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Artikel

MARZENA SOKOŁOWSKA-PARYŻ

Diagnosing Discourse: Poetry and Cancer in Peter Reading's *C* 1

Abstract: The paper proposes to analyze Peter Reading's *C* (1983), an entire poetic collection devoted to cancer and the ways of speaking about cancer. The significance of this work has been largely underestimated by critics, frequently hostile to Reading's innovative attitude to poetry, yet the collection remains unprecedented in its ambitions to highlight both the potential and the danger of any attempt to contain cancer within a chosen discursive structure, be it scientific or literary. The analysis of Reading's collection is embedded in a theoretical frame constituted by Susan Sontag's *Illness as Metaphor*, Michel Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*, Jacques Revel and Peter Jean-Pierre's "The Body: The Sick Man and His History," and Clifford Geertz's "Ideology as a Cultural System." The thematic axis of the collection is constituted by the history of the poet-narrator's illness, though the narrative also includes stories of other cancer patients, as well as fragments from medical journals and dictionaries. The characters in the collection are distinguished not by individual personality traits but by the distinctive language in which they express their predicament. In relation to language that attempts to appropriate disease, Reading creates a fundamental opposition between poetry (health and life) versus prose (illness and death). This distinction explains why the narrator, who has cancer, chooses the form of prose units in order to express his predicament, but also "tries out" various poetic forms which constitute his desperate hold on life. Reading draws a similarity between the hospital surgeon and the poet – the former dissecting human bodies, the latter dissecting poetic kinds and poetic meter. Reading's narrator becomes ultimately the surgeon-poet, carrying out his experimentations in "amputated" rhetoric. It is precisely in this quest for a more down-to-earth, prosaic poetry that Reading is truly an inheritor of the war poets – in the case of both war and cancer, poetry must sacrifice its figurative potential, because any type of linguistic de-familiarization of cancer destroys the true nature of the illness.

PETER KRAHÉ

'Living on a woman': Zum Verständnis der Geschlechterrollen
in sozialkritischer Literatur der Zwischenkriegszeit 19

Abstract: This article examines conflicts of gender relations during the interwar period in Britain. It centres on a discussion of Walter Greenwood's successful novel *Love on the Dole* (1933) as a representative case study of working-class coping strategies in the face of unemployment and dearth. While the interwar period has sometimes ambiguously been named *The Age of Illusion*, even *The Long Week-end*, the 1930s with their consistently high unemployment rates in the industrial north have been termed *Devil's Decade*, *Pink Thirties*, or, quite plainly, *The Hungry Thirties*. Gender relations could not remain unaffected by these constraints on everyday life: Whereas it had been a commonly shared view in the working classes that the husband had to be the breadwinner and the wife's place was at home, these established gender roles could no longer be taken for granted. Increasingly, they were reversed: Men who lost their jobs stayed at home, while their wives went out to work to support the family. As a result,

notions of gender identity, self-respect, and morality had to be redefined. British rearmament and the outbreak of the Second World War created a fundamentally different prospect by mobilizing the entire workforce of men and women alike. The resulting full employment provided a precondition for Labour's postwar welfare state, which brought with it a return to traditional gender roles by the 1950s.

MARIANNE FLASSBECK

Infiltration statt Konfrontation: Weibliche Komik in
Sylvia Townsend Warner's *Lolly Willowes* 35

Abstract: With reference to the theoretical controversy about gender-specific humour this essay intends to explore the various expressions of female humour in Sylvia Townsend Warner's novel *Lolly Willowes*. On the understanding that the established studies of humour have traditionally been studies of male humour (without being defined as such) and so have either disregarded or belittled female humour, this essay illustrates how the subversive tendencies of female comedy have worked out comical effects different from those of male writings, and consequently require different standards of criticism. In *Lolly Willowes*, a novel which continuously oscillates between realism and the imaginary, the obscure laughter accordingly manifests itself as 'giggling' and therefore (in the terms of Plessner) marks an indefinable 'space between.' The reader's comic sensations, stimulated by this muted laughter, originate less from the traditional effects of comedy such as burlesque comparisons, or the comical effects of the unexpected, but much rather from a thrilling and tickling awareness of insecurity.

HANS OSTERWALDER

Dreamscapes: Harold Pinter's *The Room* and Franz Kafka's
"Auf der Galerie" 53

Abstract: The kinship between Pinter and Kafka is patently obvious and has been pointed out by numerous critics, the dreamlike quality of the texts of these two masters of menace and mystery being one of the aspects of their work on which there is a critical consensus. Therefore Freud's trail-blazing early work *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900) provides tools for shedding light on some of the obscurities of the two writers. This essay picks out Pinter's first play *The Room* (1957) and Kafka's short story "Auf der Galerie" (1917) to demonstrate that the basic dream mechanisms of displacement and condensation are the creative principles underlying these two surrealist texts. The Lacanian angle of these two concepts is taken into account, but the reading stops short of Lacan's radical conclusions about the 'free-floating signifier' and 'impassable primordial difference.' The other extreme avoided here is the neat Freudian pigeon-holing indulged in by some early psychoanalytical critics. Freudian concepts do contribute to an understanding of this kind of text, but there is always a residue of ambiguity.

WALTER C. METZ

Breaking the Cycle: *Die Another Day*, Post-Colonialism,
and the James Bond Film Series 63

Abstract: This paper develops a post-colonial reading of the latest James Bond series entry, *Die Another Day* (2002), a film directed by Lee Tamahori, the New Zealand artist most famous for his international art cinema hit, *Once Were Warriors* (1994). The paper argues that the film shifts away from the colonialist ideological position of the Cold War-era films in the Bond series. This argument is supported by two methodologies derived from critical theory. First, the film is read intertextually against *Once Were*

Warriors, the Cold War Bond films, and the academic literature on these films. Second, since the film's villain is a North Korean colonel who has become Caucasian through a radical surgical procedure, Richard Dyer's approach to whiteness studies is used to assess the film's surprising position on racial difference.

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