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ASOCIACIÓN ESPAÑOLA DE ESTUDIOS ANGLO-NORTEAMERICANOS
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70 años de Estudios Ingleses en la Universidad española

En 2022 se cumplen setenta años de la Orden de 2 de octubre de 1952 (*B.O.E.* 6 de octubre, rectificada *B.O.E.* 9 de octubre), por la que se organizaban con carácter provisional los estudios de Lenguas Modernas (francés, inglés, alemán e italiano) en la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la Universidad de Salamanca, dando inicio de forma ininterrumpida a los Estudios Ingleses en la Universidad española. El aniversario es especialmente singular. Setenta años abarcan tres generaciones académicas completas, solapadas en el tiempo, que han hecho posible el tránsito desde la puesta en marcha de una mínima organización docente e investigadora hasta la madurez que ha alcanzado la Filología Inglesa en España, a través de los múltiples escenarios políticos e históricos que esta contribución intenta hilvanar. Aunque aquí se presentan unos pocos datos y pinceladas de forma cronológica, estas páginas no pretenden dar cuenta de la historia de los estudios ingleses en nuestro país; esta solo podría concebirse hoy día de la misma manera en que se ha formado, como un gran mosaico, una obra colectiva, que aglutine diversas maneras de entender y escribir la historia.

1. Los primeros años (1952–1967)

El inicio de los Estudios Ingleses en la Universidad española se produjo con bastante retraso frente a otros países europeos (Engler y Haas 2000; Monterrey 2000, 2003a y 2003b). Antes de 1952, el inglés figuraba en el plan de estudios de algunas carreras, sobre todo de ingenierías y Escuelas de Comercio, como asignatura orientada a la lectura y traducción, o como requisito de ingreso o egreso (Monterrey 2003a, 75-78). Esta enseñanza podía ser proporcionada por los Institutos Universitarios de Idiomas. Por otra parte, en 1932, durante la Segunda República, se aprobó un plan de estudios de Lenguas Modernas para poner fin a la falta de formación del profesorado de idiomas en enseñanza secundaria (Monterrey 2003a, 72-74). Aunque este plan no se llegó a implementar debidamente, daría lugar a la Licenciatura en Filología Románica en 1944, la cual a su vez proporcionó el marco curricular para la nueva especialidad en Lenguas Modernas en la institución salmantina.

La Orden de 2 de octubre podría entenderse como otro síntoma de la tímida apertura cultural del franquismo en la primera parte de los cincuenta,[1] en un contexto de bloqueo internacional y asfixia financiera. Si bien en 1952 España y Estados Unidos iniciaron conversaciones diplomáticas que conducirían al importantísimo acuerdo militar de 1953, la creación de los nuevos estudios no parece haber sido motivada por asuntos de política exterior. La iniciativa fue impulsada por el ministro de Educación Joaquín Ruiz-Giménez, el secretario de Universidades Joaquín Pérez Villanueva, ligados a los sectores más progresistas del franquismo, y por el filólogo Antonio Tovar Llorente, Rector de la Universidad de Salamanca (Monterrey 2000, 39). El preámbulo de la Orden destacaba el retraso histórico en ofrecer "deseable y conveniente formación científica de nuestros futuros profesores de Lenguas Modernas." No obstante, esta determinación afrontaba no pocas contrariedades tal y como expuso Emilio Lorenzo en su intervención durante el IV Congreso de AEDEAN (Salamanca, 1980), reproducida en *AEDEAN News Bulletin* (2002). A la resistencia y detractores dentro y fuera de la universidad (Lorenzo 2002, 58-59), venían a sumarse el bajo nivel idiomático del alumnado (60), el rango inferior del profesorado de idiomas en secundaria en comparación con el de otras materias como lenguas clásicas (58, 59), y la disparidad entre la elección mayoritaria del inglés en las universidades y la escasísima oferta de este idioma en secundaria (60).

Los nuevos estudios en Salamanca se acomodaron dentro de la Sección de Filología Románica como ensayo para la creación de una Sección independiente. Por esta razón, el primer año de la nueva especialidad (es decir, el tercer año de carrera) solo variaba en la enseñanza teórica y práctica de dos idiomas a elegir entre alemán, inglés, francés e italiano, excepto la combinación de estos dos últimos por ser los propios de la Licenciatura en Románica. La docencia fue impartida por profesorado extranjero. El informe preceptivo del balance del primer curso fue muy positivo en lo académico, pero se solicitaba financiación para adquisición de fondos bibliográficos, material de laboratorio de fonética y habilitación de nuevos espacios docentes (Ramos Ruiz 2007, 213). Sin embargo, según Lorenzo, "la respuesta de los alumnos ante el anuncio de los nuevos estudios no fue demasiado entusiasta," quizás porque se veía como "una licenciatura de segunda categoría" (2002, 59).

En 1953, también de forma provisional, y "sin plan de estudios aprobado" (Lorenzo 2002, 59), se creó la Sección de Lenguas Modernas en la Universidad de Madrid y se elevó a definitiva—al igual que en Salamanca—por el Decreto de 9 de julio de 1954 (*B.O.E.* 29 de julio) que detallaba, además, ambos planes de estudios. El catálogo de asignaturas del de

[1]Sobre asuntos relacionados con nuestros estudios en las primeras etapas del franquismo, véanse los libros de Jacqueline Hurtley sobre Josep Janés, gran difusor de la literatura inglesa (1992), y sobre Walter Starkie, primer Director del British Council cuando la institución abrió su sede en Madrid en 1940 (2013).

Madrid diseñaba un modelo formativo altamente especializado en Estudios Ingleses.[2] El plan de estudios de Salamanca mantenía el formato inicial, pero se eliminaron muchas asignaturas de lengua y literatura española en la reforma del año siguiente (O. de 18 de junio de 1955, *B.O.E.* 7 de julio),[3] cuya oferta de dos idiomas se mantendría en el nuevo plan aprobado por la Orden de 18 de junio de 1968 (*B.O.E.* 20 de julio). Estos dos primeros planes de estudios dan idea de la enorme diversidad curricular de nuestra disciplina en las distintas universidades durante la primera andadura.

El Decreto de 9 de julio de 1954 sirvió de base para la creación de la Sección de Filología Moderna en Barcelona (Decreto de 17 de junio de 1955, *B.O.E.* 5 de julio). Solo se autorizó la implantación de los idiomas alemán e inglés, y se fijó el comienzo a partir del curso 1956; pero la Orden de 22 de agosto de 1955 (*B.O.E.* 17 de septiembre) no solo aprobó el plan de estudios de la especialidad,[4] sino que adelantó el comienzo para ese mismo curso 1955-1956.

En Zaragoza, por la Orden de 21 de marzo de 1957 (*B.O.E.* 24 de junio), se creó lo que se denominó "orientación de Humanidades Modernas" dentro de la Sección de Historia. Al igual que en Salamanca, se estudiaban materias de lengua y literatura de dos idiomas a elegir entre alemán, francés, inglés e italiano, y se completaba con asignaturas de historia medieval y moderna, geografía regional y cursos monográficos organizados por la Facultad.

La administración tardó en dotar profesorado numerario. Las plazas de nuestros primeros catedráticos se crearon en la Universidad de Madrid. Emilio Lorenzo Criado, que se había encargado de organizar los estudios en la Universidad de Madrid, obtuvo la Cátedra de "Lingüística Germánica (especialmente inglesa y alemana)" (O. de 23 de julio de 1958, *B.O.E.* 5 de septiembre) y, tres años después, Esteban Pujals Fontrodona fue nombrado catedrático propiamente en "Lengua y Literatura Inglesa" (O. de 26 de junio de 1961, *B.O.E.* 20 de julio). Emilio Lorenzo, al tiempo que rememoraba la incertidumbre, "los apuros, estrecheces y contratiempos de los primeros años," subrayaba que"[t]odos, alumnos y profesores, estábamos iniciando una aventura histórica sin tener la más remota idea de las intenciones ministeriales en cuanto a la continuidad de la nueva política de apertura cultural, que resultó ser cicatera y lenta, más en cuanto a las universidades que en cuanto a los Institutos" (2002, 59).

No obstante, los Estudios Ingleses habían arraigado definitivamente en España, y lo hicieron con extraordinaria pujanza. Santoyo y Guardia dan cuenta de las primeras becas de la Fundación Fulbright (Comisión de Intercambio Cultural entre España y los Estados Unidos de América)[5] y de las primeras tesis doctorales (1982, 10), de las nuevas cátedras, agregaciones y adjuntías (11-12),[6] y de la primera revista, *Filología Moderna* (9-11, 155-61), para las cuatro nuevas disciplinas. A finales de 1967, se había implantado Filología Inglesa en las Facultades de Filosofía y Letras en los doce distritos que por entonces vertebraban el mapa universitario español, ya que el Ministerio había priorizado nuestros estudios sobre otras lenguas modernas.

Paralelamente, el interés por aprender idiomas se disparó en los sesenta. La Escuela Central de Idiomas de Madrid, creada en 1911 y única institución que otorgaba titulación oficial en lenguas vivas, solicitó en 1960 la modalidad de matrícula libre para satisfacer la enorme demanda de estas enseñanzas. Con la finalidad de descongestionar el centro, que había superado las seis mil inscripciones, se crearon Escuelas Oficiales de Idiomas en Barcelona, Valencia y Bilbao en 1964 (*B.O.E.* 13 de octubre) y, por idénticas razones, en Alicante, La Coruña, Málaga y Zaragoza en 1968 (*B.O.E.* 14 de enero de 1969).

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[2]Plan de estudios de 1954 en la Universidad de Madrid, con indicación del número de horas semanales. Tercer curso: Gramática general 3 h., Crítica literaria 3 h., Lengua inglesa (I) 3 h., Introducción a la lingüística indoeuropea 3 h., [Literatura inglesa (I) 3h.], Literatura española (I) 3 h.
Cuarto curso: Lengua inglesa (II) 3 h., Literatura inglesa (II) 3 h., Lingüística anglosajona 2 h., Geografía de las Islas Británicas 2 h., Geografía de los Estados Unidos 2 h., Historia de Inglaterra (I) 2 h., Cultura e instituciones inglesas (I) 2 h., Literatura española (II) 2 h.
Quinto curso: Lengua inglesa (III) 3 h., Literatura inglesa (III) 2 h., Literatura norteamericana 2 h., Lingüística inglesa 2 h., Historia de Inglaterra (II) 2 h., Historia de los Estados Unidos 2 h., Cultura e instituciones inglesas 2 h., Cultura e instituciones de los Estados Unidos 2 h., Arte inglés 2 h.
[3]Tercer curso: Curso práctico de una lengua, Curso práctico de otra lengua, Historia de la literatura española, Fonética y fonología, un Curso de los de libre elección.
Cuarto curso: Curso práctico de la primera lengua, Curso práctico de la segunda lengua, Historia de la literatura de la primera lengua, Historia de la literatura de la segunda lengua, Gramática española, un Curso de libre elección, primer Curso complementario de la primera lengua (gótico).
Quinto curso: Curso práctico de la primera lengua, Curso práctico de la segunda lengua, Historia lingüística de la primera lengua, Historia lingüística de la segunda lengua, Historia de la lengua española, segundo Curso complementario de la primera lengua (historia de la literatura inglesa).
[4]Resultan novedosas en este plan de estudios las asignaturas de Lingüística comparando el inglés y el alemán con el español, y otras más específicas como "Inglés de América," "Filología holandesa y flamenca" y "Filología escandinava."
[5]A principios de los setenta comenzó el Programa de Cooperación Cultural entre España y los EEUU (1970-1976) que tuvo su continuación en el Comité Conjunto Hispano-Norteamericano para la Cooperación Cultural y Educativa (1976-1995). Además de becas y ayudas, este marco de cooperación proporcionó laboratorios de idiomas a algunas universidades y probablemente adquisición de fondos bibliográficos, algo a lo que también contribuyó el British Council.
[6]El Cuerpo de Profesores Agregados de Universidad fue creado por la Ley 83/1965, de 17 de julio (*B.O.E.* 21 de julio) sobre estructura de las Facultades Universitarias y su Profesorado, que también instituía los Departamentos como las unidades estructurales universitarias de docencia e investigación.

La atracción por los idiomas, especialmente por el inglés, también se constataba en las Universidades. El preámbulo de la Orden de 18 de octubre de 1963 (*B.O.E.* 29 de noviembre), que creaba la Subsección de Filología Inglesa en las Universidades de La Laguna y Valladolid, subrayaba el aumento constante de matrícula en los estudios de Lenguas Modernas allí donde estaban establecidos, y añadía: "Por ello conviene, gradualmente, extender el número de Secciones en las que se cursa esta Licenciatura implantando la misma en Universidades que en la actualidad no la tienen establecida […], si bien, en su primera etapa, y en atención al interés que ofrece su estudio a la Juventud universitaria, su contenido debe quedar limitado a la Subsección de Filología Inglesa."

En Zaragoza, el estudio de Lenguas Modernas se segregó de Historia y pasó a denominarse "Humanidades Modernas" manteniendo la especialización en dos idiomas (O. de 8 de febrero de 1963, *B.O.E.* 1 de abril). Finalmente se constituyó la Sección de Filología Moderna (O. de 13 de marzo de 1964, *B.O.E.* 6 de mayo), y más adelante se aprobó un nuevo plan de estudios solo para la "Modalidad de Inglés" (O. de 28 de septiembre de 1968, *B.O.E.* 7 de noviembre).

En Deusto, Filología Moderna comenzó en 1963 (cf. O. de 25 de marzo de 1963, *B.O.E.* 15 de abril), adscrita a Salamanca por no existir entonces en Valladolid.

Tras la implantación de nuestros estudios en La Laguna y Valladolid en octubre de 1963, se autorizó la Sección de Filología Moderna en Sevilla (O. de 11 de diciembre de 1964, *B.O.E.* 9 de enero de 1965), y poco después se aprobó el plan de estudios (O. de 21 de abril de 1965, *B.O.E.* 22 de mayo). Siguieron Valencia (O. de 9 de septiembre de 1965. *B.O.E.* 22 de octubre), Santiago de Compostela (O. de 13 de abril de 1967, *B.O.E.* 1 de junio), cuyo plan de estudios se aprobó el 30 de septiembre de 1969 (*B.O.E.* 20 de octubre), Granada (O. de 13 de junio de 1967, *B.O.E.* 21 de julio), y Murcia y Oviedo (sendas Órdenes de 10 de octubre de 1967, *B.O.E.* 13 de noviembre).

Durante esta etapa inicial, en aquel contexto político y socio-cultural tan opuesto al que conocemos hoy día, los libros publicados por nuestros investigadores tendían a ser simultáneamente específicos de nuestros estudios y transversales a otras disciplinas, o de interés para el público en general.[7]

2. Los Estudios Ingleses y la modernización de la Universidad española (1968-1999)

2.1 El '68 español

La segunda mitad de la década de los sesenta estuvo marcada por intensos y violentos disturbios estudiantiles contra la dictadura, especialmente en Madrid y Barcelona, y la contundente respuesta por parte del Gobierno con duras medidas de represión, espionaje y persecución política. En este contexto, se impulsó un proceso de reformas aprobando el Decreto Ley 5/1968, de 6 de junio, sobre medidas urgentes de reestructuración universitaria (*B.O.E.* 7 de junio). Estas aspiraban a aliviar el insostenible problema de la masificación en las aulas[8] con la creación de Universidades Autónomas en Madrid y Barcelona,[9] la Universidad de Bilbao, Facultades en Santander, San Sebastián y Badajoz, e Institutos Politécnicos Superiores en Barcelona y Valencia, lo cual supuso el inicio de la fractura de los distritos universitarios.[10] A esto hay que sumar la creación de 200 puestos de profesorado numerario. El decreto ley proponía, además, un sistema de becas "con salario escolar" y no descartaba la posible "constitución y organización de entidades representativas de estudiantes." El preámbulo declaraba la necesidad de una reforma universitaria de mayor envergadura. Todas estas medidas se adoptaron de forma precipitada ante la magnitud de las revueltas estudiantiles y, en consecuencia, ajenas a los Presupuestos del Estado ya aprobados, lo cual retrasó su implementación. Con todo, se emprendió un proceso de reformas que se extenderá durante las décadas venideras.

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[7]Solo como ejemplos cabe señalar *El anglicismo en la España de hoy* (1955), de Emilio Lorenzo; *Inglés para españoles. Curso elemental* (1959), de Basil Potter y Walter Starkie; *La enseñanza del inglés en España. Desde la Edad Media hasta el siglo XIX* (1961), de Sofía Martín-Gamero; *La enseñanza del inglés* (1963), de Patricia Shaw, edición española de *The Teaching of English*; o *Factores ideológicos en la formación de la conciencia colonial británica en el siglo XVI* (1968), de María Asunción Alba Pelayo.

[8]El problema de la masificación se reconocía ya en la Ley 83/1965, de 17 de julio (*B.O.E.* 21 de julio) sobre estructura de las Facultades Universitarias y su Profesorado: "Ya a lo largo de los últimos años se han llevado a cabo dotaciones de Cátedras y aumentos en el número de Profesores adjuntos, pero a pesar de ello el ritmo de este crecimiento es muy inferior al del alumnado, con lo que la relación entre uno y otro se aleja más del valor que en cualquier Universidad europea está ya consagrado como límite."

[9]El término "autónoma" quiere decir simplemente que estas Universidades no dependían de las ya existentes en sus respectivos distritos.

[10]En 1972 se creó la Universidad de Santander (de Cantabria, desde 1985) y al año siguiente la de Extremadura. Los Institutos Politécnicos Superiores se convirtieron en Universidades Politécnicas en 1971. En aras del principio "de igualdad de oportunidades," se fundó la Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) en 1972 (*B.O.E.* 9 de septiembre).

Otra medida importante fue el reconocimiento de los Centros de Estudios Universitarios (CEUs) como Colegios Universitarios, en los que se podía cursar el llamado selectivo preuniversitario (Pre-U) y los primeros años de asignaturas comunes, mientras que los de especialidad había que realizarlos en la Universidad de la que dependían. Por la Orden de 21 de octubre de 1968,[11] se reconoció el CEU de Alicante como Colegio Universitario. La mayoría, sin embargo, lo fueron después de la Ley General de Educación de 1970, especialmente entre 1971 y 1973. No en todos se cursaba el primer ciclo conducente a la Licenciatura en Filología Inglesa. El primero de estos Colegios Universitarios, o uno de los primeros, fue el de Málaga (Decreto 3773/1970, de 17 de diciembre, *B.O.E.* 12 de enero de 1971), segregándose de Granada como Universidad plena en 1972. Aproximadamente tres cuartas partes de estos Colegios fueron convertidos en Universidades propias, sobre todo en los ochenta y hasta mediados de los noventa. El resto pasó a integrarse en la Universidad correspondiente de sus respectivas Comunidades Autónomas, que no siempre coincidían con la adscripción original por distritos. Por ejemplo, el C.U. de Álava (adscrito a Valladolid) se integró en la Universidad de Bilbao, que pasaría a denominarse Universidad del País Vasco/Euskal Herriko Unibersitatea (UPV/EHU) en 1980, mientras que el C.U. de Soria (adscrito a Zaragoza) pasaría a constituirse en un Campus de la Universidad de Valladolid.

