

Contributors

MASSIMO BACIGALUPO, head of DISCLIC (Department of Linguistic and Cultural Communication Studies), Università di Genova, served as AISNA President 2001-2004. He contributed several entries to the *Ezra Pound Encyclopedia* (Westport Ct.: Greenwood Press, 2005), and provided new versions of American writers (James Merrill, Robert Lowell, Amy Lowell, Kenneth Koch et al.) for the 200th issue of *Poesia*, devoted to "400 Poets of the 1900s" (December 2005).

MARINA COSLOVI teaches English and American literature and culture, and translation, at Università di Venezia "Ca' Foscari." She graduated there in 1992 with full marks and honors, and in 2000 she completed her Ph.D. with a dissertation on Italian translations of Dorothy Parker. She has published articles on Washington Irving, Thomas Pynchon, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, American culture in postwar Italian women's magazines and Italian translations of American writers in the 1930s and 1940s.

INGE DORNAN graduated from Girton College, Cambridge in 2001, mentored and supervised by Betty Wood, and has since taught American and Caribbean history and literature at a number of academic institutions (Warwick University, University of East Anglia, Oxford University and, presently, Brunel University). She has recently published articles on American women and slavery, and women's work and early American industrialization. She is currently working on a monograph of women and slavery in colonial America.

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BERNDT OSTENDORF, Professor (em.) of North American Cultural History at the Amerika Institut, University of Miinchen, Germany, has published *Black Literature in White America* (1982), *Die multikulturelle Gesellschaft: Modell Amerika?* (1995), *Transnational America. The Fading of Borders in the Western Hemisphere* (2002). Areas of interest include the cultural history of immigration; the politics of (ethnic) difference, multiculturalism and public culture; American popular culture and the culture industry; New Orleans and American music.

CECILE ROUDEAU currently teaches American literature and translation at the Ecole normale supérieure in Paris. She has written on 19th- and 20th-century New England and regionalist women writers. Most recently, she has translated and annotated Sarah Orne Jewett's *The Country of the Pointed Firs*.

UGO RUBEO is an associate professor of American literature at Università di Roma "La Sapienza". He has published widely on African American poetry, both in Europe and in the U.S., and his book *L'uomo visibile* (Roma, 1990) was the first comprehensive study on the subject to appear in Italy. He has devoted a number of essays to E. A. Poe, and is the author of a book on *The Narrative of A. Gordon Pym* (2000). Other publications include a study on the cultural relationship between the U.S. and Italy (*Mal d'America*, 1987) and a variety of essays on Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Bellow and Auster, among others. He has devoted several papers to Henry James, and has translated into Italian *The American Scene* (Milano, 2001).

MARY JO SALTER is Emily Dickinson Senior lecturer in the Humanities at Mount Holyoke College and Vice-President of the Poetry Society of America. She is co-editor of *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* (fourth edition, 1996, and fifth edition, 2005). Her first play, *Falling Bodies*, premiered at Mount Holyoke College in the fall of 2004. Her five books of poems, all published by Knopf, are: *Henry Purcell in Japan* (1985), *Unfinished Painting* (1989; winner of the Lamont Prize); *Sunday Skaters* (1994; nominated for the National Book Critics' Circle Award in Poetry); *A Kiss in Space* (1999); and *Open Shutters* (2003; a New York Times Notable Book of the Year). She is also the author of a children's book, *The Moon Comes Home* (1989). She has been awarded residencies at Bogliasco (Italy) and at The MacDowell Colony (NH). At present she is writing lyrics for Fred Hersch for a staged song cycle, *Hold Still!* (See *New York Times*, 22 February 2006.) She lives with her family in Amherst, Massachusetts.

CINZIA SCARPINO has recently completed a doctoral dissertation devoted to "Whale and Waste. Reading *Underworld* by Don DeLillo through *Moby-Dick*" at Università degli Studi di Milano. Her main fields of research have been American twentieth-century short-story writers (Ernest Hemingway, Sherwood Anderson, Raymond Carver, Grace Paley), and contemporary authors with a New York focus (Don DeLillo, Paul Auster). She is currently working on "catastrophic imagination" in American culture.

