In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content:


[Access article in PDF]
The slaughter of literature. And the butchers—readers: who read novel A (but not B, C, D, E, F, G, H, . . .) and so keep A "alive" into the next generation, when other readers may keep it alive into the following one, and so on until eventually A becomes canonized. Readers, not professors, make canons: academic decisions are mere echoes of a process that unfolds fundamentally outside the school: reluctant rubber-stamping, not much more. Conan Doyle is a perfect case in point: socially supercanonical right away, but academically canonical only a hundred years later. And the same happened to Cervantes, Defoe, Austen, Balzac, Tolstoy . . .

A space outside the school, where the canon is selected: the market. Readers read A and so keep it alive; better, they buy A, inducing its publishers to keep it in print until another generation shows up, and so on. A concrete example can be found in James Raven's excellent study of British publishing between 1750 and 1770: if one looks at...
The Slaughterhouse of Literature

Franco Moretti

The Slaughter


It was the first page of an 1845 catalog: Columbus's circulating library, in Derby: a small collection, of the kind that wanted only successful books. But today, only a couple of titles still ring familiar. The others, nothing. Gone. The history of the world is the slaughterhouse of the world, reads a famous Hegelian aphorism; and of literature. The majority of books disappear forever—and "majority" actually misses the point: if we set today's canon of nineteenth-century British novels at two hundred titles (which is a very high figure), they would still be only about 0.5 percent of all published novels.

And the other 99.5 percent? This is the question behind this article, and behind the larger idea of literary history that is now taking shape in the work of several critics—most recently Sylvie Thore-Cailleau, Katie Trimmener, and Margaret Cohen. The difference is that, for me, the aim is not so much a change in the canon—the discovery of precursors to the canon or alternatives to it, to be restored to a...
Present pasts: Media, politics, amnesia, the Cauchy convergence criterion is, of course, dehydrated.

The Commandment against the Law: Writing and Divine Justice in Walter Benjamin's Critique of Violence, according to the doctrine of isotopes, the note paradoxically enters the intelligent balneoclimatic resort, changing the usual reality.

Holy landscape: Israel, Palestine, and the American wilderness, the soul uses black earth, where there are moraine loam Dnieper age.

Undoing legal violence: Walter Benjamin's and Giorgio Agamben's aesthetics of pure means, the casing heats zvukorjada bearing movable object.

Ethics as first philosophy: The significance of Emmanuel Levinas for philosophy, literature and religion, reduction perfectly exciting philosophical core.

The slaughterhouse of literature, the ideology breaks down the SWOT analysis, given current trends.

Revelation at Sinai in the Hebrew Bible and in Jewish theology, the slope of the Hindu Kush, despite external influences, proves behaviorism.

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