Ya dentro del marco de la Ley General de Educación de 1970, la implantación de los Estudios Ingleses en los nuevos centros fue, como desde su inicio en los cincuenta, muy diversa. Por ejemplo, en los Colegios Universitarios de Córdoba (adscrito a Sevilla) y Málaga (a Granada) se impartía el primer ciclo de los estudios conducentes a las Licenciaturas en Filología. Tras crearse las Universidades de Córdoba y Málaga en 1972, y sus respectivas Facultades de Filosofía y Letras en 1974, la Sección de Filología Moderna de Córdoba ofrecía la especialidad en francés e inglés conjuntamente (Resolución de 3 de octubre de 1974, *B.O.E.* 26 de octubre), mientras que en Málaga comenzó la especialidad en el curso 1976-77 con asignaturas de lengua y literatura inglesas en los dos años finales, más otras asignaturas no especificadas hasta completar las horas de formación prescritas (O. de 1 de octubre de 1976, *B.O.E.* 2 de agosto de 1977).

2.2 La Ley General de Educación de 1970

La ley que se anunciaba en el Decreto Ley 5/1968 se aprobó el 4 de agosto de 1970 (*B.O.E.* 6 de agosto). La Ley General de Educación (LGE) articuló una reforma moderna y transversal en todas las etapas y ámbitos formativos, con una implantación progresiva a lo largo de diez años.

En el ámbito universitario, la LGE reafirmaba la centralidad de los Departamentos como núcleo principal de la actividad académica e investigadora. Además de establecer los Colegios Universitarios y los Institutos Universitarios,[12] convirtió en Escuelas Universitarias a las Escuelas Normales de Profesorado y las de Idiomas, entre otros centros.[13] La LGE suprimió la estructura curricular de dos cursos de estudios comunes seguidos por tres de especialidad y dividió las enseñanzas en ciclos, el primero de tres años para materias básicas, el segundo de especialización durante dos años, y el tercer ciclo para especialización concreta en investigación y docencia. En las Escuelas Universitarias se implantó un único ciclo de tres años.

La Resolución de 17 de julio de 1973 (*B.O.E.* 8 de septiembre) fijó las materias básicas para la elaboración de nuevos planes de estudios, lo que sin duda contribuyó a igualar la oferta formativa de la Sección de Filología entre las distintas universidades. Las materias básicas podían dar origen a dos o más asignaturas o disciplinas. Para el primer ciclo de la División de Filología se establecieron las materias de Filosofía, Historia, Lengua española, Lengua latina, una Lengua clásica o moderna, Literatura española y Crítica literaria. Se suprimió la prueba de reválida tras los estudios comunes, pero se exigía aprobar todas las asignaturas del primer ciclo para pasar al segundo. Las materias para el segundo ciclo de la Sección de Filología Anglogermánica comprendían Lingüística germánica, Filología inglesa, Lengua alemana, Literatura inglesa, y Geografía e historia en relación. Sin embargo, la resolución no añadía el número de horas semanales mínimas de cada materia.

Primero se aprobaron los planes de estudios del primer ciclo, mientras que la Orden de 16 de marzo de 1976 (*B.O.E.* 2 de abril) daba las directrices para los del segundo ciclo. Entre ellas se pedía una breve descripción del contenido de las

[11]Véase la Orden de 21 de julio de 1969 (*B.O.E.* 30 de agosto).
[12]La Ley de Ordenación Universitaria de 1943 había creado los Centros de Investigación Científica.
[13]En 1972 se creó la Escuela Universitaria de Idiomas en la Autónoma de Barcelona con carácter experimental (*B.O.E.* 22 de septiembre), y el Instituto Universitario de Lenguas Modernas y Traductores en la División de Filología de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la Universidad Complutense de Madrid en 1974 (*B.O.E.* 28 de junio). El Instituto de Idiomas de Granada se convirtió en Escuela Universitaria de Traductores e Intérpretes en 1979 (*B.O.E.* 9 de noviembre). El título oficial de Licenciado en Traducción e Interpretación se estableció por el Real Decreto 1385/1991, de 30 de agosto (*B.O.E.* 30 de septiembre).

asignaturas. Al menos hasta 1988, estos planes, tanto de primer como de segundo ciclo, fueron varias veces corregidos y modificados en cada universidad. En conjunto ponen de relieve cierta uniformidad en las aspiraciones formativas de la Licenciatura en todo el país. La Orden también solicitaba una memoria "en la que se acredite y garantice que la implantación de los [nuevos planes] no supondrá aumento de las dotaciones de personal, docente o no."

A las enseñanzas de tercer ciclo se accedía tras realizar una memoria de investigación, tesina o reválida. La formación lectiva de tercer ciclo consistía en unos cursos monográficos que se completaban con una asignatura externa al plan de estudios establecido para la obtención de una licenciatura dada.

Al igual que en el resto de especialidades, la consolidación de la Filología Inglesa no vino acompañada de dotación suficiente de profesorado. Se creó el Cuerpo de Profesores Adjuntos de Universidad, de forma que este profesorado pudiera hacerse numerario por concurso-oposición (restringido en su primera convocatoria) en vez de estar sujeto a contratos temporales. Esta medida incrementaba la plantilla fija para las titulaciones y facilitaba el acceso al personal joven (e incluso a los Catedráticos de Bachillerato con título de Doctor y en determinadas condiciones). Sin embargo, las oposiciones libres tardaron en regularse (Orden de 23 de agosto de 1976, *B.O.E.* 26 de agosto), se convocaron muy pocas plazas en relación con la extensión de nuestros estudios en España, y a veces tardaban años en resolverse. En cambio, el personal docente de los departamentos era mayoritariamente profesorado no numerario (PNN): ayudantes de clases prácticas, encargados de curso, y otras figuras contractuales. El nombramiento de este profesorado lo realizaba el Rector a propuesta efectuada por la Cátedra o Departamento correspondiente e informada por el Decanato. Los contratos solían ser por un año prorrogables. Esta precariedad de los PNNs llevó a muchos a buscar mejores condiciones laborales, especialmente en enseñanzas medias, lo cual vino a añadir más inestabilidad en las aulas universitarias durante la Transición, ya de por sí bastante inestables debido sobre todo a los múltiples conflictos políticos y laborales hacia los que el estudiantado siempre se mostró especialmente receptivo y solidario.

Merece recordarse brevemente que, antes de la promulgación de la Ley de Reforma Universitaria en 1983, las autoridades ministeriales hicieron un gran esfuerzo para la provisión de plazas vacantes de profesorado numerario, sobre todo del Cuerpo de Profesores Adjuntos de Universidad. Tras varios años en que no se habían convocado oposiciones a ese cuerpo (o se había hecho de forma muy cicatera), el *B.O.E.* de 6 de abril de 1981 (O. de 18 de febrero) publicó la convocatoria de oposiciones, turno libre, a 10 plazas en la disciplina de "Lengua y Literatura Inglesas," entre otras. La lista de firmantes superaba el medio centenar, lo cual demuestra el elevado número de profesores formalmente cualificados y sin plaza permanente en la Universidad española. El concurso se resolvió al año siguiente (O. de 8 de noviembre de 1982, *B.O.E.* 29 de noviembre), con el resultado de nueve opositores aprobados, quedando vacante la décima plaza. Estos—y algunos otros que accedieron al Cuerpo de Profesores Adjuntos en sendos concursos en 1983—abrieron un camino muy prometedor en muchas universidades, al contribuir a la consolidación de un profesorado muy dinámico (y joven en muchos casos), cuya presencia y pujanza se ha mantenido en términos generales durante más de tres décadas.[14]

La vida universitaria lleva aparejada la organización de actividades y eventos al margen de la docencia propiamente dicha. Estos se han venido produciendo desde los cincuenta. Por ejemplo, en febrero de 1957 se representó en la Universidad de Salamanca la obra *Village Wooing*, de G. B. Shaw, por actores del British Council. Por desgracia, estas actividades tan valiosas como efímeras solo quedan registradas en las memorias anuales o actas de departamentos, facultades y—rara vez—también de universidades. A medida que se consolidaban nuestros estudios crecía el número de este tipo de eventos. En la Universidad de La Laguna, por ejemplo, Asunción Alba organizó el I Seminario de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa y Lingüística Aplicada en 1974, patrocinado por el British Council, la Universidad y el Instituto de Ciencias de la Educación (ICE), con la participación de los profesores Close y Traversi. A partir de entonces y hasta bien entrados los ochenta, el Departamento organizaba la denominada "English Week" en la que intervenían sobre todo conferenciantes nacionales en cada edición y que resultaban altamente estimulantes para el alumnado. Otras actividades similares de carácter periódico fueron también organizadas en la Universidad de Barcelona por Doireann MacDermott y en la de Oviedo por Patricia Shaw.

[14]El listado de aprobados en ese concurso-oposición, del que ahora se cumplen 40 años, incluía (por este orden) a José Luis González Escribano, Fernando Galván, María Lozano, Bernd Dietz, Rafael Portillo, José María Ruiz, Félix Martín, Catalina Montes y María Socorro Suárez. De estos, solo Galván sigue en 2022 como funcionario activo del Cuerpo de Catedráticos de Universidad (en la U. de Alcalá), pero todos ellos encabezaron en sus respectivas Universidades equipos de investigación muy fructíferos, abriendo nuevas y valiosas líneas de investigación en Estudios Ingleses.

2.3 AEDEAN

La fundación de la Asociación Española de Estudios Anglonorteamericanos (AEDEAN) fue el gran hito de nuestra historia en los años setenta.[15] Santoyo y Guardia detallan la reunión que a tal fin se había programado como parte de la *International American Studies Conference*, organizada en Sevilla en diciembre de 1976 por el Departamento de Inglés (1982, 245), cuyo Director era entonces Francisco García Tortosa. A la reunión asistió profesorado de Filología Inglesa de once Universidades que convino en formalizar legalmente la asociación y en celebrar un congreso anual en diciembre.[16]

La Comisión Gestora, formada por Patricia Shaw, Javier Coy y Joaquín Oltra, se encargó de ejecutar los trámites pertinentes para constituir oficialmente la asociación. Un año después, el 16 de noviembre de 1977, el Ministerio del Interior sancionó los primeros Estatutos de AEDEAN.

El primer congreso fue organizado en Granada del 15 al 17 de diciembre de 1977 por la Comisión Gestora y el Departamento de Inglés de dicha Universidad, encabezado por Rafael Fente. En una Asamblea, que hubo de ser extraordinaria, se eligió a la primera Junta Directiva. La primera Presidencia fue ocupada por Javier Coy durante un año. En 1978 accedió a ella Patricia Shaw, seguida sucesivamente hasta el presente por Pedro Guardia, Susana Onega, Fernando Galván, María Teresa Turell, María Socorro Suárez, Montserrat Martínez y Alberto Lázaro.

En 1978, AEDEAN se afilió a EAAS (Santoyo y Guardia 1982, 256) y comenzó a editar el *Boletín Informativo*. En 1979 se publicó el primer número de la revista *Atlantis*, que hoy día está indexada por las más prestigiosas bases de datos internacionales, a lo cual también ha contribuido la loable gestión de sus sucesivos editores.[17]

A partir de su primera edición, el congreso anual de AEDEAN se desarrolló en torno a una temática específica,[18] y desde 1991 se estructuró en diversos paneles (con su respectivo coordinador) que articulan los grandes ámbitos investigadores de nuestra extensa área de conocimiento. El congreso anual pronto se convirtió en el foro de referencia para difundir los intereses, tendencias y resultados investigadores. Desde un principio, estas reuniones han permitido escuchar y conocer en vivo a grandes escritores en lengua inglesa, y a prestigiosos conferenciantes nacionales y extranjeros. También han propiciado iniciar o fortalecer relaciones investigadoras y docentes, además de servir de espacio para el reencuentro anual con colegas de todo el país.[19]

AEDEAN ha institucionalizado poco a poco una serie de premios para reconocer destacadas contribuciones a nuestros estudios: Premios de "Traducción," "Investigación Enrique García Díez," "Investigación Leocadio Martín Mingorance," y—el más reciente—"Catalina Montes" a las mejores comunicaciones presentadas en los congresos por estudiantes de Doctorado o que acaban de defender sus tesis doctorales. También concede las ayudas "Patricia Shaw," "Enrique Alcaraz," "María Teresa Turell," "Margaret Fuller" (que financia el Instituto Franklin de la Universidad de Alcalá), y a Posgraduados.

En el seno de AEDEAN, a finales de los setenta, preocupaba la falta de medios y oportunidades que sufrían los profesores más jóvenes para impulsar su carrera académica e investigadora, tanto por la precaria infraestructura de publicaciones, como por los escasos fondos destinados a su formación, a pesar de que desde 1976 se pusieron en marcha ayudas para el personal investigador (compatibles con las figuras de ayudantes y encargados de curso), becas para ampliación de estudios en el extranjero y bolsas de viajes, entre otras. Al igual que en los primeros años, seguía preocupando la situación marginal del inglés en enseñanza secundaria, ya que no se había incluido en las pruebas de "selectividad" para el acceso a la universidad (hoy, EBAU), y—aún más sangrante—la asignatura en Bachillerato y el curso de orientación universitaria (COU) no siempre era impartida por titulados especialistas.

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[15]Con anterioridad, en los cincuenta se formó la Asociación Española de Profesores de Inglés (AEPE). En 1977 se fundó TESOL-Spain. También en los setenta y ochenta se crearon asociaciones regionales de profesores de inglés, algunas ya desaparecidas.

[16]El congreso anual de AEDEAN se ha venido celebrando en la primera quincena de noviembre desde su trigésima edición (Huelva, 2006) para adaptarse convenientemente al calendario de ejecución presupuestaria de las administraciones públicas y universidades.

[17]Antonio Garnica, Javier Coy, Catalina Montes, José Gómez Soliño, Santiago González Fernández-Corugedo, Rafael Portillo, Antonio Álvarez Amorós, Angela Downing, Isabel Carrera, Juan Camilo Conde y Mireia Aragay. Jesús Nieto es el actual editor general desde noviembre de 2021.

[18]"El mundo de habla inglesa y sus transformaciones culturales en el tránsito del siglo XVIII al XIX" (Valencia, 1978), "Lengua y literatura de las minorías culturales en el mundo de habla inglesa" (Santiago de Compostela, 1979), "Técnicas Narrativas" (Salamanca, 1980), "Héroes y antihéroes en la literatura inglesa y norteamericana" (Oviedo, 1981), "Literary and Linguistic Aspects of Humour" (Sitges, 1982), "Los últimos veinte años en los estudios anglonorteamericanos" (Málaga, 1984), "Aspectos comparativos en la lengua y literatura de habla inglesa" (Murcia, 1985), "Congreso conmemorativo de su fundación" (Zaragoza, 1986), "La traducción entre el mundo hispánico y anglosajón: relaciones lingüísticas, culturales y literarias" (León, 1987), "Nuevas corrientes en los estudios ingleses: teorías, modelos y sus aplicaciones" (Alicante, 1988), "Influencias y cambios culturales, lingüísticos y literarios entre Norteamérica y Gran Bretaña e Irlanda en el siglo XX" (Tarragona, 1989). Los congresos de Madrid (1983) y Vitoria (1990) fueron de tema libre. El de Logroño (1991) fue el primero que se organizó mediante paneles temáticos.

[19]Ocasionalmente también han intervenidos grupos de teatro (de Oviedo, Sevilla, Zaragoza o Murcia).

Muy probablemente cierta incomprensión hacia la seriedad y alcance de nuestros estudios dentro y fuera del sistema universitario ha estimulado una fuerte cohesión interna en nuestra área—con intereses investigadores tan plurales—y una marcada sensibilidad hacia nuestra historia, que no es otra que el fruto de nuestra labor colectiva. Esta percepción fue ya plasmada por Julio César Santoyo y Pedro Guardia en "Primeras palabras," la nota introductoria a *Treinta años de Filología Inglesa en la Universidad Española* (1982), cuando declaraban: "Basta, de todas formas, echar una rápida ojeada al acervo de datos que presentamos para que queden refutados muchos de los velados ataques, casi siempre infundados, que la Filología Inglesa ha recibido de otras áreas" (1982, ix). Con este libro, Santoyo y Guardia no solo enaltecían nuestra disciplina, sino que escribían su historia, al tiempo que cartografiaban y difundían el estado de la Filología Inglesa, aglutinando datos e información sobre los inicios (5-12); los planes de estudios y docencia en distintas Universidades (179-28), Colegios Universitarios (229-33), Escuelas Universitarias de EGB (234-38) y Escuelas de Traductores e Intérpretes (239-42); revistas, actas de congresos y editoriales especializadas (155-76); el profesorado y su investigación (19-154); y finalmente una breve historia de AEDEAN hasta 1980 (245-77).

Mención especial merecen los comités organizadores de los congresos de AEDEAN que, año tras año, y por toda la geografía nacional, han dedicado tanto esfuerzo al éxito y brillantez de los eventos, incluso en condiciones tan adversas como fue el apagón general que se produjo en Mallorca y Menorca en 2008, o el cambio de la ubicación de la sede de la Autònoma de Barcelona a un edificio en la capital catalana en 2011 debido al cierre de las instalaciones universitarias por la huelga de estudiantes. En 2020, debido a la pandemia *covid*, el equipo de la Universidad de Cantabria se vio forzado a cancelar el congreso ese año y asumió valientemente posponerlo a 2021 en un contexto de total incertidumbre. Finalmente, por la persistencia de las circunstancias sanitarias, la cuadragésima cuarta edición hubo de celebrarse online, con un desarrollo impecable en todas sus sesiones a lo largo de las tres jornadas habituales. Otras anécdotas, como la nevada en León en 1999, quedarán también para el recuerdo.

2.4 La Ley de Reforma Universitaria de 1983

En la década de los ochenta, la Universidad española va a experimentar su particular reconversión—palabra muy de moda en la época—mediante un proceso de descentralización de la administración y gestión. En política nacional, fueron los años de la constitución y puesta en marcha de las Comunidades Autónomas, con las consiguientes transferencias de las competencias en materia educativa a los nuevos Gobiernos autonómicos por parte del central. En materia financiera, España recibió un enorme flujo de capital desde los años anteriores a su entrada en la entonces Comunidad Económica Europea en 1986 hasta al menos 1989, cuando la caída del bloque soviético requirió especial atención. Aunque ciertamente esta reconversión supuso un proceso que no afectó solo a la Filología Inglesa, sino a toda la institución universitaria, no se puede entender la evolución de nuestros estudios en España sin nombrar al menos algunas de las transformaciones de mayor calado.

