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Editorial

The first issue of the *Journal of American Studies of Turkey, JAST*, came out in May 1995. It was very well received locally and internationally. We have had much encouragement from colleagues, which makes the problems that have to be surmounted seem less colossal. We are especially happy that the journal is acquiring an international character already. The present issue contains essays from authors of different nationalities stationed in various parts of the world. At a time when "American Studies" as a discipline is being restructured, and in certain cases, only newly being formed, we would like to hope that *JAST* can make a contribution of its own.

This issue contains nine articles. The first four articles address multiculturalism from various perspectives, followed by an article treating an ethnic theme. The next one discusses an issue of political philosophy. The subsequent four are basically literary studies, yet they bear political overtones in the aspects of the works they are discussing.

"Multiculturalism and Humor" discusses the complicated relation of humor to multiculturalism in the US. Its author, David Espey, lived and taught in Turkey as a Fulbrighter and the essay bears the marks of his stay.

"Chinese-American Cinema Today," by Douglas W. Cooper, an American scholar teaching at present in China, is an informative essay discussing the recent emergence of Chinese-American filmmakers in the US, correcting with their cinema the Hollywood-produced negative image of the Chinese.

In another informative essay focusing on the cinema, "Hollywood UK: UK's Hollywood," Laurence Raw, a British scholar currently based in Turkey, compares and contrasts the images of the British and the Americans in their reciprocal cinemas from the 1920s to the 1990s.

"Jasmine or the Americanization of an Asian," by Gönül Pultar, discusses Asian-American woman writer Bharati Mukherjee's 1989 novel. The essay argues that Jasmine, while revealing the social and cultural tensions inherent in the process of Americanization of a first-generation Asian immigrant, constitutes a harsh critique of present-day mainstream America.

Lale Demirtürk's article, "Black Woman's Selfhood in Alice Walker's *Possessing the Secret of Joy*" analyzes the plight of the black woman reflected in the 1992 novel. The subject of *Possessing the Secret of Joy* is female circumcision as practised in Africa. In Walker's pen, this controversial topic becomes a heavily charged symbol in an intricate quest for identity, and an act representative of all kinds of mutilation and enslavement women have undergone throughout the ages. Focusing on the psychological impact of the ritual of genital mutilation, Demirtürk argues that the black woman's struggle to acquire a "selfhood" forces the need to change the ritual itself.

Paul Jerome Croce discusses William James's cultural stance and the cultural constructions of his theoretical formulations concerning republican ideology in "From Virtue to Morality: Republicanism in the Texts and Contexts of William James." Croce's essay is part of a revival of interest in the philosopher in the US. However, it holds another interest as well. Those in Turkey who lament that the erosion of the values of the early Turkish Republic accelerated in the eighties and escalated toward the mid-nineties will read with interest Croce's argument that as "virtuous and luxury-fearing republicanism dissipated or even gave way to enterprising capitalism and self-interested individualism" in the US, James responded by developing as remedy what he termed "morality," a compromise between "the best of religious and scientific perspectives." The question which follows is whether James's solution is universally valid and applicable or not. We are expecting your comments, to be published in the next issue.

Semiramis Yaşcıoğlu's "Language, Subjectivity and Ideology in 'A Rose for Emily'" is a textual analysis of William Faulkner's short story. Critical of monographs concentrating on the female protagonist of the story, Yaşcıoğlu turns her attention instead on the narrator, and brings new insight as well as a novel interpretation to a well-known work. Yaşcıoğlu's application of linguistic criticism to such a familiar work provides the occasion of seeing theory put into practice.

Another essay focused on language is Nick Selby's "Fascist Language in *The Adams Cantos* of Ezra Pound." Selby demonstrates how the poet, while believing that the American Revolution should be seen as a "text" for a twentieth century cultural revival, turned in *The Adams Cantos* toward an authoritarian discourse of history. Pound's manipulation of language for his own ends, in effect, lays bare his political position during the 30s and the affinities of his poetic art with Mussolini's fascism.

Peter J. Grieco's "Swirling Voices: Considerations of Working-class Poetic Property" will have certain readers feel a tinge of nostalgia, as they recall "the good old Cold War years" when anything worth the attention of the intelligentsia had to involve the issue of the working-class. Grieco's essay, arguing that the "terms" of "working-class" poetry are much more extensive and familiar than believed, is a welcome corrective to the current body of criticism, universal in its trend,

highlighting race and gender at the expense of class, as well as one of the nascent signs that a reversal is not too far.

With this issue we are initiating two new sections: book reviews and film reviews. We hope to maintain as large a scope as possible for both book and film reviews and are expecting contributions of reviews as well as essays.

We end with a conference report on the American Studies seminar in Antalya in November 1995 and a call for papers for our fourth issue.