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CINZIA SCHIAVINI is "assegnista di ricerca" at Università degli Studi di Milano. She graduated in 1997 in American Literature with a dissertation on Henry Roth and J.D. Salinger, and she received a Ph.D in 2002 with a thesis on space symbols and American geographies in Herman Melville's novels. She is currently working on a research project on contemporary American travel writing.

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Abstracts

MARINA COSLOVI, *James and Victor Carpaccio: The Horizontal and the Vertical in Art*

The paper investigates the theme of the Vertical and the Horizontal in Art by examining James's relation with Vittor Carpaccio, an artist he extols in the "Venice" essay (1882) in *Italian Hours* by declaring that "there is something ridiculous in talking of Venice without making him almost the refrain," but of whom, surprisingly, readers find no trace in James's Venetian fiction. The Horizontal in Art — the depiction of the tangible world — is treated in relation to the vertical religiosity of Carpaccio's art, which becomes in James the transcendent dimension of the art of writing. Since James's love for Carpaccio was deeply influenced by John Ruskin's "discovery" of the same painter, the paper focuses also on the influence of the elder writer's works on James's view of the lagoon city and its art.

INGE DORNAN, *The Rise and Fall of Womanhood: Ideal and Reality in Women's Status and Experience in the Colonial Low Country*

This essay explores the ways in which the ideal and reality of womanhood in the colonial Low Country shaped the contradictory status of women in Georgia and South Carolina, promoting their independence and empowerment and simultaneously undermining their capacity as women to fully exercise it. Historians have traditionally divided their analyses of colonial women between those who achieved a relative degree of social and economic independence (Elizabeth Anthony Dexter, 1931) and those who did not (Mary Beth Norton, 1988). This study suggests that such neat dichotomies fail to disclose the complexity of women's status and experience in colonial Georgia and South Carolina. In both colonies, white women were perceived as vulnerable and dependent on men; but they were also expected to work alongside them to build the socio-economic foundations of the Low Country. Women cleared land, bought and sold slaves, managed farms and established businesses. And contemporaries fully supported them in their endeavours. The ideal and reality of womanhood in the Low Country thus shifted between raising women's socio-economic status (vertically) and, concomitantly, retreating from the full implications of this by insisting on feminine codes of conduct and behavior that limited their scope of influence and power. By embracing women's active role in the family and market economy, however, Low Country society disclosed the limits of patriarchal ideology in maintaining women's powerlessness and dependency.

BERNDT OSTENDORF, *A Nation with the Soul of a Church? The Strange Career of Religion in America: A View from Europe*

American religiosity is a mystery to most Europeans. The difference derives from several historical contradictions: The founding myths of America were pre- and post-millenarian, based on predestination and on progress. Whereas the European revolutions stood opposed to religion, the American did not. While the First Amendment forbade the establishment of religion, it guaranteed each citizen the free exercise thereof. Though America became the spearhead of modernization (and hence, Max Weber would argue, of secularization) the lure of religious freedom made it the home to all "dissenting faiths of Europe" and to an indigenous religious revivalism. In short, the very separation of church and state caused the enormous flowering of religion in the free market of popular opinion.

CECILE ROUDEAU, *Crossing the Voice, Crisscrossing the Text: Writing at the Intersection of Prose and Poetry in Sylvia Plath's "Sunday at the Mintons"*