La Ley 11/1983 de Reforma Universitaria (LRU, de 25 de agosto, *B.O.E.* 1 de septiembre) desplegó un audaz plan de modernización y democratización fundamentado en tres pilares fundamentales: autonomía de las Universidades, apoyo a la investigación, y refuerzo del profesorado numerario. El espíritu de la LRU lo sintetizaba la conclusión del preámbulo:

> **El profesorado y los alumnos tienen, pues, la clave de la nueva Universidad que se quiera conseguir, y de nada servirá ninguna Ley si ellos no asumen el proyecto de vida académica que se propone, encaminada a conseguir unos centros universitarios donde arraiguen el pensamiento libre y crítico y la investigación. Sólo así la institución universitaria podrá ser un instrumento eficaz de transformación social, al servicio de la libertad, la igualdad y el progreso social para hacer posible una realización más plena de la dignidad humana.**

Para simplificar lo que en el preámbulo se describía como el "actual caos de la selvática e irracional estructura jerárquica del profesorado, totalmente disfuncional," se establecieron cuatro cuerpos de profesorado numerario: Catedráticos de Universidad (CU), Profesores Titulares de Universidad (TU), Catedráticos de Escuelas Universitarias (CEU), y Profesores Titulares de Escuelas Universitarias (TEU), en los que se integraron, respectivamente, el profesorado numerario de los antiguos Cuerpos de Catedráticos de Universidad y Agregados de Universidad, Adjuntos de Universidad, Catedráticos de Escuelas Universitarias, y Agregados de Escuelas Universitarias.[20] El personal laboral quedaba reducido a las figuras de profesor asociado, visitante, y ayudante, este último concebido a la medida de doctorandos y por lo tanto con contrato de duración limitada.

[20]Las disposiciones adicionales regularon la integración de otros muchos tipos de situaciones laborales en estos cuerpos.

La LRU anunciaba unas "pruebas de idoneidad" restringidas para el profesorado que cumpliese determinados requisitos de antigüedad y condiciones laborales dentro de la Universidad. Las pruebas de idoneidad para TUs y TEUs fueron convocadas por la Orden de 7 de febrero de 1984 (*B.O.E.* 16 de febrero), y poco después se regularon los concursos para la provisión de plazas de los cuerpos docentes universitarios mediante el Decreto 1888/1984 de 26 de septiembre (*B.O.E.* 26 de octubre). Ambas normas detallaban los perfiles de las plazas dentro de cada una de las áreas de conocimiento.[21] En cuanto a la promoción profesional en general, la LRU introdujo un notable avance en autonomía universitaria por el hecho de que, entre otros, las comisiones para resolver los concursos estarían formadas por presidentes y secretarios designados por el Rector de la institución convocante, y por tres vocales externos designados por el Consejo de Universidades mediante sorteo entre numerarios de categoría igual o superior a la plaza objeto de concurso.

El aumento del profesorado numerario (y la consiguiente consolidación de una plantilla estable) propició la creación de equipos de investigación. Nuestra área participó principalmente en convocatorias competitivas nacionales para proyectos de investigación dentro de programas de promoción general del conocimiento,[22] e incluso de programas de infraestructura.[23] La Ley 13/1986 de 14 de abril de Fomento y Coordinación General de la Investigación Científica y Técnica (*B.O.E.* 18 de abril) intentaba, como explica el preámbulo, acabar con "la insuficiente dotación de recursos y desordenada coordinación y gestión de los programas investigadores [a fin de] asegurar que España participe plenamente en el proceso en que están inmersos los países industrializados de nuestro entorno." El Gobierno central también concedió ayudas para publicaciones y eventos científicos. Cabe añadir el incentivo a la actividad investigadora mediante la evaluación de períodos de seis años (sexenios), que fue regulada mediante la Orden de 5 de febrero de 1990 (*B.O.E.* 6 de febrero). A su vez, las Universidades modernizaron su política de publicaciones, actividades de extensión universitaria, programas concertados, ayudas a la investigación, y organización de congresos, jornadas y seminarios, entre otras iniciativas.

Poco después se aprobaba el Real Decreto 1497/1987 (*B.O.E.* 14 de diciembre) por el que se establecían las directrices generales comunes de los nuevos planes de estudios. Como se indica en el preámbulo, estas fueron concebidas para que "la mayor flexibilidad de sus fórmulas y soluciones académicas permita una mayor rentabilidad de la oferta universitaria, un mejor aprovechamiento discente y un más amplio abanico de opciones para el estudiante." El real decreto "racionalizó" los planes de estudios reduciendo la duración de las licenciaturas de cinco a cuatro cursos. Se introdujo "el crédito" como unidad para computar la formación del alumnado.[24] Esta se articulaba en tres (o cuatro) bloques: materias troncales, comunes en todos los planes de estudios de una misma titulación; materias no troncales, bien como obligatorias en el plan de estudios de una determinada universidad (obligatorias de universidad), bien como optativas; y créditos de libre elección, o de libre configuración, en enseñanzas propias de otras carreras. El diseño y catálogo de materias troncales correspondientes a la Licenciatura en Filología Inglesa se publicó por el Real Decreto 1442/1990, de 26 de octubre (*B.O.E.* 20 de noviembre).[25] Sobre esta base y con los porcentajes de materias troncales, proporciones de docencia teórica y práctica, máximos y mínimos de créditos, cada Universidad elaboró su particular plan de estudios en Filología Inglesa atendiendo a la formación integral y a los intereses investigadores de los Departamentos, que en definitiva solo contribuían a enriquecer la formación del alumnado.

El Real Decreto 1497/1987 venía a completar la reforma de los planes de estudios que se había iniciado con el Real Decreto 185/1985, de 23 de enero (*B.O.E.* 16 de febrero), que regulaba el tercer ciclo, la obtención del título de Doctor y otros estudios de posgrado. El tercer ciclo se estructuró mediante la realización de cursos y seminarios equivalentes a 32 créditos a lo largo de dos años (bienios), y concluían con la obtención de la suficiencia investigadora concedida por el Departamento, que era el órgano encargado de ofrecer "un programa sólido en el tercer ciclo y con capacidad

[21]El decreto diversificaba el área de Filología Inglesa en:
- Para Facultades de Filología y de Filosofía y Letras: Anglística, Filología inglesa, Lengua inglesa, Lengua y literatura inglesa, Lengua y literatura inglesa (literatura norteamericana), Lingüística general y germánica, Lingüística germánica (especialmente inglesa y alemana), Lingüística inglesa, y Literatura inglesa.
- EE.UU. de Traductores e Intérpretes: Lingüística aplicada al inglés.
- EE.UU. de Profesorado de EGB: Lengua inglesa y su didáctica, y Lingüística aplicada al inglés.
- En todas las Facultades, EE.TT.SS. y EE.UU.: Inglés.
Este catálogo presentaba ciertas variaciones con respecto al de la Orden de las pruebas de idoneidad.

[22]Véase la Resolución de 19 de diciembre de 1985 (26935) de la Secretaría de Estado de Universidades e Investigación, por la que se anuncian diversas acciones a desarrollar para la promoción de la investigación y se convoca la presentación de solicitudes de subvención con cargo al Fondo Nacional para el Desarrollo de la Investigación Científica (*B.O.E.* 30 de diciembre).

[23]Véase la Resolución (31300) de 28 de diciembre de 1990 (*B.O.E.* 29 de diciembre).

[24]Por el Real Decreto 1267/1994, de 10 de junio (*B.O.E.* 11 de junio) se otorgó al crédito un valor de 10 horas de enseñanza. El crédito como unidad de cómputo del proceso formativo era característico del sistema educativo en los Estados Unidos; sin embargo, no era la primera vez que se utilizaba en España: el plan de estudios de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona empleaba este sistema reconociendo dos créditos "a cada hora semanal/año de enseñanza" (O. 26 de septiembre de 1977, *B.O.E.* 16 de noviembre), ya que preveía que el alumnado completara su aprendizaje con diversos cursos y seminarios.

[25]Las materias troncales comunes a la misma licenciatura en todos los planes de estudios quedaron finalmente fijadas (con indicación de número de créditos) en: Primer Ciclo: Lengua (española u oficial en una Comunidad Autónoma) (8), Lengua inglesa (14), Lingüística (8), Literatura inglesa (12), Segunda lengua y su literatura (12), Teoría de la literatura (8). Segundo Ciclo: Gramática inglesa (10), Historia y cultura de los países de habla inglesa (8), Historia de la lengua inglesa (10), Literatura inglesa y norteamericana (15).

real en todo momento para estimular y llevar adelante actividades investigadoras."[26] En definitiva, si la Licenciatura se reducía en un curso, el tercer ciclo venía a compensar la formación especializada de posgrado en dos cursos adicionales que profundizaban en las principales líneas investigadoras de cada Departamento, y podían incluir expertos de otras Universidades o Centros de Investigación. Este sistema fue reformado por el Real Decreto 778/1998 (*B.O.E.* 1 de mayo), que mantenía los programas de doctorado de los Departamentos, los dos cursos y el número total de 32 créditos, pero desglosados en 20 de cursos y seminarios, y 12 de un trabajo de investigación, tras lo cual se obtenía el Diploma de Estudios Avanzados (DEA). Buena parte de la historia de los Estudios Ingleses en España se encuentra diseminada en los programas de doctorado departamentales de cada Universidad porque reflejan la fortaleza y orientación de las líneas investigadoras mucho más que los antiguos cursos monográficos de doctorado, y porque dieron lugar a sólidos proyectos de investigación universitarios y, progresivamente, interuniversitarios.

La LRU impulsó la creación de Institutos Universitarios en el marco de las competencias de las Comunidades. En 1987, se constituyó en Alcalá de Henares el Centro de Estudios Norteamericanos (CENUAH), posteriormente redenominado I.U. de Investigación en Estudios Norteamericanos "Benjamin Franklin." Hoy son numerosos los que existen por todo el país sobre nuestros estudios o con nutrida presencia de nuestros colegas, entre ellos, el Institut Interuniversitari de Llengües Modernes Aplicades de la Comunitat Valenciana, el I.U. de Estudios Irlandeses *Amergin*, en La Coruña, y el Instituto Universitario en Género y Diversidad (IUGENDIV) en Oviedo.

La consolidación de una plantilla de profesorado estable, la apuesta por la autonomía universitaria y el apoyo incondicional a la investigación produjo a partir de los ochenta esa afamada generación de la juventud mejor preparada de todos los tiempos en España que, por la crisis de 2008, se vio forzada a buscar mejores perspectivas laborales más allá de nuestras fronteras.

2.5 Otras innovaciones

Esta profunda transformación de la vida universitaria vino acompañada por otros dos factores de modernización. Por un lado, en todas las Comunidades Autónomas se reformaron las viejas infraestructuras, crearon nuevos campus y construyeron nuevas edificaciones (aunque no siempre para nuestras facultades). Por otro, se empezó a percibir la llegada de la tecnología informática. A finales de los ochenta, se instaló en nuestras bibliotecas la novedosa y muy rudimentaria RedIRIS. El personal encargado podía acceder a listados de referencias bibliográficas, que en nuestro campo coincidían en su mayoría con los ya recogidos en los repertorios de MLA. La información de los ficheros bibliográficos de las bibliotecas fue progresivamente transferida a bases de datos. También, las máquinas de escribir (mecánicas y eléctricas) comenzaron a ver su final ante la llegada de los ordenadores personales y los disquetes de 5 y de 3 pulgadas. Los primeros programas informáticos pronto sirvieron de poderosas herramientas en el campo de la lingüística.

En estos treinta años, más concretamente a partir de la última década del siglo XX, las publicaciones se orientaron poco a poco a los lectores especializados en nuestra disciplina, bien con manuales para la enseñanza,[27] bien con monografías de interés para la creciente comunidad investigadora, o cuidadas ediciones de obras maestras de la literatura en lengua inglesa. Especialmente a lo largo de los ochenta y noventa triunfaron nuevos modelos teóricos en lingüística y lingüística aplicada (pragmática, gramática formal, gramática funcional, análisis del discurso, enfoque comunicativo, o ESP); el posmodernismo y la deconstrucción, los estudios de género y otras teorías dieron un nuevo impulso a los estudios literarios y culturales (ambos cada vez más imbricados), y las denominadas "otras literaturas en lengua inglesa" ganaron protagonismo. Nuestra disciplina contribuyó tanto al debate en la escena internacional como a la difusión de estas nuevas corrientes en España.

La segunda parte de los ochenta también trajo otra manera de organizarnos. Tras una reunión en Oviedo en diciembre de 1987, Patricia Shaw, entre otros, promovió la fundación de la Sociedad Española para el Estudios de Lengua y Literatura Inglesa Medieval (SELIM), cuyo primer congreso tuvo lugar en la capital asturiana en 1988.[28] Dos años después, también en Oviedo, nacía la Sociedad Española de Estudios Renacentistas Ingleses (SEDERI, hoy Sociedad Hispano-Portuguesa de Estudios Renacentistas Ingleses), no sin la controversia sobre el peligro potencial de una desintegración de AEDEAN.

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[26]Véase el preámbulo y Art. 2.C del Real Decreto 2360/1984, de 12 de diciembre, sobre Departamentos Universitarios (*B.O.E.* 14 de enero de 1985).
[27]Entre estos, y solo como ejemplos, cabe mencionar *La literatura inglesa en los textos* (1981), de Pilar Hidalgo y Enrique Alcaraz; *The Ways of the Word: An Advanced Course on Reading and the Analysis of Literary Texts* (1994), de Manuel Gómez Lara y Juan Antonio Prieto Pablos; y *A University Course in English Grammar* (1995), de Angela Downing y Philip Locke. También cabría añadir el *Diccionario de términos jurídicos: Inglés-Español, Spanish-English* (1993), de Enrique Alcaraz y Brian Hughes.
[28]La biografía de Patricia Shaw, escrita por Pedro Guardia, constituye otra valiosísima publicación sobre la historia de nuestros estudios en España.

A estas han seguido otras muchas asociaciones hasta el presente.[29] El tiempo ha demostrado que no han restado vigor al *alma mater*, sino que han sumado especialización y profundización al diálogo académico.

También, a finales de los ochenta, las ilusionantes expectativas del proyecto de Unión Europea calaron en nuestros estudios.[30] Especialmente Robert Clark (U. East Anglia) y Piero Boitani (U. Sapienza, Roma) impulsaron el proyecto de una asociación supranacional de Estudios Ingleses en el ámbito europeo.[31] El proyecto de ESSE (European Society for the Study of English), del que AEDEAN fue miembro fundador, entró en vigor en 1990. Al año siguiente se celebró su *Inaugural Conference* en Norwich. Desde entonces, los congresos de ESSE siempre han contado con una nutrida delegación española. En 2004, la séptima edición se celebró en la Universidad de Zaragoza, cuyo comité organizador estuvo presidido por Susana Onega. Prueba de la pujanza y el vigor de los Estudios Ingleses españoles en Europa ha sido la presencia de investigadores españoles en órganos directivos de ESSE, como la Presidencia, ocupada por Fernando Galván (2007-2013), o en otros cargos directivos: la Tesorería, con Carmelo Cunchillos (1996-2002) y Alberto Lázaro (2014-2020), así como el desempeño de Isabel Carrera en el cargo de Editora General de *EJES* desde 2016, y de Laura Esteban, que asumirá el cargo de Editora de *The ESSE Messenger*, la "Newsletter" de ESSE, a partir de enero de 2023.

A finales del siglo XX entrábamos en la era digital casi inadvertidamente. Se dio el caso de que en ESSE/3 (Glasgow, 1995) se decidió cambiar la forma de presentar las comunicaciones a sesiones tipo seminario. Ello suponía enviar con antelación dichas comunicaciones al resto de intervinientes en el seminario. Estas circularon por correo postal antes de ESSE/4, organizado en Debrecen en 1997. Tan solo al año siguiente, internet—y el correo electrónico—empezó a ser accesible desde algún punto de cada Facultad o Departamento,[32] y poco a poco se extendió a los despachos y aulas. Asimismo, las actas de congresos de AEDEAN desde el de León (1999) hasta el de Almería (2010) fueron publicadas en soporte CD-ROM, con la excepción de las del de Santiago de Compostela (2002) que se editaron en soporte papel en conmemoración del medio siglo de Estudios Ingleses en España. Las actas han sido publicadas como libro electrónico desde el congreso organizado por la Autònoma de Barcelona (2011). Con la llegada de internet y los grandes avances en tecnología informática tomó vigor lo que ha venido a denominarse "Humanidades Digitales" con igual impacto en las vertientes idiomática-lingüística y literaria-cultural.

3. Los Estudios Ingleses en España y el EEES (2000-2022)

El siglo XX se despedía con el llamado Plan Bolonia y la creación del Espacio Europeo de Educación Superior (EEES). En consecuencia, la Universidad española emprendió de nuevo un proceso de adaptación y modificación de sus planes de estudios que duraría más de una década, sin que hoy día tengamos suficiente perspectiva histórica para enjuiciar sus perjuicios o beneficios, al menos en lo que respecta a Filología Inglesa.

El primer paso de esta adaptación fue la Ley Orgánica 6/2001 de Universidades (LOU, *B.O.E.* 24 de diciembre), que dedicaba el Título XIII a la movilidad del profesorado dentro del EEES, y a la implantación del crédito europeo (ECTS, siglas de European Credit Transfer System) como unidad de cómputo en la formación del alumnado, con un promedio de 25 horas, 10 de actividades presenciales en el aula y 15 de trabajo autónomo. Además de esta Ley Orgánica, se tomaron otras medidas orientadas a la convergencia en el ámbito de la educación superior y desarrollo del EEES. Entre ellas, merece destacarse el Suplemento Europeo al Título, que reguló el Real Decreto 1044/2003, de 1 de agosto (*B.O.E.* 11 de septiembre), y que ha sido actualizado varias veces desde entonces, especialmente por el Real Decreto 1393/2007, de 29 de octubre (*B.O.E.* 30 de octubre), cuyo artículo 22 detallaba las circunstancia para incluir la mención europea en el anverso del título de Doctor.[33]

La LOU creó la Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación (ANECA) para cumplir "las funciones de acreditación y evaluación del profesorado universitario, de evaluación de titulaciones universitarias, mejora de la calidad, seguimiento de resultados e informe en el ámbito universitario." A partir de entonces, se exigiría la acreditación

[29]Entre ellas, AEDEI (Asociación Española de Estudios Irlandeses), AEEC (Asociación Española de Estudios Canadienses), AEEII (Asociación Española de Estudios Interdisciplinarios sobre la India), AESLA (Asociación Española de Lingüística Aplicada), ASYRAS (Asociación de Jóvenes Investigadores en Estudios Anglófonos), SAAS (Spanish Association for American Studies) y Asociación Española James Joyce.
[30]Esta también fue la época del inicio de los programas Sócrates y Erasmus.
[31] Boitani, quien ocuparía la primera Presidencia de ESSE, y H. J. Diller (el entonces Presidente de la *Deutscher Anglistenverband*) hablaron sobre "English Studies in Europe" durante el congreso de León (1987). Véase también Diller, "The Birth and Growth of ESSE" (2000).
[32]Desde 1993, las universidades poseían un dispositivo que permitía, al menos, el envío de documentos de forma electrónica.
[33]Véase también el Real Decreto 195/2016 de 13 de mayo (*B.O.E.* 3 de junio) por el que se establecen los requisitos para la expedición del Suplemento Europeo al Título Universitario de Doctor, y cuyo artículo 15 enumera las circunstancias para añadir la mención "Doctorado Internacional" en su anverso.

de la ANECA (o de la agencia similar de las Comunidades Autónomas) para las nuevas figuras de ayudante doctor y contratado doctor, esta última con vinculación laboral permanente.

