Hawthorne's involvement with the logic of the tourism of his day is a key aspect of his development as a fiction writer. Starting from a discussion of the early sketch "My Visit to Niagara" the article argues that the discourse of tourism, with its protocols and practices, is for Hawthorne a fertile breeding ground and conceptual framework for the elaboration of a new rationale and a new aesthetic for the fiction writing he calls "romance." It then explores how tourism resonates in the romance which takes it as its central thematic concern: *The Marble Faun*. Hawthorne's last completed long work of fiction represents a moment of artistic and personal crisis for the author, who finds his notion of romance writing caught in a sort of double bind created by the touristic nature of his stay in Italy. As the plot of the novel suggests, in his efforts to extricate himself from the situation, Hawthorne, envisioned and experimented with a new kind of writing that led him to revise and alter radically the romance form he had previously elaborated in favor of a much more realistic style of fiction.

Keywords: Nathaniel Hawthorne, tourism, Italy, *The Marble Faun*, romance, realism

Carlo Martinez is professor of American literature at the Università "Gabriele d'Annunzio," Chieti-Pescara, Italy. Author of two books and several essays and articles, he has worked mostly on nineteenth-century US literature and on the relationship between literature and tourism. His most recent publication is an article on E. A. Poe, "'The heresy of The Didactic': Poe, the Literary Field, and the Aestheticization of the Market," which appeared in *Arizona Quarterly*.