"Sunday at the Mintons" ushers Sylvia Plath into the world of letters as a virtuoso story-teller and an acerbic poet. Horizontal by necessity, her prose is dishevelled by the stubborn assaults of a poetical urge that questions its linearity and challenges its laws. Spatializing the dialectics between genre and gender, the narrative pits Henry Minton against his sister Elizabeth, the down-to-earth, matter-of-fact brother against the fanciful extravagant spinster who dreams of floating into the blue. It behoves *her* to space out the narrative line, cut the tether between words and things and, within the story's cracks and the breaches of the symbolic, to release writing from the ponderous demands of referentiality. But amidst these cracks, a voice tentatively emerges which cannot hold as it yields again to the weighty conventions of the referential, the *diktats* of a humdrum linearity. Plath's early story not only questions the grounds for reading, it also defies the sense of an ending. Racked by doubt, crossed by its inner contradictions, "Sunday at the Mintons," this article argues, stages the ceaseless transactions between the demands of the story genre and the temptation of an unfettered poetic reverie, permitting, for the first time in Plath's career, the surfacing of "a voice of her own," however crossed, at the intersection of the vertical and the horizontal.

UGO RUBEO, *Taking the "Organic" View: the Vertical/Horizontal Crux in Henry James's The American Scene*

The four sections of *The American Scene* devoted to New York present the reader with a highly contrasted account of the city's urban renewal, which Henry James deeply resents. The clash between what James sees as an exasperated modernity, and the receding memory of the old town is dramatized through an insisted opposition between images of vertical and horizontal expansion used as a paradigm of the conflict that individual commercial aggressiveness is waging against a rapidly vanishing sense of social concern. James's critique of modern urban planning's subservience to interest and greed is countered by his effort to develop an organic view of the city context as a way to reestablish the preeminence of a strong social ethos.

CINZIA SCARPINO, *After The 25th Hour: Perspectives on David Benioff's Novel*

The aim of this paper is to consider David Benioff's novel *The 25th Hour* (2000) and the film version directed by Spike Lee (2002) in the light of their New York setting, examining how the intersection of the two space-time axes — the horizontal and the vertical — can be related to the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center. Whereas the representation of the horizontal cityscape comes along with hope and dream, the vertical direction entails a catastrophic image of New York City. The paper suggests that Benioff's and Lee's rendering of pastoral projections and cataclysmic pulls (through the use of representative strategies that hark back to Modernism) can be viewed as latter-day versions of abiding American obsessions: the fear of impending chaos as related to the outburst of social struggles that has always loomed large within U.S. urban culture and sociology, climaxing during the Gilded Age and in the 1920s and 1930s.

CRISTINA SCATAMACCHIA, *Horizontal and Vertical Themes in Joan Didion's Memoir Where I Was From*.

The paper analyzes *Where I Was From*, by Californian journalist and novelist Joan Didion, as well as a number of autobiographical essays and interviews. Published in 2003, the book is a complex and challenging text, partly a memoir of her family's pioneer past and partly a reassessment of the history of California. It is a kind of bookend to Didion's earlier musings on her native state and it investigates horizon-

tal themes (the pioneers' crossing of the American continent as well as the author's personal crossings, that is, her recurrent moves back and forth between California and New York) and vertical themes (the role of the federal government as the main cause for social and political change in California from the Gold Rush to the present). Such horizontal and vertical themes, intersecting both Didion's life and her books, emerge here through the description of her ambivalent, often painful, relationship with a set of specific Western ideas that over the years she has come to reject, and through an endearing recollection of her family past, including her women ancestors.

CINZIA SCHIAVINI, *Writing the Land: Horizontality, Verticality, and Deep Travel in William Least-Heat Moon's PrairyErth*

This paper focuses on the meaning of horizontality and verticality in William Least Heat-Moan's *PrairyErth* (1991). Part travelogue, part ethnographic research, Heat-Moan's text explores the history and geography of Chase County, a region of 733 square miles and about 3,000 citizens in the middle of the Flint Hills, Kansas. Starting from the concept of "deep travel" that *PrairyErth* embodies, the paper examines the construction of vertical and horizontal cultural maps, related to the synchronic/diachronic reading of space enacted by the author. The essay is set out in three main sections, that investigate the theme of individual and collective memory, the opposition between European and Native American cultural cartographies, and the relation between open/closed geographies and open/closed textual spaces.

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