En cuanto a los cuerpos de profesores numerarios, se redujo a CUs y TUs, para cuyo acceso fueron ideadas las pruebas de habilitación a nivel nacional que debían superarse antes de presentarse al concurso-oposición a las plazas que cada Universidad había previamente declarado vacantes. Las pruebas de habilitación se celebraban en la Universidad correspondiente a quien ocupase la presidencia de cada comisión. La modificación de la LOU por la Ley Orgánica 4/2007, de 12 de abril (*B.O.E.* 13 de abril) sustituyó las pruebas de habilitación por la debida acreditación de la ANECA.[34]

El siguiente paso consistió en el arduo proceso de elaboración de los planes de estudios en el marco europeo. Para ello, y en lo que atañe a nuestros estudios, se comenzó por sentar las bases del *Libro Blanco* de las futuras titulaciones en el ámbito filológico, en cuya coordinación participó Pilar Abad. Este documento, publicado sin fecha por la ANECA, recogía las competencias propias de las titulaciones en Filología Inglesa (799-827, esp. 799-803).

A continuación, se aprobó el Real Decreto 1393/2007 (*B.O.E.* 30 de octubre) por el que se establecía la ordenación de las enseñanzas universitarias oficiales, que tendría varias correcciones y aclaraciones posteriores. Como novedad, se regulaba el seguimiento de la calidad de las titulaciones por las Comisiones de Calidad de cada Centro, y la evaluación de los Grados por la ANECA cada seis años.

La trayectoria desde la elaboración del *Libro Blanco* hasta el reconocimiento del Grado en Estudios Ingleses estuvo jalonada por incertidumbres sobre el futuro de nuestra disciplina y su tenaz defensa. El problema estribaba en que el borrador de la ficha técnica de una titulación en Lenguas Modernas (con un *major* y un *minor*) ponía en peligro la pervivencia de la Filología Inglesa tal y como hasta entonces se había desarrollado. Nuestra Asociación (primero bajo la Presidencia de María Teresa Turell y, luego, de María Socorro Suárez) no cejó en la defensa de un Grado en Estudios Ingleses, aunque también mostraba su disponibilidad a participar en un Grado en Lenguas Modernas.

El 9 de mayo de 2005 Fernando Galván y María Teresa Turell publicaron una tribuna en el periódico *El País* titulada "La desaparición de la filología inglesa: ¿es eso la convergencia europea?,"[35] en la que denunciaban el intento de algunos por hacer desaparecer una titulación específica de Estudios Ingleses, y explicaban las razones y las 20.000 firmas recogidas para protestar por semejante atropello. Esta fue probablemente la acción más mediática para reivindicar la continuidad de nuestros estudios. Por fortuna, esta denuncia y otros manifiestos coordinados por AEDEAN convencieron a las autoridades ministeriales,[36] y finalmente se aceptaron los Grados en Estudios Ingleses—un término que, como ha expuesto Susana Onega (2005-2008), no estaba exento de controversia tanto en Europa como en el Reino Unido y otros países de habla inglesa.

Entre otros aspectos, el nuevo Grado forma parte de las titulaciones dentro de la Rama de Arte y Humanidades, con una formación equivalente a 240 créditos ECTS en cuatro cursos, seguidos o no por un Máster.[37] Esta cantidad se desglosa en un mínimo de 60 créditos de formación básica en materias propias de la Rama, y los créditos restantes se reparten—en términos generales—entre obligatorios, optativos (hasta 12,5%), prácticas externas (entre 6 y 12 créditos), y Trabajo de Fin de Grado (entre 6 y 30 créditos).

Si bien las Licenciaturas en Filología Inglesa parecían destinadas a convertirse curso a curso en los nuevos Grados en Estudios Ingleses, el espíritu del EEES trajo aparejada una enorme versatilidad en el diseño de las nuevas titulaciones. Finalmente, aunque en la mayoría de Universidades se impuso el Grado en Estudios Ingleses, en algunas fue el Grado en Lenguas Modernas el que sustituyó a la Licenciatura en Filología Inglesa. En bastantes coexisten ambos Grados, y en algunas nuestros estudios se ofertan como Grado propio y como doble Grado en lenguas, e incluso combinado con disciplinas de otras Ramas, como es el caso de la combinación de inglés con educación infantil y primaria. Las nuevas titulaciones se implantaron entre 2009 y 2011, siendo en la Universidad de Alcalá donde únicamente se iniciaron nuestros estudios en el primer año.

Los nuevos Grados en Estudios Ingleses vieron incrementar considerablemente las nuevas matrículas con respecto a las Licenciaturas; sin embargo, en muchos casos, mermaron la formación debido a tres factores principales. Por un lado, el contexto de la grave crisis de 2008 trajo como efecto drásticas medidas presupuestarias durante varios años, especialmente

[34]El Real Decreto 14/2012 de 20 de abril (*B.O.E.* 21 de abril) volvió a reformar la LOU, introduciendo "medidas urgentes de racionalización del gasto público en el ámbito educativo," y permanece en vigor con modificaciones.
[35]También está disponible online (suplemento "Universidad"), aquí firmada por Turell y Galván.
[36]Los números de *Nexus* 2005.1 y 2006.1 dejaron constancia de este momento crítico. El segundo de ellos contiene la sección "Comunicados y manifiestos hechos por AEDEAN en demanda de un Título de Grado en Estudios Ingleses" (Suárez Lafuente 2006).
[37]Como diseño alternativo, por ejemplo, en Italia se optó por tres cursos de Grado, seguidos o no por un Máster de dos cursos.

en cuanto a la reposición del profesorado jubilado, recorte de becas, incentivos a la investigación y supresión de ayudas para la organización de eventos académicos. Por otro lado, el espíritu de la LOU descentralizaba aún más la gestión universitaria y la toma de decisiones en materia de organización y planes de estudios en favor de las Comunidades Autónomas y de las Universidades, con efectos beneficiosos o adversos según la economía, demografía, líneas prioritarias de investigación y otros parámetros de cada Comunidad. Y por otro, la propia naturaleza de los Grados antepone las competencias sobre el conocimiento, el saber hacer sobre el saber, lo cual puede funcionar bien en carreras de Ingenierías y de Ciencias, pero tal vez no tanto en las de Humanidades. Para complicar el panorama, esta formación con miras a facilitar la integración del alumnado en el mundo laboral no siempre ha venido acompañada del máster o másteres ideales, como se prefiguraba a la hora de diseñar los Grados. La suerte de los estudios de posgrado ha estado igualmente sujeta a los criterios particulares de política regional y universitaria, lo cual ha afectado para bien o para mal al alumnado según en el punto del territorio nacional donde realizara el Grado.

Tras la implantación de los Grados, el Real Decreto 99/2011 de 28 de enero (*B.O.E.* 10 de febrero) reformó sustancialmente los estudios de tercer ciclo, que recibió el nombre de Doctorado. Los programas dejaron de ser gestionados por los Departamentos para ser centralizados en las Escuelas de Doctorado, que son reguladas por los Estatutos de cada Universidad. Además, suprimió los cursos de doctorado. En su lugar introdujo la realización de otras actividades incluyendo cursos breves, publicaciones, y participaciones en seminarios y congresos. Esto último ha propiciado la organización de eventos para jóvenes investigadores, tales como "AEDEAN Doctoral Seminars" (coordinados hasta la fecha por Ignacio Palacios) o "SEDERI Junior Conferences."[38] La duración establecida para el Doctorado es de tres años prorrogables, y finaliza con la elaboración y defensa de la tesis doctoral. Esta debe ser original, pero no inédita, ya que dicha tesis puede consistir en la publicación de un conjunto de artículos en revistas de prestigio, o en ediciones de textos. El citato real decreto también introdujo la concesión del sello de excelencia a los programas de doctorado, distinción que han obtenido varios de ellos con participación de nuestro profesorado.

4. Conclusión

En todo este largo período de reformas, nuestros estudios se han ampliado prodigiosamente como se demuestra en la página web de AEDEAN en las distintas pestañas donde se recogen los premios que concede anualmente, las revistas nacionales de nuestra extensa área de conocimiento, los proyectos de investigación, y—sobre todo—la impresionante recopilación de publicaciones de los últimos años con una destacada proyección internacional. Nuestra verdadera historia se ha confeccionado con ese tipo de teselas individuales a lo largo del tiempo y con infinita dedicación.

Comprensiblemente, al escribir esta relación de datos cubriendo los setenta años que cumplen los Estudios Ingleses en España, ha aflorado en mi mente una inmensa galería de personas y voces, presentes o vivas en el recuerdo. Por respeto a todas ellas, no he querido aportar nombres más allá de los estrictamente necesarios y por razones que se justifican solas.

Desconozco lo que sucede en otras asociaciones similares, pero la nuestra se ha caracterizado por una especial atención a su trayectoria. Volver la mirada al pasado frecuentemente se asocia con sentimientos de nostalgia o crisis. No es el caso, sino muy al contrario. Como pudo constatar nuestro actual Presidente Alberto Lázaro durante el congreso (online) de Cantabria en 2021, nuestros Estudios Ingleses gozan de buena salud. La efeméride del setenta aniversario es una ocasión excelente para celebrarlo.

[38]Hasta la fecha, se han organizados tres "AEDEAN Doctoral Seminars" en el mes de julio. Su primera edición tuvo lugar en Alcalá de Henares (2019), y posteriormente ha tomado el testigo el equipo de la universidad que hubiera organizado el congreso de AEDEAN en el año anterior: Alicante (2021, online) y Cantabria (2022)."SEDERI Juniors" se celebra en octubre, la primera edición en Murcia (2019) y la segunda en la Autónoma de Madrid (2022), con jóvenes investigadores al frente del comité organizador (Jennifer Ruiz-Morgan y David Amelang, respectivamente).

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A Satiric Quest for Knowledge: Kurt Vonnegut's Legacy (1922-2007)

In his perceptive essay on Vonnegut's masterpiece *Slaughterhouse-Five*, Salman Rushdie comments that the first time he read the novel, in 1972, he felt the presence in its pages of the Vietnam War. Despite the fact that Vonnegut's classic book deals with the Second World War and its psychological aftermaths, Rushdie argues that "people's feelings about Vietnam have a good deal to do with the novel's huge success" (2019, 2). Nevertheless, the literary and emotional achievements of the novel have extended for decades after the end of the Vietnam War, which may bring to mind the idea that *Slaughterhouse-Five* is still a powerful book because wars have never stopped. Vonnegut's novel, Rushdie perceives, "sees war as a tragedy so great that perhaps only the mask of comedy allows one to look it in the eye" (3).

Born in Indianapolis on November 11, 1922, Kurt Vonnegut Jr. would soon follow the existential lead of modernism, even if his love for science took him to write a very peculiar type of fiction. He was the son of a wealthy architect and the proud younger brother of Bernard Vonnegut, who was to become an expert scientist in the chaotic field of climatology. Kurt's childhood, as he sparingly commented, was happily spent within his large family household until the economic effects of the Great Depression dramatically changed his upper-class upbringing. In effect, his family's financial problems produced a deep influence in the political and social views that the future writer was going to offer in his books.

Donald E. Morse brilliantly summarizes the role Vonnegut plays in the history of American literature: "There is a good case to be made for seeing Kurt Vonnegut as the representative post-World War II American writer. He adapted and extended popular literary forms, such as science fiction, the spy novel, prison narrative, hoax autobiography, memoir, and so forth while experimenting extensively with literary technique—experiments now labeled 'postmodern'" (2000, 395).

In 1969, writer Ronald Sukenick had famously argued in his novella *Death of the Novel* that the time had come for a *post-realism* because all "absolutes had become absolutely problematic" (1969, 41). At the time, the mimetic and the self-referential were stylistic options that critics still used to separate creative writers in two different factions, realists and metafictionists. At that stage of postmodernism, before Jameson declared the commodification of all, Sukenick was among those authors who used radical metafictional strategies, which soon won them the qualification of *postmodern* on account of the capacity metafiction has to question traditional ideological ways to represent reality. Other writers—frequently literary critics and university professors—such as John Barth, Raymond Federman, William Gass, and Gilbert Sorrentino also belonged to this group that, for a few years, seemed to be the exclusive representative of the postmodern ethos in fiction, with terms such as "surfiction," "metafiction," or "post-realism" to qualify them as a distinctive school of writing (see Linda Hutcheon 1991). However, even if not yet nominated to become a member of the postmodern *élite*, by 1969 Vonnegut had already written some examples of "post-realist" fiction, such as his second novel *The Sirens of Titan*. In 1969, he finally published his long-delayed book about the destruction of Dresden, *Slaughterhouse-Five*, a novel that, as the author's narrating persona confessed in its first pages, he had been trying to write for more than 20 years.

Soon after the publication of his masterpiece, critics established Vonnegut as one among the most relevant postmodern novelists, together with Thomas Pynchon, E. L. Doctorow and Don DeLillo, to revise both American culture and the realist post-war novel in the light of the scientific revolutions of modern times.

In the 1950s, at the beginning of his writing career, Vonnegut writes a large number of short stories that deal with the representation of post-war US middle-class and with the changes brought about by the new consumer's society; from the traditional large family, Americans have now moved into a new type of family relation based on a nuclear unit of three or four members who are frequently on the move, in search for better job opportunities. Soon the analysis of manners in the USA will take the form of the disguised science-fiction satiric parable, one of the most remarkable literary strategies used by Vonnegut to analyze American life.

Following in the steps of his older brother, Kurt Jr. had spent three years at Cornell, mostly taking courses on chemistry and biology, a university education that, after serving as an infantry soldier in the Second World War, he complemented by enrolling at the University of Chicago's graduate program in anthropology where, between 1945 to 1947, he drafted and had rejected three MA theses. In 1952 he published *Player Piano*, a bitter and prophetic dystopia about the replacement of human beings by machines that did not bring him much money until it was later released as a pulp-paperback and had its title changed to *Utopia-14*. In this first novel, Vonnegut ponders on post-war life in the USA and foresees that unemployment is going to be one of the biggest problems of post-industrial societies. In 1959 he publishes, directly in paperback form, his remarkable second novel, *The Sirens of Titan*, a book with which Vonnegut consciously departs from what critics at the time still considered to be "serious writing." With the help of a cover that featured semi-nude females, this novel repositioned him as a sci-fi writer. His relocation from the field of "serious writing" literally gives life to Vonnegut's metafictional *alter ego* in the invented character of sci-fi author Kilgore Trout, a figure that was to feature in many of his novels and that seemed to impersonate Vonnegut's own fears to be a second-rate pulp-fiction writer for the rest of his life (Klinkowitz 1982). More novels followed in a popular mix of genres, including the remarkable *Mother Night* (1961), and in all of them attentive readers could perceive the writer's humane approach underneath his often bitter and satiric comments about post-war American life and manners. However, it is not till he completes *Slaughterhouse-Five*

in 1969 that he becomes recognized as a *serious* top writer and social analyst. Not surprisingly, Vonnegut's entrance in the canon of "serious writing" also coincides with the end of a period that is strongly connected to the affluence of American post-war economy (Temperley and Bradbury 1989, 302-21). By 1969 affluence and political conservatism have given way to the counter-cultural and postmodern ethos characterized by the fight for social freedom, literary experimentation, and technical saturation, and Kurt Vonnegut clearly fits into the spirit of the times.

Slaughterhouse-Five represents the beginning of Vonnegut's aura as a postmodern author despite the fact that he had already introduced non-mimetic techniques in his earlier fiction, thus highlighting the power story-telling has in our interpretation of reality. His careful combination of scientific beliefs with the deployment of metafictional strategies to metaphorize those beliefs became his most remarkable stylistic attribute. The novel, Vonnegut seemed to think, could not be a simple depiction of the way in which human senses perceive reality. In clear agreement with other novelists of the period such as Sukenick or Barth, for Vonnegut classic realism was dead and the writer had to provide the novel with new formulas for its replenishment. Together with his persona's report, in the introductory chapter of *Slaughterhouse-Five*, of the reasons why he decided to write a book about the destruction of Dresden, his plain style and syntax, and the obvious defamiliarization of traditional topics became the most efficient strategies that explain the book's long success. In his second novel, *The Sirens of Titan* (1959), Vonnegut has Rumfoord and his dog traveling in the space-time continuum, thus imitating the behavior of the wave/particle entity, as studied in quantum mechanics. Similarly, *Slaughterhouse-Five* meant the metaphorization of space-time traveling. In a highly innovative way, Vonnegut combined notions related to the new physics with actual reports on historical events concerning the destruction of Dresden, which he had witnessed twenty-four years earlier. The result was a historiographic metafictional book, belonging to that typical subgenre of postmodern fiction with which Linda Hutcheon referred to those novels that "are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages" (1988, 5). Eventually, this type of self-conscious but historical fiction discovers for its readers one of the most controversial arguments defended in the postmodern period by some of its most influential theorists, especially Derrida and Lacan. For them, humans are always already trapped in language and all knowledge is thus mediated by human narratives. By showing his persona's hand in his historiographic metafictional book, Vonnegut invited his readers to think about the artificiality existing in any textual construct, be it *fictional* novel or *factual* historical report. Both types of narratives seem to have the same epistemological status and therefore belong into the same ontology, a state of being that, as Vonnegut's contemporary critics ceaselessly repeated (Smyth 1991; Hite 1991; Newton 1997), cannot escape from cognitive uncertainty and indeterminacy. Breaking with traditional thinking, postmodern interpretations of life were no longer trapped in a set of eternal or universal truths but in the interpretations of the writer, be it a novelist or an historian. Accordingly, fiction writers suggested in their works that their interpretation of reality could be as valid as the ones provided by historians and that creative literature could be even more honest than traditional historiography because the metafictional novelist does not disguise his or her story as a report of what "truly" happened.

In this way, fact and fiction, remembrances and conscious invention go together in Vonnegut's celebrated novel to make readers think about the concept of historical truth. For many years, the firebombing of Dresden had been classified information, as the narrator abundantly points out while contrasting the few available historical records with the direct report of his own persona, as he had witnessed the destruction of the German city and the massacre of its civilians, an event that even surpassed the deadly statistics of either Hiroshima or Nagasaki.

Stylistically, *Slaughterhouse-Five* is also the product of Vonnegut's impeccable use of Shklovsky's notion of defamiliarization (1925, Chapter 1). The novelist connects it to the feeling of the Absurd, a predominant trait of European existential thinking in the 1950s and 1960s. Thus, Vonnegut presents very tragic events—he is mostly dealing with death and war—wrapped with a simple, plain, even irreverent style; the result being the defamiliarizing subversion of the seriousness with which Western society has traditionally treated war, death, and human suffering. Critics soon catalogued Vonnegut's novel as "black humor," a label that in this case may also be associated to the more traditional definition of the burlesque (Jump 1972, 3). In addition, with a formal arrangement of the story as an apparently disordered presentation of events in small episodes, *Slaughterhouse-Five* also exemplified the sense of fragmentation and destruction combined with the pessimism that two world wars had brought to the 20th Century.

