

## Journal of American Studies of Turkey

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### Editorial

The Modern Language Association has accepted, for its coming convention in Toronto, a panel on the "Literature of the United States in Languages other than English." This means that, under the aegis of that august temple of learning, texts in languages other than English will be discussed as "American Literature." Following identical panels, at the past March 1996 EAAS meeting in Warsaw and the scheduled one at the October 1996 ASA meeting at Kansas City, such a development completely ruptures the traditional "English major" concept, already much pre-empted of its significance and conventions with the advent and proliferation of American Studies. It is also one of the many new trends that make American Studies such an exciting field today, enabling young scholars to venture on hitherto untrodden paths, and affording sophisticated scholars the joy of tracking down material, as well as that of reconceptualization, which is what scholarship is truly about. These trends and the new directions in the field are also manifest in other venues, especially electronic. American Studies pedagogy, the structuring of the American Studies canon, and the necessity and/or possibility of internationalizing American Studies are only some of the topics of lively debates on h-amstdy, the American Studies discussion group on the Internet. **Crossroads**, the American Studies project on the World Wide Web, by offering as wide an overview as possible, also reflects the vibrancy of American Studies.

*JAST* is proud and excited to be contributing, however slightly, to the enterprise of remapping American Studies. Its electronic publication is at present the only electronic American Studies journal and has been listed on **Crossroads** as one of twenty outstanding American Studies projects on the World Wide Web (Finlay). This is not without its drawbacks: it has given us a sense of responsibility of keeping up and if possible, trying to be better, especially at a moment when American Studies seem to require a perspective that can only be provided from outside of the US and away from established platforms.

We are happy that scholars around the world are sharing our enthusiasm and have been sending manuscripts that demonstrate that *JAST* does have a place and function within American Studies. To follow the pattern initiated with our first two issues, we are publishing nine of these.

Our first article, "A Multidimensional Theory of Colonialism: The Native North American Experience" by Duane Champagne, arguing for a theory which approaches colonialism from the perspective of the colonized, is an important

statement. We believe that in time it will be a much-cited essay, transcending in essence the Native American experience on which it is based.

Our second article, "John Dewey in Turkey: An Educational Mission," by Ernest Wolf-Gazo relates Dewey's experience in Turkey and his advices for reforming Turkish education. The essay argues that Dewey's ideas are paradigmatic for all developing societies and as relevant today as they were during his lifetime. However, it is also a statement on the American experience, and on the difference(s) between Europe and America.

In our third article, "The 1996 Presidential Election and Populism: Some Readings," Paul Levine discusses a topic of current interest and, with great insight, brings a much-needed perspective to an event, the dynamics of which may not be totally intelligible to those outside the US.

Our fourth article, "Cultural Studies in the United States and Multiculturalism" by Meyda Yeđenođlu, is a critique of the present state of the discipline. It is a powerful synthesis of the diffuse and disparate current debates on cultural studies and their relationship with post-colonial criticism.

Our fifth article is an interview. We hope, in future issues, to continue featuring interviews of prominent scholars. We start the series with the *doyenne* of American Studies scholars in Turkey, Professor Neclâ Aytür. Conducted by Ayşe Kírtauç, one of her former doctoral students, the interview sheds light on the beginnings of American Studies in Turkey.

The next four essays are basically literary studies. "Sam Shepard's *States of Shock: Nihilism in Political Drama*," by Aslý Tekinay, discusses the celebrated playwright's somber message and appraisal of current American society in the play in question. The essay demonstrates how Shepard renders his view through the use of nihilistic elements.

Serpil and Michael Oppermann's "The Novel as Performance: The Example of Raymond Federman" examines the writer's novels to argue that these have been written in what they call "the performatory mode." The essay provides an illuminating insight into literary creation that far transcends Federman's works, while at the same time offering exegesis of his fiction.

Our next essay, "Time as Thematic and Structural Element in William Faulkner's 'The Bear'" by Erinç Özdemiş, analyzes the dual function of time in one of the writer's best-known short stories. Discussing the place of memory in it, the essay indicates how "The Bear," although situated in a specific region-the American South- is ultimately about the significance of Time in the life of human beings.

As has become the tradition, this issue ends with an essay devoted to poetry. Ekaterini Georgoudaki's "African American Women Poets: Resisting Sexual Violence," discusses both the sexual violence depicted by the poets and the potent retort that their poetry constitutes. The essay demonstrates how the iconoclastic poetic language of the poets serves as a means of protest and fight against the sexual violence black women have been subjected to for centuries.

### **Works Cited**

Finlay, Jeff. "Crossroads Workshop I: Using the World Wide Web." <http://www.georgetown.edu/crossroads/workshop1.html>. May 1996.