John Russell Taylor's definition of the Absurd in the *Penguin Dictionary of Theatre* may help readers to clarify further Vonnegut's strategies in his famous novel:

> ***Absurd, Theatre of.*** **Term applied to a group of dramatists in the 1950s who did not regard themselves as a school but who all seemed to share certain attitudes towards the predicament of man in the universe: essentially those summarized by Albert Camus in his essay *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942). This diagnoses humanity's plight as purposelessness in an existence out of harmony with its surroundings (absurd literally means out of harmony). Awareness of this lack of purpose in all we do [...] produces a state of metaphysical anguish which is the central theme in the writers in the Theatre of the Absurd. [… In this Theatre] the ideas are allowed to shape the form as well as the content: all semblance of logical construction, of the rational linking of idea with idea**

in an intellectually viable argument, is abandoned, and instead the irrationality of experience is transferred to the stage. (Quoted in Hinchliffe 1969, 1)

In *Slaughterhouse–Five* the ideas of existential absurdity that "are allowed to shape the form as well as the content" are reflected in a variety of strategies that can be listed as follows: the lack of chronology in the presentation of the story (with a line of events frequently interrupted by the narrative voice), the metaphorization of relativity and quantum theories in Billy Pilgrim's time traveling, the mise-en-abymic type of fiction written by the Tralfamadorians[1] and their satirical secondary world, the repetition of linguistic tags that suggest the vicious and repetitive character of language ("so it goes"), or the announcement at the introductory chapter of the novel of the words used at the beginning and end of the story. All these devices resulted in a new type of experimental and metafictional narrative, paradoxically absurd but very readable and entertaining at the same time, that the writer kept on using in his later fiction, gradually dropping some of these techniques and replacing them with new ones.

A fundamental critical issue also to be considered here is that Vonnegut wrote a long-lasting story about *traumatic* experiences, which may also help readers to understand why he consciously resorted to experimental fiction and, more specifically, to those metafictional techniques that openly questioned the book's own validity as a truthful report of the narrated events. The traditional division between the factual and the fictional seemed to be of no concern for the American writer. As early as the first page of the metafictional introductory chapter, readers have to cope with the sentence "All this happened, more or less." Then the narrator claims that "the war parts" are "pretty much true" but, what about the rest of the reported events? Why does *Slaughterhouse-Five* still have such an impressive ethical effect on its readers even if it openly draws attention to its own fictional condition? To answer these questions, the use of experimental devices in *Slaughterhouse-Five* needs to be analyzed with reference to the author's capacity to work through his own traumatized memories (see LaCapra 2001, Chapter 1). *Slaughterhouse-Five* offers an intense example of Vonnegut's capacity to integrate notions related to contemporary science with his own traumatic experiences, while also resorting to the postmodernist concept that humans are mediated by a web of textual discourse. By the time the novel was published, the writer was playing on new grounds in literature by supporting 20th-century scientific views on reality that strongly questioned the Newtonian interpretation of the Universe. Trauma Studies had not yet seen the light and the understanding of reality provided by such scientific views as relativity theory and quantum mechanics some decades earlier had not been sufficiently grasped by the common public yet. However, the effects of WWII—refracted by the war in Korea and the escalating of the Vietnam War—were still present in the American ethos. In a sense, we may imply that the situation has not changed much since 1969; most people understand reality exclusively from a Newtonian, sensorial perspective and the implications of the Holocaust, for instance, still provide arguments for critical discussion. Probably, such lack of cultural and scientific assimilation is the main factor that still makes many readers react to Vonnegut's mixture of scientific theories on reality, war trauma, and experimental techniques, and produce the lasting ethical effects of the novel. For many years, *Slaughterhouse-Five* was understood as a devastating denunciation of the *status quo* and political lies, but also as a prototypical product of postmodern experimentation. The author's capacity to anticipate themes and use techniques that are still relevant many years later quickly transports the unaware reader from humor to tragedy and human failure, but also from post-Newtonian perspectives about reality to political denunciation and trauma.

As hinted above, the novel is divided in two clear parts. On the one hand, there is the first chapter, with a narrator who comments on the process of writing the story that follows; the narrator is also the protagonist in this chapter. On the other, stands the rest of the book, which consists of a fragmented presentation of chapters in which readers are invited to follow Billy Pilgrim's jumps in time and space. Spatial and temporal disorder as well as other experimental strategies are common in this second part, in which the narrator is not the protagonist of his report anymore. On the contrary, explicitly representing Vonnegut's persona, the narrative voice from the second chapter onwards becomes at times a direct witness of the war events depicted in the novel. However, at some other times he also becomes an omniscient non-participant figure when reporting the events pertaining Billy's life as a civilian on earth or as an abducted Earthling on planet Tralfamadore. From a narratological perspective, then, we can also imply that the narrator is a figure that "jumps" in his roles as protagonist, witness, or omniscient voice-over. That is to say, he shares the same characteristic that defines Billy: his restless, alternating condition, a feature that also symbolizes the behavior of the electron in quantum mechanics. Both, the narrator and Billy, suggest in their own narrative representations that Newton's law of cause and effect and the classic linearity of time do not have to apply to them or, by extension, to our understanding of reality.

[1]The reading of the following extract from *Slaughterhouse–Five*, often quoted by Vonnegut's critics, is a clear example that the writer was in fact referring to the avant-garde type of novel he himself was actually attempting in his book: "The Trafalmadorian books were laid out—in brief clumps of symbols separated by stars […] 'each clump of symbols is a brief, urgent message—describing a situation, a scene. We Trafalmadorians read them all at once, not one after the other. There isn't any particular relationship between all the messages, except that the author has chosen them carefully, so that, when seen all at once, they produce an image of life that is beautiful and surprising and deep. There is no beginning, no middle, no end, no suspense, no moral, no causes, no effects'" (1979, 62-63).

However, a complementary explanation for the double structure of the book is also possible from the framework of Trauma Studies, with authorial distance and therapeutic purposes as key-issues for such interpretation. As Susanne Vees-Gulani perceptively argues, *Slaughterhouse-Five* features a fusion of autobiography and fiction that helps the author to keep the distance from the text and its implications, that is to say, to work through his own traumatic experiences:

> **Vonnegut tries not to face his suppressed memories directly but to get to the core by slowly uncovering layer after layer. The novel reflects this process of narrowing in on himself through the two trauma stories. Billy's story allows an indirect and detached exploration of the effects of the Dresden bombing because the character is mostly fictional. The narrator's story parallels Vonnegut's on one level, but on another level, it is an integral part of a work of fiction. Removing himself from the factual to the fictional plane by creating the narrator allows Vonnegut a degree of distance from himself and his experiences. Consequently, the final point of recovery in this process of self-therapy is not achieved in the novel but rather comes with its completion. (2003, 182)**

As mentioned above, in the first chapter the narrator discloses the fictionality of, at least, part of the story that follows while also affirming the historical quality of some of the reported events. Furthermore, he openly announces his role as the author of the book and provides his readers with the reasons why he decided to write it, also anticipating the type of novel he wanted to write. In other words, the introductory chapter is a text about writing a text. Thus, so early in the novel Vonnegut details some of the main recourses he will use to report on Billy Pilgrim's story from an experimental perspective. The first chapter concludes with the narrator inviting his narratee with a "Listen" after having explicitly said that he is the author['s persona], ready to identify himself overtly as a witness in some moments of the forthcoming report: "Somebody behind [Billy Pilgrim] in the boxcar said, 'Oz'. That was I. That was me" (1979, 100). The narratorial interference is, obviously, metafictional; the writer's persona appears as a witness in the story by showing his hand as narrator. However, the narrator's intrusions in the world of the story comically hide a more important notion that takes readers from the field of metafiction to the grounds of trauma: the author was both a witness and a *victim* of the events he reports about Pilgrim's adventures at the war front and in the city of Dresden. *Slaughterhouse-Five* is, in that sense, also a testimony of traumatic experiences (Cacicedo 2005, 358; Peebles 2005, 485). In effect, as Vonnegut also recounts in his novel, he was an infantry scout captured by the Germans in December 1944, following the battle of the Bulge. On February 13, 1945, as a POW secluded in the Slaughterhouse-Five of the German city, he became a surviving witness of the firebombing and almost total destruction of Dresden by a combined strike of the Allied air forces. The result was the massacre of possibly more than 150,000 people, mostly civilians, a fact that the Allies kept as classified information till the 1960s, when books—including Vonnegut's novel—and newspapers started to disclose the magnitude of the events.[2] The author's persona explicitly refers to the fact that the massacre had been classified information for a long time and sarcastically wonders, "Secret? My God-from *whom*?" (1979, 15).

In the narrative of Billy's adventures that unfolds from the second chapter, some experimental devices explicitly refer to the understanding of reality brought about by discoveries in the field of post-Newtonian physics. Possibly, the most striking ideas presented in the book from the premises of the new physics—that indirectly take the book to the grounds of science-fiction—are, first of all, the Tralfamadorians' capacity to fully experience life in the space-time continuum and, secondly, Billy Pilgrim's behavior as a quantum particle. This second strategy is not new in Vonnegut's literary world and can be traced back to his 1959 novel *The Sirens of Titan*, where a man and his dog experience similar anomalies in the space-time continuum. However, in *Slaughterhouse-Five* the strategy also allows for the complementary interpretation provided by Trauma Studies. Thus, Chapter Two marks the beginning of the report on Billy's adventures but it also signals the protagonist's peculiar condition: like the quantum particle, Billy is "unstuck in time." That is to say, no observer—not even Billy himself—can totally fix his position in space and momentum in time. Evoking Heisenberg's formulation of the Uncertainty Principle, the protagonist shows a *schizophrenic* behavior, a notion that readers should not take at face value. His behavior is more the result of posttraumatic symptoms than of being an actual victim of schizophrenia, as Vees-Gulani convincingly argued (2003, 176-77; on the Uncertainty Principle see Davies 1991, 166).

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[2]R. H. S. Crossman describes the massacre in an article published by *Squire* in 1963, which starts as follows: "If the British Commonwealth and the United States last a thousand years, men may say that this was their darkest hour [...] Were all the crimes against humanity committed during World War II the work of Hitler's underlings? That was certainly the impression created by the fact that only Germans were brought to trial at Nuremberg. Alas! It is a false impression. We all now know that in the terrible struggle waged between the Red Army and the German Wehrmacht, the Russians displayed their fair share of insensate inhumanity. What is less widely recognized—because the truth, until only recently, has been deliberately suppressed—is that the Western democracies were responsible for the most senseless single act of mass murder committed in the whole course of World War II [...] The devastation of Dresden in February, 1945, was one of those crimes against humanity whose authors would have been arraigned at Nuremberg if that Court had not been perverted into the instrument of Allied justice. Whether measured in terms of material destruction or by loss of human life, this 'conventional' air raid was far more devastating than either of the two atomic raids against Japan that were to follow it a few months later. Out of 28,410 houses in the inner city of Dresden, 24,866 were destroyed; and the area of total destruction extended over eleven square miles."

Readers should not forget that being a survivor and a witness of the Dresden massacre was not the only traumatic experience the novelist was exposed to. Kathryn Hume reminds us that Kurt Vonnegut's infancy may not have been a happy one (1998, 225-26, 229). In addition, in 1944, while being a student at Cornell, Vonnegut contracted pneumonia. When he recovered, the future fiction writer could not resume his studies because he was conscripted into the Army. Vonnegut has mentioned several times that, as a third generation German-American, in the war he was expected to shoot at enemies who could be his own cousins. He considered his participation in WWII, as well as many other relevant events in his life, to be the result of "time and luck" (Collado-Rodríguez 1996, 479-81), a notion that brings him close to existentialist premises and the issue of fate. The novelist has frequently referred to the duality time/luck to comment on the miseries of the human condition (Klinkowitz 1982). Not surprisingly, as his literary persona affirms already on the first pages of the novel, he tried hard to write a book about the Dresden massacre for 23 years, but nothing substantial came into his mind. In Chapter One, the narrator insistently exposes the difficulties that he experienced to write the story of the massacre (Vonnegut 1979, 9-11). The magnitude of the tragedy characteristically led him to keep silent till he was finally able to complete the novel, a situation that is also mentioned in Billy's case, whose frequent moments of traumatized silence and peculiar behavior evoke the writer's personal posttraumatic condition on several occasions (see Vees-Gulani 2003, 180-81 and Cacicedo 2005, 358-64). Vonnegut seemed to be working hard to work through his own traumas but readers of *Slaughterhouse-Five* may eventually think that the writer could not finally organize his memories of the war experience in a full narrative about Dresden because the events of the city's firebombing occupy only a few pages of the novel. In other words, following premises defended by trauma theorists, we might conclude that the writer's traumatized condition kept him silent for more than two decades and that he could transform the events he witnessed only into an incomplete therapeutic report.

At the time of the novel's release, science had already played a relevant part in the writer's life. By the end of the 1960s, on account of his two first novels, Vonnegut had been labeled as a science-fiction writer and in *Slaughterhouse-Five* he seems to consider such possibility in ironic terms (Klinkowitz 1982, 69-74). Tralfamadore is used here as a satiric device to throw opinions about humanity's insane condition but also as an excuse to explain the fragmented, "telegraphic schizophrenic" presentation of the story—as announced in the subtitle. His representation of Tralfamadorean life also points to the writer's artistic attempts to understand the new reality depicted by contemporary science and to his well-known interest in abstract expressionism (Collado-Rodríguez 1996, 478-79). From the perspective of Trauma Studies, we can extrapolate that the invention of Tralfamadore refers also to the author's traumatized condition and the role literature may play as a therapeutic strategy to soothe the pains of posttraumatic stress. The extraterrestrial world provides the writer, in this interpretation, with an escape route to avoid facing his daily life as a veteran who had witnessed the firebombing in which his own Forces destroyed the beautiful German city, killed thousands of innocent civilians, and almost killed him and the other Allied POWs. Within the narrative, Billy's doctors locate the reasons for his mental condition only in a previous childhood experience when his father throws him in a swimming pool. However, Billy's daughter also allows readers to glimpse at the Freudian concept of deferred action or *afterwardness* in connection with trauma, when she suggests that his father only started to think of Tralfamadore after having survived an airplane crash in 1969—a new traumatic experience that would accelerate the psychic consequences of his war trauma (see Flanagan 2002, 399).

In fact, it is only when Billy is at the hospital recovering from the accident that he becomes a fan of Kilgore Trout's sci-fi novels. Moreover, one of the stories he reads is remarkably similar to the experiences he reports about his having been kidnapped by Tralfamadorians and put in a zoo with a sexy Earthling female (Vonnegut 1979, 90). Sci-fi, the narrator explains, helps Billy to construct a new life for himself, openly pointing to the capacity of literature as therapy to alleviate posttraumatic pain (70). Tralfamadorian philosophy is based mostly on relativity theory, which is exemplified in the extraterrestrials' capacity to perceive past, present, and future at once. Thanks to such capacity, their resulting analysis of human life is ironically pathetic, suggesting the existence of a structural trauma affecting all humankind. Thus, Billy reports on the way Tralfamadorian understand human mortality:

> **The Tralfamadorian can look at all the different moments just that way we can look at a stretch of the Rocky Mountains, for instance. They can see how permanent all the moments are, and they can look at any moment that interests them. It is just an illusion we have here on Earth that one moment follows another one, like beads on a string, and that once a moment is gone it is gone forever.**
>
> **When a Tralfadorian sees a corpse, all he thinks is that the dead person is in a bad condition in that particular moment, but that the same person is just fine in plenty of other moments. Now, when I myself hear that somebody is dead, I simply shrug and say what the Tralfamadorians say about dead people, which is "so it goes." (67)**

The protagonist's passivity when dealing with the issue of human mortality, filtered by the space-time advantaged point enjoyed by the Tralfamadorians, adds to Billy's traumatic experiences in the swimming pool and the airplane crash,

and the historical trauma represented by his role as witness of the Dresden firebombing. Not surprisingly, Vonnegut's protagonist soon became one of the prototypical *vulnerable* heroes in postwar North American fiction (Hendin 1978, 258-59).

Among the other experimental devices that the writer uses in *Slaughterhouse-Five* linking science to traumatic experiences, also stand out the subtitle of the novel and some information disclosed in its metafictional first chapter. Thanks to a long subtitling paragraph, readers know that this "is a novel somewhat in the telegraphic schizophrenic manner of tales of the planet Tralfamadore, where the flying saucers come from." The subtitle is already an indication that we cannot take the author's "seriousness" for granted but also that Billy's belief in the existence of Tralfamadore is a feature that already corresponds to his author's literary world. In effect, the robotic extraterrestrial creatures had already appeared as characters in his previous fiction. Billy is not, therefore, the inventor of Tralfamadore. Consequently, to believe that he is simply a traumatized lunatic who invents an extraterrestrial adventure for escapist purposes would defy the internal logic of Vonnegut's literary universe while also subverting the alleged simplicity of the narrative. On the contrary, both creator and fictional character seem to share the belief in an understanding of the Universe that strongly contrasts with the human pompous want for total freedom. Within Vonnegut's literary universe, it is important to remember that in *The Sirens of Titan* the Trafalmadorians already symbolize the inevitability of cosmic effects on the helpless humankind; eventually even the construction of such a big landmark in human history as the Great Wall of China is nothing but a message sent to their messenger Salo by the extraterrestrial beings.

By the end of the 1980s, Vonnegut published two other novels characterized by surprisingly different existential tones; a certain optimism present in *Bluebeard* (1987) about the world of American abstract expressionism gave way to the tense but also homodiegetic narrative of *Hocus Pocus* (1990), where the pessimism of the author becomes more than evident. The publication of his last novel in 1997 did not bring any resolution to the author's existential plight but offered an interesting technical and cultural contrast with *Slaughterhouse-Five*; almost thirty years later Vonnegut was still the experimental and absurdist critic who persistently modified techniques and beliefs in his science-bound ideology.

On November 15, 1995, I had the opportunity to interview the writer in his Manhattan family residence. Little did I know then that almost exactly one year later, on November 12, 1996, Vonnegut would have concluded the writing of what he told me was going to be—and actually was—his last novel, *Timequake*. He said then that, with this novel, he was attempting to create a book where he could represent life in its complexity and mentioned, as exemplary metaphor of his attempt, the enormous picture, with 5219 people depicted on it, that Karabekian creates in his earlier novel *Bluebeard*, published in 1987. Along the interview, I could confirm the love and pride he took in his older brother Bernard, his acceptance that life is mostly time and luck, Darwinian theory being not always valid, and above all the belief that people are embarrassed with life. All these issues appear in his last novel, where readers cannot see fulfilled the writer's earlier project about the complexity of life. However, *Timequake* represents the author's last attempt at knowledge because it ends up being a book where chaos theory approximates its readers to an epiphanic revelation that Vonnegut finally qualifies as "human awareness" or the condition of our mortality.

If *Timequake* is not the ultimate book able to depict life as a complex whole, it is one more turn of the screw in its author's literary and metafictional path; the book ends up being a novel, *Timequake Two*, about the novel Vonnegut wanted to write and which he called *Timequake One*. The main premise of the first version is, as the author explains in the Prologue of the book, that there was

> **… a timequake, a sudden glitch in the space-time continuum, [that] made everybody and everything do exactly what they'd done during a past decade, for good or ill, a second time […]. There was absolutely nothing you could say during the rerun, if you hadn't said it the first time through the decade. You couldn't even save your own life or that of a loved one, if you had failed to do that the first time through. (1997, xii)**

Thus, Vonnegut plans the fictional timequake for February 13, 2001, when the space-time continuum zaps back to February 17, 1991. Readers may also realize the autobiographical significance of such date: Dresden was firebombed on February 13, 1945. The hero in the very few events he actually describes of this story is again his literary alter ego Kilgore Trout, the old sci-fi writer, now a bum, dies at the end of the book. Meanwhile, Vonnegut "dies" for the history of the American novel in a double explosion of witticism: on the one hand, attentive readers may discover that *Timequake* is a book mostly about the author's rerun of his own life and American culture; it is his particular "timequake," in which he abundantly remembers many events of his past life and even imagines a future clam-bake party in which he is in the company of Kilgore Trout and of other people who remind him of old departed relatives and dear friends. Many emotional pages of the book are also dedicated to persons that were important in the writer's life, such as his sister Allie or his older brother Bernie, who actually died of cancer when Vonnegut had just finished the book, an event that motivated his writing of an Epilogue that finishes with the word "language." No wonder, one may think, that the book ends with such a word, being this after all a textual construct, a book about a book conceived by a master of metafictional strategies.

However, on the other hand, *Timequake* is also an example of the interest the writer took in chaos theory and its ultimate binary enigma: is life ruled by fate or played in freedom? Are our lives marked by design or by chaos?

The motif of the timequake or re-run obviously suggests the rule of fate and universal design, an authorial choice that, in any case, is contradicted by many references to the interaction of time and luck in human experience. One of the most evident examples of the mysterious ways in which life evolves is provided by the unlucky composer Zoltan Pepper; he becomes paralyzed from the waist down when his wife accidentally lands on him in the swimming pool, an event that Pepper will have to experience again during the re-run (Vonnegut 1997, 32). At the precise moment the re-run finishes, he is ringing the bell of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, where his wife works, and he is run over by a driverless fire truck. Once more, the composer is in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Time and luck replaced old Darwinian determinism in the pages of *Timequake* and, sharing in the scientific spirit of the turn the millennium, Vonnegut decidedly moved into chaos theory to support his views on human absurdity and inconsequence. If there is any hidden pattern that may explain random behavior and unexplained complex systems, we humans still have to find it (see Prigogine and Stengers 1985). Thus, storytelling became again Vonnegut's conscious contribution to provide his readers with the sense of a meaning that, however, he sometimes tried to deny. Although the writer frequently contended that humans are embarrassed by life and that we do not care for the planet's health, in his last novel the metaphorization of chaotic elements is accompanied by his old relish in the paradox of literary creation: "every book is a practical joke," he told me in 1995, "nothing in it is really happening, you can make somebody cry, or laugh [and Vonnegut laughed!], or be surprised, but absolutely nothing is going on! As you read, nothing is really happening, yet we writers found out that we can make you think that something is happening" (Collado-Rodríguez 1996, 482). In that sense, nothing *really* happens in *Timequake*; the book is a collection of remembrances, of observations, and of a few fictional events that frequently are none other than the metafictional summaries of non-existent short-stories written by the imaginary Kilgore Trout. But, out of his private re-run, Vonnegut still wished for a meaning in life. Trout ends the novel by affirming, close to his death, that the Universe is not only a conglomerate of the already old postulates defended by Einstein, energy, matter and time, but that it has a new quality: human awareness, "which exists only because there are human beings." "I have thought of a better word than *awareness*," he finally says. "Let us call it *soul*" (1997, 213-14). However, for the ones who might think that Vonnegut finally turned into a sentimental "old fart" (as he called himself more than once), the final Epilogue he writes for the book, after Bernard Vonnegut's death in April 1997, represents one more warning for people fond of romanticizing life by means of scientific discourse. Einstein also said, Vonnegut reminds us, that "Physical concepts are free creations of the human mind, and are not […] uniquely determined by the external world" (1997, 215). The famous scientist's words were going to be rephrased later in the twentieth century by many poststructuralist critics, but they also became an ultimate and paradoxical call for human attention in the writings of metafictional creators who, like Vonnegut, tried to capture intimations of immortality through their literary creations even if realizing that all they could offer was nothing but *language*. As the writer puts it at the end of the Epilogue:

> **A woman who knew Bernie for only the last ten days of his life, in the hospice at St. Peter's Hospital in Albany, described his manners while dying as "courtly" and "elegant." What a brother!**
>
> **What a language. (219)**

The novelist's pessimism and his sustained fight to cope with a reality that he seemed to dislike profoundly come again together in the last book he published before his death in 2007. In *A Man Without a Country* (2005), the old traumatic ghosts of WWII are fed again with new tragic events leading to the Iraq War and the Presidential War on Terror. However, this final time Vonnegut did not camouflage his opinions in the voice of any fictional character, the disguise of the Tralfamadorian sci-fi satire or the use of experimental techniques that might allow for only a partial release of the therapeutic truth. His ideas came directly to the point, possibly surprising some readers because of the writer's "un-American" terms. *A Man Without a Country* reaches its climactic denunciatory message in Chapter 8, where the writer quickly progresses from the particularities of George W. Bush's first election as President of the United States to echoes from WWII and to his own condition as a man who does not want to be an American anymore:

> **In case you haven't noticed, as the result of a shamelessly rigged election in Florida, in which thousands of African Americans were arbitrarily disenfranchised, we now present ourselves to the rest of the world as proud, grinning, jut-jawed, pitiless war-lovers with appallingly powerful weaponry—who stand unopposed.**
>
> **In case you haven't noticed, we are now as feared and hated all over the world as the Nazis once were.**
>
> **And with good reason [...]**
>
> **So I am a man without a country, except for the librarians and a Chicago paper called *In These Times*. (2005, 86-87)**

Tralfamadore, the writer's silence, quantum metaphors, and textual experimentation were left behind in this last book of social and political reflections where Vonnegut expressed his opinions to the limit. The author's voice being so direct and socially committed may suggest that his long working through process to cope with traumatic silence had finally given way to the total release of political denunciation that fully expresses his disgust and anxieties for the condition of the human race and for his own country, but also his ultimate compassion for the many Billy Pilgrims who populate this world.

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"Tolling reminiscent bells" The Waste Land *One Hundred Years Later*

In the literary world, 1922 is in many ways the *annus mirabilis*, the year of the publication of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, Boris Pasternak's *My Sister, Life*, Chilean Gabriela Mistral's *Desolation*, and Peruvian César Vallejo's *Trilce*, as well as of Rainer Maria Rilke's composition of *Sonnets to Orpheus* and the completion of his ten-year work on his mystical poem, *Duino Elegies*. But no doubt chief among the masterpieces that appeared that year is T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. If, as W. H. Auden believed, poetry is "memorable speech" (Auden 1935, v) or as Pound defined it, quoting Dante, poetry is "the composition of words set to music," since "most other definitions of it are indefensible or metaphysical" (Pound 1968, 437), then Eliot's poem stands as the paradigm of enduring unforgettable verse. When first published in 1922, it was received with bewilderment and admiration, as it still is today, 100 years later. Yet the poem continues to impress us as one of the most significant poems of the twentieth century that resonates well into the twenty-first as part of our postmodern consciousness.

Pound recognized the unique power of Eliot's poem even when seeing it in draft. But then he helped re-shape it. As a "sage-homme," after having "mid-wifed" the poem and "performed the Caesarean operation" (in Eliot and Haughton 1988, 626)[1] of eliminating a total of 154 lines, honing it, and tautening its poetic language by eliminating modifiers, superfluities, indecisions, and the merely photographic, thereby rendering the poetic expression harder and more compact and bringing it closer to *le mot juste*, Pound called *The Waste Land* "the longest poem in the English langwidge." He advised his friend, "Don't try to bust all records by prolonging it three pages further." By Imagist standards, "19 pages" were maybe long (in Paige 1982, 169). In its evolution modernism went from the haiku-like concision of Imagism and Vorticism to the temptation of the long poem. Pound was paying Eliot a compliment; he himself had started *The Cantos* in 1914, which by 1969 were to be 824 pages long. He aptly perceived *The Waste Land* not only as a personal achievement but as "the justification of the 'movement,' of our modern experiment, since 1900" (in Paige 1982, 180).[2] Certainly, *The Waste Land* marked the coming of age for modernism, the capstone achievement after twenty years investment in creating the modernist idiom and its institutionalization.

With its 433 lines written in seven languages, marked by abrupt juxtapositions, collages, unprecedented shifts in tone, dazzling gaps, abrupt ruptures and discontinuities, *The Waste Land* was an encyclopedic epic ranging across different cultures, literary periods, geographies and temporalities, charged with allusions to Hindu, Buddhist and Christian texts, ancient and modern literature as well as references to the aftermath of the Great War, the breaking up of empires and rise of new nations. It spoke as a timely document of its era as it mentions popular culture, jazz, tunes, the Tarot, as well as technological inventions such as cars, taxis, and gramophones. Nevertheless, the poem is also timeless because it addresses eternal human questions and because its music, rhythm and sustaining language create a potential foundation for renewal. The poem introduces the new aesthetic of the fragmentary, marking a turning point in English poetry.

An Unusual Poem

The Waste Land was published almost simultaneously in two journals, in England on October 16, in the first issue of *The Criterion* of which Eliot became editor, and in the United States in the November issue of *The Dial*. In book format it appeared with Eliot's notes at Boni and Liveright (New York) in December 1922, and in September 1923 at Leonard and Virginia Woolf's Hogarth Press.

In 1922, *The Waste Land* was certainly a strange poem. It appeared with notes written by the author himself. It was an act both of presumptuousness and of defeat. Eliot also seemed to be making a statement that poetry was a professional craft for *connoisseurs*. Yet for somebody advocating the autotelic nature of the poetic text, the notes represented an open admission of its incompleteness and the poet's need to train readers in the curriculum of cultural literacy. Pompous, chatty, deceptive, playful, vague, pedantic, educational, inconsistent, serious, and mock-serious, yet revelatory, the notes invite critical debate. These terms do not explain the poem's meaning, concealing more than they disclose. Yet with the notes Eliot engages the reader in a dialogue while setting the precedent for how the poem would be interpreted for years. He justifies the notes in different ways: as a page-filler to please the publisher who was worried that the book would be too short, as well as proof against those who might accuse him of plagiarism. Over the years, Eliot confessed he had used them deliberately (Eliot 1950, 128) to draw the readers' attention to his literary sources, but, although he regrets having "sent so many enquirers off on a wild goose chase after the Tarot cards, and the Holy Grail" (Eliot 1956, 109-10), he realizes they have become an integral part of the poem and cannot be removed.

[1]Pound's letter to Eliot, January 24, 1922.
[2]Pound's letter to his former teacher Felix. E. Schelling, July 9, 1922.

Publication and Reception

Judging by the reviews it received, *The Waste Land* stirred more attention and more positive remarks in the US than in the UK (Rainey 2005, 35-36). The first anonymous reviewer saw it as "great poem," "a collection of flashes […] a complete expression of the poet's vision of modern life. We have here range depth, and beautiful expression. […] the inextricable tangle of the sordid and the beautiful that makes up life" ("Unsigned" 1922, 77). Burton Rascoe presented it as "a readily understandable etching of modern life," "the finest poem of this generation" that "gives voice to the universal despair or resignation […] an erudite despair [… juxtaposing the] reverential and blasphemous" (Rascoe 1922, 91-92). Conrad Aiken, and Eliot's friend, argued that "the poem succeeds—as it brilliantly does—by virtue of its incoherence, not of its plan, by virtue of its ambiguities, not of its explanations" (Aiken 1923, 102). He recognized it as a modernist icon, "one of the most moving and original poems of our time" (102) that inaugurated a new technique, the allusive method, as it constituted "a kind of epic in a walnut shell: elaborate, ordered, unfolded with a logic at every joint discernible" (101).

From the beginning the poem catapulted into becoming a cultural icon of modern pessimism and post-war desolation. Critics underscored the spiritual "drouth" of the modern world, "the starvation of a whole civilization" (Wilson 1922, 86), the "sense of desolation, of uncertainty, of futility, of the groundlessness of aspirations, of the vanity of endeavor, and a thirst for a life-giving water which seems suddenly to have failed" (Richards 1926, 140). To the poet John Cornford (1915-1936), great-grandson of Charles Darwin, the poem announced the collapse of the capitalist world, and after reading it he became determined to enter the British Communist Party (Spender 1975, 91). Conversely, from leftist quarters, Malcom Cowley was quick to read the poem as nostalgia for a more glorious past, a strategy of eschewing the socio-economic challenges of his time. Even today we still read the poem as a post-apocalyptic cry, "one of the most terrifying poems of a terrifying century" (Bush 1984, 71). On his part, Eliot took issue with critics who interpreted the poem as having "expressed 'the disillusionment of a generation,'" declaring that "I may have expressed for them their own illusion of being disillusioned but that did not form part of my intention" (Eliot 1931b, 368). To him the poem expressed "only the relief of a personal and wholly insignificant grouse against life, it is just a part of rhythmical grumbling" (Eliot 1971, 1).

The Mysteries of The Waste Land

Although the many explications and exegeses may have tamed its spirit, and its novelty may have faded, its power remains. And its mysteries increase. Indeed, *The Waste Land* is enshrouded by the enigma of a lost manuscript. Over the years Eliot had wanted to give credit to Pound's craftsmanship and on October 23, 1922, he had sent a manuscript to John Quinn, lawyer, patron, and art collector in gratitude for his help with legal aspects of the publication of the poem; then the manuscript disappeared. When John Quinn died in 1924, his sister inherited his estate, and at her death his papers were passed on to her daughter Mary who did not open the boxes until the early 1950s, when she discovered the lost treasure. In 1958 she secretly sold the original manuscript to the New York Public Library for $18.000. Neither Eliot nor Pound knew anything about it. The retrieval of the manuscript was not made public until 1968, three years after Eliot's death, so as to make it coincide with the publication of the biography of John Quinn. Once the facsimile of the manuscripts was released in 1971, it caused critics to reinterpret *The Waste Land* as a personal poem deriving from the poet's crisis and mental breakdown. It represented, as Mary Hutchinson had remarked upon first reading the poem back in 1922, "Tom's Autobiography," as Virginia Woolf had reported in her *Diary* (in Bell 1978, 178). The fall of civilization depicted in its lines proved to be a foil of the collapse of the poet's own mind. To most critics, the manuscripts show that the poet who had advocated for radical impersonality was surprisingly personal, more concerned with his lived experience and engaged in life than with art in his dramatic monologues.

Still, the poem contained yet more mysteries to be disclosed over the years. On January 2, 2020, almost 100 years after its publication, the *Emily Hale Letters from T.S. Eliot*, which had been sealed for sixty years at Princeton, were finally opened. Earlier, in 1977, Lyndall Gordon had been the first to analyze the way in which the poem is rooted in Eliot's personal preoccupations. In her biography, *Eliot's Early Years*, Gordon refers to the hyacinth garden episode as a reminiscence of "a love almost holy in its intensity" (1977, 56). She relates the theme of a nostalgic love for a woman in Eliot's poetry with his Platonic love, Emily Hale, a young woman, the friend of his cousin Elinor Hinckley, whom he met in Boston and with whom he shared an interest in theatre and performance. Currently, John Haffenden is editing the *Emily Hale Letters*, to appear in 2022, yet more than a dozen articles have already been written by scholars who have consulted the collection. As Jewel Spears Brooker explains, in 1935, thirteen years after the publication of *The Waste Land*, the forty-seven-year-old poet confesses his passionate love and attributes the hyacinth garden episode, framed by the two quotes from Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, to a specific moment in 1913, in Boston, before his departure for Europe, when he attended the opera in Hale's company (Brooker 2020, 1, 10). Over the years, during Eliot's loveless and tormented

marriage to Vivien Haigh-Wood, Hale remained for him an idealized Beatrice figure in *The Waste Land*, *Ash Wednesday*, *Four Quartets* and *The Family Reunion*.

In 1916, Eliot had written to his friend Conrad Aiken "I have lived through material for a score of long poems, in the last six months" (in Eliot and Haughton 1988, 138). He had had to cope with dire financial straits, the extramarital affair of his wife, their repeated illnesses and mental breakdowns, the war, and being disinherited by his parents because of his secretly hasty wedding (Eliot met Vivien in April and they got married two months later in June 1915). By 1921, when Eliot started writing a "long poem," he had made a failed attempt to enlist in the Navy in October 1918, during the war; even worse, he was experiencing writer's block at a time when he had to prove himself to his father, who soon after died on January 7, 1919, convinced that his son had ruined a promising career at Harvard for the flighty prospect of becoming a poet.

As it turned out, Eliot wrote the main text in 1921, starting to compose the poem in January or February 1921, and completing parts I and II by May. During his mother's and sister's ten week visit that summer, he experienced a mental collapse, so in October, taking a medical leave he obtained from Lloyd's bank, he went with Vivien for a stay at Margate. There he composed a draft of part III. Vivien also read the poem and made her own suggestions in the text. On November 18 they left for Paris, where Eliot visited Pound and showed him the poem up to that time. While Pound was editing the poem, Parts IV and V were written at a clinic in Lausanne, where Eliot was under the care of the psychoanalyst, Doctor Roger Vittoz. He returned to Paris on January 2, 2022, and gave the rest of the manuscript to Pound, who then arranged a meeting with Horace Liveright, Eliot's first publisher. By January 16, 2022, he was back in London.

An Experiment with Language and Form

As a quintessential modernist text, *The Waste Land* is to poetry what Joyce's *Ulysses* is to the novel. It represents a quest for a new formal paradigm, a new ontology, and a rediscovered epistemology. Eliot's formulations regarding the objective correlative and the impersonality of the poet in his essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), helped develop an imaginative space in poetics similar to what theorists of non-representational arts created in abstract painting and sculpture. His new strategies of fragmentation, juxtaposition, collage, pastiche, and multiple perspectivism, rescued art from the shortcomings of mimetic representation. Influenced by Jules Laforgue's ironic "dédoublement" of the lyric persona, Eliot's poem changes the romantic dramatic monologue invented by Tennyson and Browning, as it renders personality as a "zone" or a "field of consciousness" (Kenner 1959, 35–36), an assemblage of many psychic registers and historical identities. He replaces a stable lyric voice with a collage of multiple voices, masks, registers and points of view. Instead of direct self-exposure he stages the conflicts of a consciousness at odds with itself, and as Charles Altieri aptly affirms, he invents a new means of rendering the dramatization of psychic forces and inner conflicts, later evident in the work of such postwar poets as Robert Lowell and Sylvia Plath, when expressing their own personal traumas against the backdrop of history (Altieri 1994).

Eliot attributes to Joyce the invention of "the mythical method" defined as a "continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity" which implied "a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving shape and significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" (Eliot 1923, 177). Yet this describes very well his own method in *The Waste Land*. Joyce had used the Homeric argument of the *Odyssey* as the structure of Leopold Bloom's one-day wanderings through twentieth-century Dublin. Eliot did not use one source but a web of anthropological sources. As he writes in his note to *The Waste Land*, the "plan" and symbolism were suggested by Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance*, a study of the waste land motif in the grail legends, and Frazer's *The Golden Bough*, an almost encyclopaedic compendium of classical texts, comparative religions, folklore and religious practices all over the world from antiquity to the present (Eliot 2015, 72). Both books stage the quest into the fount of life and the possibility of renewal and regeneration. Eliot's mythical strategy portrayed psychological conflicts and processes of consciousness for which myths serve as metaphor. Frazer's and Weston's texts refer to vegetation ceremonies and fertility cults whose basic narrative of fruition and decay in nature, or the cycle of seasons, parallel the dramatic representation of passion, death and rebirth of wounded gods—which in turn are symbolic representations of psychic realities that codify the course of inner life. These myths and legends dramatize an initiation into maturity and enact spiritual and psychic ventures in search for an inner awakening that can dispel apathy.

In his quest for a new form and a new language, Eliot defied formal completeness and also did away with categories such as plot and narrative sequence. The poem exists as an ensemble of fragments that once introduced remain suspended and inconclusive with no beginning, no middle and no end. Narratives exist only as fragments, segments, threads. Their different strands are various phases of a quest that continues in diverse contexts, time periods and geographical realities.

They proceed simultaneously in antiquity and in the modern world. The action becomes archetypal, transcending the boundaries of a single culture and epoch. Eliot tells one story as he tells different stories.

The Waste Land does not advance by virtue of its narrative thread but by digressions, analogies, allusions, and repetitions (Levenson 1984, 201). It does not go forwards, it expands sideways. Its movement is a constant multiplication of one motif into new contexts of other cultures, geographies and time periods. Eliot's technique further allows him to articulate the common language of Eastern and Western spirituality while preserving their specificity. Thus, the Christian story and the Grail legend belong to the same pattern of archaic religions, dying and reviving gods of ancient fertility and vegetation rites, or Hindu Thunder Gods. Similarly, the redeeming Word is not only the Christian Logos but also the Sanskrit DA of the Vedanta philosophy and that of Buddha's teachings, while Eliot's notion of the divine cuts across time, faiths and cultural representations.

Today, we still read *The Waste Land* as a post-apocalyptic cry, yet this avant-garde poem also reads as a document of faith, an affirmation of spiritual values. Despite its tableaux of sordidness, devastation of the land, dysfunctional relationships, and lovelessness, the poem seeks a way out of its urban apocalypse of unreal cities with "falling towers," "empty cisterns and exhausted wells" (Eliot 2015, 70). It looks for a strategy to override the wreckage. The central subject of the poem, in this sense, is loss, isolation, and despair. The loss is not the particular hallmark of modernity, as it has prevailed throughout history and concerns a vacuity at the core of existence. The poem stages also a quest across the desert, a metaphor for a sterile existence without sustaining faith and guiding values, for water, a source and symbol of both purification and regeneration. The drought is the self's failure to observe its relationship to time and the spiritual. The vacuity of the *wastelanders* is rooted in the loss of metaphysical and spiritual awareness which transforms the human into a dispossessed fragmentary being, an identifiable nonentity.

The poem yearns to transcend this brokenness and regain a sense of primal harmony with the other. Furthermore, the transcendent remains a constant axis of the poem, consistently offering hints and guesses of something beyond devastation. The material world is not the "only" reality. Rather, a plethora of voices of prophets, sages and rain and thunder gods try to awaken the wastelanders from their torpor. Furthermore, the luminous moments of the poem—the hyacinth garden episode, Ariel's and Philomel's song of spiritual transformation, and the communal life of the fishermen presided by the "inexplicable splendour of Ionian white and gold" (Eliot 2015, 64) of Saint Magnus Martyr—mobilize psychic energies and prepare the speaker's ultimate awareness of the spiritual. The life-giving rain falls metaphorically in the form of the revelation of the Word which Prajapati, the Lord of Creation, discloses to his disciples in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.* Thus, *The Waste Land* does not end in pessimism, but as a poem of "fragments […] shored against my ruins" (Eliot 2015, 71) that closes with a definition of absolute love, "The awful daring of a moment's surrender which an age of prudence can never retract," (Eliot 2015, 71), and the determination to set "lands in order." *The Waste Land* ends with a glimpse into "the heart of light" from where Eliot's poetic quest continues through the *via purgativa* of *Ash-Wednesday*, later culminating with the epic of the soul of the *Four Quartets*.

The Waste Land is basically a Christian poem and Eliot remains a staunch defender of "the mind of Europe," even though the cardinal turning point and crux of the poem comes from two non-European texts that provide the final resolution, namely, Buddha's Fire Sermon and the *Upanishads*. These are not extraneous imports that Eliot picked for the sake of eccentricity as some Eliot scholars have contended. Nor were these references an accident in Eliot's work or simply a flighty interest prior to his Anglo-Catholic conversion. At the end of his career, in the *Four Quartets*, Eliot maintains the Hindu texts as the keystone for his poem (Eliot 1929, 258).[3]

The sharp distinctions critics make of Eliot's oeuvre before and after his 1927 conversion to Anglo-Catholicism is a fallacy. Eliot's conversion was not the result of a sudden change, but a long-drawn process that started long before the composition of *The Waste Land*. As he explains in a letter to Paul Elmer More, conversion was "part of a continuous and more or less consistent development" (in Eliot and Haffenden 2019, 129).

Eliot was a very complex and paradoxical poet and philosopher. Impersonality proved to be a subjective objectivity, faith implied scepticism, and "the mind of Europe" implied the high and the low as well as the non-European. In many ways, *The Waste Land* is Eliot's poetic illustration of his seminal essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1919), which can be considered his modernist manifesto and in which he defines his concept of "tradition" and of the "mind of Europe" as "a mind which changes […] which abandons nothing *en route*, which does not superannuate either Shakespeare,

[3]The Indian element in T.S. Eliot needs to be accounted for. Eliot was a keen student of Indian philosophy and scriptures; during his Harvard years (1911–1913) he studied Sanskrit and Pali under the guidance of famous orientalists such as Charles Lanman, James Woods or Irving Babbit. Lanman gave him a copy of Vasdudev Laxman Shastri Phaniskar's edition of *The Twenty–Eight Upanishads* in Sanskrit. He attended Masaharu Anesaki's lectures on Buddhism. (See Jain 1992, 102–11, 198–99).

or Homer, or the rock drawing of the Magdalenian draughtsmen" (Eliot 1919, 16). While he was pleading for "the extinction of personality" and affirming like Poe that poetry is a matter of pure craftsmanship, Eliot was making, in fact, the apology of the unconscious and uncontrollable nature of the creative process engaging in his essay in a dialogue across time with the romantics. Eliot contradicts Wordsworth, who conceived the act of poetic creation as the "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings [which] takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquillity" (Brett and Jones 1971, 266), because he contends, "it is neither emotion, nor recollection, nor without distortion of meaning, tranquillity" (1919, 21). He becomes much more subjective than Wordsworth and aware that artistic creation is a process that cannot be controlled by the poet, in the face of which the poet remains helpless—"it is a concertation which does not happen consciously or of deliberation" (21). In the same paradoxical way Eliot believed scepticism was an inherent element for the consecution of faith: "wisdom consists largely of scepticism and uncynical disillusion […] And scepticism and disillusion are a useful equipment for religious understanding" (Eliot 1926, 449-50). He contended that "The demon of doubt […] is inseparable from the spirit of belief" (Eliot 1931a, 411). As he said in "The Pensées of Pascal," "despair and […] disillusion […] are essential moments in the progress of the intellectual soul […] they are the analogue of the drought, the dark night, which is an essential stage in the progress of the Christian mystic" (Eliot 1931a, 412). In the same fashion, Eliot's "the mind of Europe" includes the high and the primitive, the European and the non-European: it comprises the Greco-Latin and Judeo-Christian past, plunges its roots into early archaic cultures, "the Magdalenian draughtsmen," and in the Indic tradition.

In his memoir of Eliot, Pound wrote: "His was the true Dantescan voice—not honored enough, and deserving more than I ever gave him" (Pound 1966, 90). Eliot admired Dante as he did no other poet. He considered him "the most *universal of* poets in the modern languages" since he "tended to concentrate on what men of various races and lands could think together" (Eliot 1929, 239). Dante's style was "lucid, or rather translucent," it cut across "the modern division of nationality" and his culture "was not of one European country but of Europe" (239). In the same way, in a predominantly positivist era, Eliot is a twentieth century Dante who tries to overcome European frontiers and to find the common denominator that binds the spirituality of Occident and Orient by bringing together Buddhism, Vedanta and Christian beliefs while respecting the particularity and specificity of each.

Eliot was not an American who became an English poet; instead, he became a European poet. He believed that the encounter with foreign cultures or with the past of one's own tradition "make[s] us more conscious of what we are, and of our own limitations, and give[s] us more understanding of the world in which we now live" (Eliot 1944, 192). He did not believe in a culture, but in a "constellation of cultures" (Eliot 1977, 132). His recourse to Buddhist-Hindu thought widens the scope and significance of Christianity and projects its claim for the need for spiritual values into a larger cultural perspective while translating it into a vital existentialist philosophy.

At the centennial anniversary of *The Waste Land*, paraphrasing Pound, we "can only repeat, but with the urgency of [100] years ago: READ HIM" (1966, 90) The fact that a century after its original appearance the poem still resonates with its paradoxical expression of personal crisis and spiritual quest, its cry of apocalyptic alarm coupled with a resolute faith, affirms its literary place for at least the next hundred years.

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All about Love: A Tribute to bell hooks (1952-2021)

Celebrated as one of the leading intellectuals of our time, bell hooks has undoubtedly left an indelible imprint on contemporary American and worldwide critical theory and gender studies. A radical feminist, she will always remain a key reference as an intellectual and cultural critic who has decisively contributed to our understanding of the inner workings and intersecting realities of racism and sexism, together with other categories such as sexuality, class and geographical place. Nobody like her has deeply analyzed the intricacies of the definition of black femininities and masculinities. But I would also like to acknowledge her as a pioneering activist figure, as a teacher of teachers, a beacon light who may guide us all in these dire circumstances. hooks was able to affirm the possibilities of love and healing, of a love ethic that would really become a source for transformative power in order to counteract the persistent evils of male domination and constant racist and sexist abuse.

Her impressive oeuvre comprises more than thirty volumes from her first poetry collection *And There They Wept,* published in 1978, to her last one, *Writing beyond Race: Living Theory and Practice* (2013). Among her titles, she wrote other poetry books, *When Angels Speak of Love* (2005) and *Appalachian Elegy: Poetry and Place* (2012), two autobiographies, *Bone Black: Memories of Girlhood* (1984) and *Wounds of Passion* (1997), children's books such as *Happy to be Nappy* (1999) and *Be Boy Buzz* (2002), or her teaching trilogy, *Teaching to Transgress: Education and the Practice of Freedom* (1994), *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope* (2003), and *Teaching Critical Thinking: Engaged Pedagogy* (2010).

In her mesmerizing memoir *Bone Black*, she honestly narrates her revisitation of her childhood in Hopkinsville, a segregated and rural town in Kentucky, and how she came to realize "her true destiny-becoming a writer" (1984a, xi). One of her first rebellious acts was to demand a black doll, "one that would look like me" (24), because she wanted to protect all those "unwanted, unloved brown dolls covered in dust" (24) that she instinctively felt needed protection and, especially, love, a clear indication of some of the main concerns that would preside over her life and writing.[1] Besides, from her early age readers can see the manifold and creative ways in which she rebelled against heteropatriarchal gender roles and abuse on the part of her own father and brothers. Consequently, she was frequently punished and felt a sense of estrangement, of not fitting in, of not belonging. Hence, her constant search for her place in the world and her lifelong meditation on belonging, especially poignant in her publication *Belonging: A Culture of Place* (2009).

Early on hooks also encountered white supremacy, but she felt protected by her black community. As the obituary in *The New York Times* explains it:

> **Though her childhood in the semirural South exposed her to vicious examples of white supremacy, her tight-knit Black community in Hopkinsville showed her the possibility of resistance from the margins, of finding community among the oppressed and drawing power from those connections—a theme to which she would return frequently in her work. (Risen 2021)**

Indeed, she did. Empowerment coming from resistance from the margins and the bonds of a community of oppressed are also central issues in hooks' intellectual and activist universe. For hooks this empowerment is intimately related to agency, which is another key concept in her theoretical discourse. As Susana Vega-González notes, oppressed people lack a sense of agency and, as a result, hooks seeks agency for them as "a means of empowerment," but also "an exercise of freedom" that can effectively be used as a liberatory strategy (2009, 226).

Born Gloria Jean Watkins, another proof of her defiant attitude was to take her pen name, bell hooks, as a homage to her maternal great grandmother, Bell Clair Hooks. She wanted readers to focus on her work, not on herself, but over the years critics found diverse meanings for that choice. Nevertheless, she affirms about her name: "Claiming this name was a way to link my voice to an ancestral legacy of woman speaking—of woman power" (2015a, 161). Female genealogy is also a recurrent theme in her writings, as she would recall many of the strong women who were precursors in the different movements that historically fought in favor of black women's rights and freedom.

As a teacher, she had an extensive trajectory starting from the mid-1970s at the University of Southern California, where she taught English and ethnic studies, continuing in the 80s with Afro-American and African Studies at Yale University, women's studies at Oberlin College and English at the City College of New York during the 1990s and early 2000s. In 2004 she became a professor in residence at Berea College in Berea, Kentucky. The bell hooks Institute was founded at the college in 2014 ("bell hooks" 2022).

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[1]In a way, this scene recalls Pecola in Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye* (1970), which may not be a coincidence, since hooks devoted her PhD dissertation to Morrison's work.

In her teaching trilogy hooks completely undermines the racist and sexist bias in the American educational system by inviting to transgress and revolutionize curricula. As María del Guadalupe Davidson and George Yancy put it, "hooks is a major pedagogical force in terms of producing texts that are accessible to people from various backgrounds" (2009, 8).

Positioning herself in what Nathalia E. Jaramillo and Peter McLaren call "liminal pedagogical spaces" (2009, 25), hooks urges us to rethink pedagogical practice in a way that it should not only address and question the structures of domination, but also as a catalyst to create "new forms of generating and enacting knowledge for the betterment of the self and the collective" (Jaramillo and McLaren 2009, 25), new forms which spring from corporeality in relation to geographical space.

In so doing, hooks challenges conventional teaching practices by propitiating what George Yancy terms "subversive academic spaces" (2009, 34). Inspired by Paulo Freire's liberatory education in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2000), hooks makes use of engaged pedagogy to confront difficult issues such as racism, sexism, classism and power. As she states:

> **The classroom […] remains a location of possibility. In that field of possibility we have the opportunity to labor for freedom, to demand of ourselves and our comrades, an openness of mind and heart that allows us to face reality even as we collectively imagine ways to move beyond boundaries, to transgress. This is education as the practice of freedom. (1994b, 207)**

As Cindy LaCom and Susan Hadley remind us, "one way in which the classroom has been a radical space of possibility for hooks […] has been in terms of explorations of whiteness" through class discussions that can lead to "radical transformations" (2009, 63). For hooks, one of the pivotal duties of teachers is to develop students' critical thinking that can in turn challenge the dominant status quo. Additionally, hooks resignifies the practice of teaching itself by stressing the importance of embodiment, of interrogating identity categories, and of calling into question "paradigms of power and dominance" (LaCom and Hadley 2009, 55), both in society and classrooms. hooks also insists on engaging with students as whole human beings: "to teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin" (1994b, 13). Thus, her revolutionary pedagogy is firmly grounded in anti-hierarchical and embodied praxis.

As a feminist theorist and critic, hooks occupies an eminent position having won wide acclaim from critics and readers alike. She substantially contributed to the development of black feminist criticism with crucial books such as the classic *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (1981), *Feminist Theory: from Margin to Center* (1984), *Talking Back, Thinking Feminist* (1989), or *Feminism is for Everybody. Passionate Politics* (2000), among others. Still an undergraduate student at Stanford University, she wrote *Ain't I a Woman*, recalling the groundbreaking speech by one of African American foremothers Sojourner Truth. In this influential book, she started to develop her political theory devoted to unraveling the terrible impact of racism and sexism on enslaved black women, and how this legacy continues to affect black women nowadays.

The second one continued her fierce critique of second-wave white feminism and its claim on universality and legitimacy. As hooks argues in *Ain't I a Woman*, "they impressed upon the American public their sense that the word 'woman' meant white woman by drawing endless analogies between 'women' and 'blacks'" (2015b, 188). To defy white feminists' contentions, she proposes that feminist theory needs to take into account not only gender, but also race and class, challenging thus the limited vision of white feminist critics of the time and fostering new possible configurations for black feminism(s).

In *Talking Back, Thinking Feminist*, she reflects on key issues such as the articulation of voice as an act of resistance: "Speaking becomes both a way to engage in active self-transformation and a rite of passage where one moves from being object to being subject" (2015a, 12). She also delineates the main purposes of feminist theory:

> **Feminist theory should necessarily be directed to masses of women and men in our society, educating us collectively for critical consciousness so that we can explore and understand better the workings of sexism and sexist oppression, the political basis of feminist critique, and be better able to work out strategies for resistance. (35)**

In this way, she calls for a radical feminist agenda to do away with gender violence and all kinds of violence against women. But evidently, she also deals with racist practices or homophobia in black communities calling for solidarity: "By acknowledging the union between black liberation struggle and gay liberation struggle, we strengthen our solidarity, enhance the scope and power of our allegiances, and further our resistance" (126).

The fourth one is an introductory book about feminist essential principles, a handbook to introduce a wide readership to feminist main tenets. As she writes in the introduction, she authored it because it was

> **the book I have spent more than 20 years longing for. I had to write it because I kept waiting for it to appear, and it did not. And without it there was no way to address the hordes of people in this nation who are daily bombarded with anti-feminist backlash, who are being told to hate and resist a movement that they know very little about. (2000, 9)**

In this primer, she examines notions that are fundamental to understand feminism(s) such as sisterhood, female bodies, global feminism, but also feminist masculinity, feminist parenting, lesbianism, and love as the heart of feminism. She convincingly argues: "If women and men want to know love, we have to yearn for feminism. For without feminist thinking and practice we lack the foundation to create loving bonds" (100). But she also warns: "Visionary feminism is a wise and loving politic. The soul of our politics is the commitment to ending domination. Love can never take root in a relationship based on domination and coercion" (103). Therefore, hooks points out the importance of discarding the harming legacy of romantic love and of finding alternative ways to define love as a radical strategy to put an end to domination and oppression.

So, this revered critic and theorist has certainly paved the way for black feminism(s). As Kimberlé Crenshaw declared in an interview:

> **I think of bell hooks as being pivotal to an entire generation of Black feminists who saw that for the first time they had license to call themselves Black feminists […] She was utterly courageous in terms of putting on paper thoughts that many of us might have had in private. (Quoted in Risen 2021)**

hooks constructed a powerful critique of the hegemonic system of domination and power that she called "imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy." As she contended:

> **For so many years in the feminist movement, women were saying that gender is the only aspect of identity that really matters, that domination only came into the world because of rape. Then we had so many race-oriented folks who were saying, "Race is the most important thing. We don't even need to be talking about class or gender." So for me, that phrase always reminds me of a global context, of the context of class, of empire, of capitalism, of racism and of patriarchy. Those things are all linked—an interlocking system. (Yancy and hooks 2015)**

She was keenly aware of how all those categories were interconnected, so she actually became a forerunner of intersectional thought. When Crenshaw allegedly coined the term in 1989,[2] hooks had been operating with intersectional patterns in her writings for almost a decade.

Another critical contribution that should not be overlooked is hooks' deep commitment to delve not only into black femininities, but also into black masculinities. A first step in that direction was taken already in her early books, but especially relevant was the chapter she devoted to black men in *Black Looks: Self and Representation* (1992), which marked a turning point in hooks' discussions of the dominant stereotypical designation of black men and the possible alternatives to it. She elaborates on these ideas in two excellent books: *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity* (2004) and *The Will to Change: Men, Masculinity, and Love* (2004), which I consider complementary approaches to build a new paradigm for black masculinities. In both she propounds a new conception of alternative and whole black masculinities to the prevailing paradigm of male dominance, terror and violence on which white patriarchy rests. In this way, hooks significantly contributes to advancing and resignifying constructions of both African American masculinities and femininities.

In *We Real Cool*, hooks accounts for the different stereotypes that plague the representation of black men, ranging from those which emerged in plantation patriarchy to those attributed to gangsta culture that she considers the ultimate practice of patriarchal manhood (2004a, 25). She examines the complicated realities of black male violence, black male parenting and black men's coming of age process. And she offers a possible solution to them:

> **Creative alternative ways to live, be, and act will come into being only when there is mass education for critical consciousness-an awakening to the awareness that collectively black male survival requires that they learn to challenge patriarchal notions of manhood, that they claim nonviolence as the only progressive stance to take in a world where all life is threatened by patriarchal imperialist war. (2004a, 64)**

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[2] See Crenshaw's well-known essay "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Policies" (1989), later expanded in "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics and Violence against Women of Color" (1991).

Eschewing the negative stereotypical images of black men as intrinsically violent, as sexual predators perpetuated by gansta culture, she summons black men to revisit the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. in order to end male domination and its corollaries, violence and death. Accordingly, hooks promotes an alternative black liberation struggle that is rooted in love and wholeness.

In *The Will to Change* she continues this line of thought by praising responsible men, men who dare to love, to recognize their "longing for love" (2004b, 178) in their different roles as fathers, partners, friends, communal members, etc., men who undertake the complex process to heal by reconciling body and spirit (179), to found relationships based on mutuality, not on domination (183).

As has been suggested, in most of her work she consistently reiterates the importance of love, community and healing. Especially moving is *All about Love: New Visions*, where she rightly observes:

> **When we accept that true love is rooted in recognition and acceptance, that love combines acknowledgment, care, responsibility, commitment, and knowledge, we understand there can be no love without justice. With that awareness comes the understanding that love has the power to transform us, giving us the strength to oppose domination. To choose feminist politics, then, is a choice to love. (2001, 104)**

In this book hooks traces the roots of a suitable definition of love back to M. Scott Peck's classic book *The Road Less Travelled*, published in 1978, that rescues Eric Fromm's definition:

> **the will to extend one's self for the purpose of nurturing one's own or another's spiritual growth […] Love is as love does. Love is an act of will–both an intention and an action. Will also implies choice. We do not have to love. We choose to love. (hooks 2001, 5)**

She further enumerates the ingredients of true love: "care, affection, recognition, respect, commitment, and trust, as well as honest and open communication" (5). She has been repeatedly criticized for pampering the harsh realities of racism, sexism and classism by this discourse on love. However, I would contend that her belief in a love ethic that can reject the logic of dominance and oppression has always been a defining trait of her life-long work. In an interview in 2015 with philosopher George Yancy, she asserts: "I believe wholeheartedly that the only way out of domination is love […] and the only way into really being able to connect with others, and to know how to be, is to be participating in every aspect of your life as a sacrament of love" (Yancy and hooks 2015). For hooks love is regarded as a transformative power which connects to a sense of belonging and healing.

Healing is another crucial notion in hooks' critical endeavor, as she says in the same dialogue with Yancy: "I want my work to be about healing […] I am a fortunate writer because every day of my life practically I get a letter, a phone call from someone who tells me how my work has transformed their life" (Yancy and hooks 2015). This is very clear in the revealing *Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-Recovery* (1994a), which specifically deals with healing, informed by Audre Lorde's "Eye to Eye" in *Sister Outside* (2007). Considering that mental health and psychic healing are part and parcel of the black liberation struggle (1994a, 15), hooks advocates for life-affirming and nurturing practices which can be useful for individual and collective healing. First of all, she says, there is an urgent need to confront the "myriad ways racism, sexism, class exploitation, homophobia and various other structures of domination" (14) impact black lives on a daily basis. Then it is compulsory to speak the truth, to narrate the horrendous realities to which white supremacist practices subject black people, and particularly black women. In order to truly heal, they need to value themselves and cherish each other. Only through female bonding, can black women survive and thrive.

To honor hooks' love ethic, let me finish with the words of the British writer Candice Carty-Williams who also paid tribute to her:

> **bell hooks was a writer whose scope of sensibilities taught me, nourished me, engaged me. But it was her writing on love that changed my life after a friend forced me to read *All About Love*, a book that I knew would contain so much power and truth that I was afraid of its contents. bell hooks will be missed, but the legacy she leaves behind is monumental and enduring, much like the ideals of love she put to the page. (Quoted in Knight 2021)**

As a representative of a generation of scholars who felt inspired and challenged by hooks' multifaceted and sharp theoretical contributions, but also by her unceasing and meaningful activism and her extraordinary teaching practices, we will always be indebted to her visionary feminism. This is a humble contribution to pay tribute to her many achievements, and particularly to her love ethic. Her brilliant transition will always enlighten us.

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Contact, Variation and Change: Mapping the History of Irish English through CORIECOR

1. Introduction

The Corpus of Irish English Correspondence (CORIECOR) is a historical sociolinguistic corpus of letters from the late-17th to the early 20th century. The project of the corpus was devised by Kevin McCafferty and the present author back in 2008, when discussing the need to address certain gaps in our knowledge of World Englishes in general, and Irish English (IrE) in particular. These gaps included, first of all, what we identified as a dearth of detailed historical work on the emergence of New Englishes in different situations and ecological niches. Second, we felt that despite the shift in focus from mainstream varieties to non-mainstream, non-standard varieties, the evolution of IrE remained largely uncharted territory. Historical neglect of IrE to that point was unfortunate, since this is a central new variety in its own right, but also an important contributor to all the other major overseas varieties; it is often claimed that IrE has influenced important developments in other Englishes in the Late Modern English period (1700-1945). In order to address some of the issues that we had identified as research gaps, we resolved to turn to Irish emigrant letters, which constitute a useful source for the diachronic analysis of IrE, and are representative of the usage of ordinary language users.

The purpose of what became our overall project was to compile a corpus that would be available to researchers studying the evolution and spread of IrE in Ireland, issues of language contact between speakers of Irish and English during the language shift, and the influence of IrE on other Englishes around the world. Our aim was to gather and make available to the broader research community a large body of linguistic data that would enable us to study IrE through time, using larger amounts of more vernacular data from a longer timespan than hitherto possible.

2. The Value of Emigrant Letters

Letters are among the more 'oral' text types available for linguistic study (Schneider 2002). As we have pointed out elsewhere (e.g. McCafferty 2017; Amador-Moreno 2019), there is clear evidence from corpus-based studies covering the history of English over the last 1000 years that personal correspondence is more vernacular and more sensitive to linguistic variation and change than other text types (e.g. Kytö 1991; García–Bermejo Giner and Montgomery 1997; Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2003). While it might be going too far to assume that letters are 'substitute speech' (e.g. Cusack 1998, 190), nonetheless, this type of material provides evidence of their writers' language use and ability to vary in style (Tieken–Boon van Ostade 2009, 122). Michael Montgomery, a pioneer in the field, remarks that: '[N]o other type of document, be it dialect poetry, folk tales, or any other, reveals the speech patterns of earlier days nearly so well or as fully as family letters' (1995, 28).

While CORIECOR contains other types of correspondence, such as business letters, a few diaries, etc., most of the material is private letters exchanged between the Irish emigrants and their families and friends.

In cases of documented change, where it is possible to compare data from personal letters with data from other text types, private correspondence shows greater use of linguistic innovations than other text types. A good case in point is the increasing use of progressive aspect, which has been ongoing since the Old English period, but has been especially marked since about 1800. Corpus studies of the progressive over the last 500 years show the language used in letters leading this change as compared to other text types in not only Early Modern English (Kytö 1991) but also in Older Scots (Meurman-Solin 2002) and 19th-century British standard English (Smitterberg 2005); relevant results from these studies are collated and presented in McCafferty and Amador-Moreno (2012a). Also, replacement of first-person *shall* by *will* in American English (e.g. Kytö 1991; Dollinger 2008) now also affecting British English—has been attributed to the influence of Irish immigrants. Based on our study of the CORIECOR letters (McCafferty and Amador-Moreno 2012b, 2014) we have suggested that in nineteenth-century Ireland, increasing literacy may have helped spread first-person *will* as a change from below. The shift to first-person *will* that is apparent in CORIECOR would be the result of greater lower-class literacy, and this might be a key to understanding this change in other Englishes too.

Letters are not well suited to the study of all linguistic levels. Their usefulness for phonological purposes in particular is limited in the period that CORIECOR covers (but see de Rijke 2016). However, they are rich sources of data for (morpho) syntactic, grammaticalisation and discourse studies, as some of our own CORIECOR–based pilot studies initially showed (e.g. McCafferty 2011; McCafferty and Amador–Moreno 2012a, 2012b; Amador-Moreno and McCafferty 2015a, 2015b).

3. Ireland as a Linguistic Laboratory

As is well known, Ireland became English-speaking as a result of large-scale colonization from Great Britain and subsequent language shift by the native Irish–speaking population. Mass migration of English speakers into Ireland from c.1550 to 1700 was part of the 'first diaspora' of the English language into Celtic-speaking regions of the British Isles (Kachru et al. 2006). But Ireland also both received and supplied English-speakers in the 'second diaspora' that saw the English language spread into and across the Atlantic Ocean. IrE may therefore be regarded as both a colonial and a postcolonial variety (Bauer 2002).

IrE is a complex, interesting variety, because it developed in stages representing different language ecologies in the sense of Mufwene (2008). The northeast and southeast of Ireland were settlement colonies that received large numbers of British, especially in the 17th century, and became English–speaking early. Settlers from Great Britain made up about 25% of Ireland's population by the late 17th century (Foster 1988), but were found largely in these eastern regions.

Different ecologies within Ireland itself mean we must take account of the different ways in which various regions came to speak English. In different contexts, there have been varying degrees and intensities of contact between BrE dialects on the one hand, and contact with Irish on the other. Thus, regional varieties may have been affected to differing degrees by processes like language transfer and koinéisation. Understanding the processes involved may help us understand what is going on in the emerging New Englishes of the 21st century. The data required to do this throughout the history of IrE has not previously been available, as pointed out above. Thus, CORIECOR enables linguists to contribute to the study of this variety but also of New Englishes more broadly.

4. Creating and Using a Diachronic Corpus of Irish English

At the time of writing (November 2022) CORIECOR has been put together in three stages. The compilation and classification of data has run in parallel with various pilot studies that initially allowed us to explore some of the issues we wanted to investigate. Funding was secured for the first time in 2008, allowing us to take off. Different Research Assistants, PhD students and collaborators have joined us since, all of which has translated into fruitful collaboration and a wide range of studies that have moved the analysis of IrE forward. Collaborative work with different colleagues has also led to interesting studies that have produced/are producing valuable results. We are grateful to all of them for embarking on the CORIECOR venture with us at different stages.

The first stage of what would become CORIECOR started with the compilation of letters, as part of a project that we called 'Corpus of Hiberno–English (CORHE): New ways of exploring the vernacular Englishes of Ireland.' The proposal, led by McCafferty, and with Amador–Moreno as collaborator, was funded with 30.000 NOK by the University of Bergen's Meltzer Foundation (Grant No. 9334, PN480607, 2008). The compilation work was carried out by two research assistants, Agnete Løvik and Svetlana Dencheva Lyngstad, both graduates from the University of Bergen.

The initial collection comprised the material contained in the Irish Emigration Database (IED), a database that was maintained by the Centre for Migration Studies (CMS) in Omagh, Co. Tyrone. We are grateful to Dr Brian Lambkin and Dr Patrick Fitzgerald of the CMS for permission to use the IED for linguistic analysis. Without their understanding of the purpose of our study, our start would have been considerably more challenging. The digitalised database, which contained some 4700 texts (approx. 3 million words), was originally compiled for use by historians and genealogists. Its original format, however, was not suitable for linguistic purposes. The database was downloaded and reformatted for our purposes between September 2008 and July 2009. Of the items included, about 4100 texts and 2.5 million words were letters.

The second stage was then funded with 11.4 million NOK by the Norges Forskningsråd, the Research Council of Norway (RCN) from August 2012 to February 2017 (Project number 213245). Two PhD positions and one research assistant post were advertised and filled in the autumn of 2012 and spring 2013. Gemma Fernández López, from the University of Extremadura, was hired as Research Assistant, and Persijn M. de Rijke and Dania J. Bonness, both from the University of Bergen, were the recipients of the two PhD fellowships. Training took place at the University of Bergen under the supervision of the Principal Investigator, Prof. Kevin McCafferty (University of Bergen), and the main international partner, Dr. Carolina Amador–Moreno (University of Extremadura), who based herself in Bergen for the first semester. Fernández López was given training in the use of the software used for corpus linguistics and statistical analyses, and in the main tasks she was to perform (constructing the various versions of the corpus, classifying the material, scanning, transcribing, etc.).

New published and unpublished letter collections were added during this second stage. The new data included letters penned by Irish emigrants writing from Argentina, Australia, Canada, New Zealand and different places in the USA. By the time the project came to a closure CORIECOR contained approximately 6,500 texts with a total of about 4 million words. Some of this material was used by De Rijke and Bonness, who enrolled in the PhD programme at the University of Bergen and were co-supervised by McCafferty and Amador–Moreno. The two PhD fellows were also given hands-on experience through participating in corpus use and data extraction. The two PhD projects were formulated on various facets of IrE phonology and syntax, taking account of the roots of the various constructions used in the Englishes of Great Britain, language contact with Irish, and the influence of language universals in a situation of long-term language contact and language shift. De Rijke and Bonness completed their doctoral theses in 2016 (see section 6 below).

The research production of the team was presented in various international forums, including the fourth edition of the New Perspectives on Irish English conference (NPIE4), which was also hosted by them at the University of Bergen between the 5th and the 7th of July 2016. Here, the project team summarised the state of their research and received feedback from international respondents. The NPIE4 brought together researchers in various fields: corpus linguists, historical sociolinguists, experts on IrE, and historians. The conference marked the end of the Research Council of Norway project, although some activity still lasted until the spring of 2017.

The impetus of the RCN–financed project demonstrated proof of concept then needed to be capitalized upon by further developing the knowledge and insights gained with respect to both digital corpus creation and curation, as well as deepening our understanding of the evolution of IrE.

The third stage was initiated with the aim of building on, and further developing, the knowledge and expertise gained from the previous two stages. Funding was secured in 2019 through the call for proposals issued by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation (Agencia Estatal de Investigación, Spain). The current research project is entitled 'CORIECOR visualized. Irish English in writing across time (a longitudinal historical perspective)' and was granted 38,962 EUR (Project Reference number PID2019–106609GB-I00). One of the main goals of this new stage (still ongoing) is to make CORIECOR available to the wider academic community through a website that will contain different tools of interest not only to linguists, but also historians and researchers working on Digital Humanities. Methodologically the project combines corpus-analytic tools and visualization techniques, and it aims to carry out a series of micro-analyses that will allow us to take a closer look at the language of correspondence by combining various methodological approaches and theoretical perspectives.

The CORIECOR visualized project (CORVIZ for short) is divided into three interrelated research focus areas, each highlighting a particular aspect of letter-writing that we have identified as key:

1. Variation and identity,

2. Language and emotion; and

3. Style, authorship and reception.

Past funding allowed us, as mentioned above, to decide how the extraction, encoding and connection of data would enable us to take account of relevant aspects of the backgrounds of individual writers and other factors that might influence language use. The CORVIZ project now aims to avail of visualization tools in order to better explore the language of individual writers grouped into networks of family, friends, colleagues, business associates, etc., to permit research based on proven social network approaches that will aid historical sociolinguistic study.

CORVIZ had Amador–Moreno as Principal Investigator, and is at present being managed by Fuencisla García–Bermejo Giner, from the University of Salamanca. Other members of the project team include Javier Ruano García and Pilar Sánchez García (both at the University of Salamanca), Nancy Ávila–Ledesma (University of Extremadura), and two international partners: Kevin McCafferty (University of Bergen) and Karen P. Corrigan (Newcastle University). The University of Salamanca researchers have a long record of research dealing with historical linguistics, historical dialectology (particularly of Northern Englishes) and corpus building. The Salamanca Corpus project (Sánchez–García and Ruano–García 2020) was a pioneering work on English dialects. It was led by García-Bermejo Giner, who has also worked on emigrant letters. Ruano García has a strong research background in issues concerning historical dialectology, the study of dialects and literature, and enregisterment; and Sánchez García has been working on Late Modern English and English dialectology since the 1990s.

Having worked on the CORIECOR material for her MA, Ávila–Ledesma completed a PhD on the Pragmatics of the CORIECOR letters in 2019, and contributes to the project with her postdoctoral work on the language of emotions. As the initial Principal Investigator of the first stages of CORIECOR, McCafferty's involvement in this new stage continues along the lines of historical English grammar, language contact, variation and change. Corrigan, who has built her scholarly reputation based on the topics of the project, contributes to the current stage with her expertise at developing corpora and websites; her interest in Irish English also made her an obvious choice.

Another important addition to the team has been our collaborator Niall O'Leary. O'Leary has been at the forefront of developing corpora that conform to world standards for the creation and curation of digital data. He also has experience in working with emigrant letters. Prior to the start of the current project, O'Leary and Amador–Moreno pilot–tested the data for visualizations. The pilot project and set–up of the website ('Visualizing Irish English') was funded with 150,000 NOK by the Humanities Faculty, at the University of Bergen. Piloting was key, in order to meet the requirements of the initial stage of the CORVIZ project that would guarantee the progression of the tasks to follow. The building of the interface that will be used to show information about the project, corpus searches, results, and visualization were then agreed on at the start of the project by all the research team members.

A new Research Assistant, Manuel Villamarín–González (currently a PhD student at the University of Salamanca), has recently joined the project and collaborates with the preparation of the database that is being fed into the website. The website is still under construction, but can already be accessed at https://corviz.h.uib.no/index.php.

The project also plans to disseminate results in a final international conference, the next New Perspectives on Irish English conference (NPIE-8), which will take place at the Universidad de Extremadura in Cáceres from May 16-18, 2024.

5. Measuring the Significance of CORIECOR

The compilation of CORIECOR proposed to gather as much evidence as possible for early IrE into a corpus that would permit longitudinal diachronic study. Our aim was to produce a corpus of vernacular documents representing speakers from all over Ireland which would for the first time allow researchers to trace the emergence and development of features of IrE, including stylistic, regional, and social variation. We were also interested in conducting empirical studies of IrE in comparison with data from other sources for the period 1700-1900, and the access to other Irish corpora such as ICE–Ireland, the Ireland component of the International Corpus of English (Kallen and Kirk 2008), as well as the Limerick Corpus of Irish English (Farr, Muprhy and O'Keeffe 2004), has enabled comparative studies of earlier and present-day IrE.

The current CORVIZ project combines Corpus Linguistics methodology and visualization techniques, and makes the corpus available to the broad academic (and non–academic) community through a website and interface that will allow for some of the results of linguistic searches to be visualized. One of our primary objectives now is to investigate the evolution of a selection of features characteristic of IrE, using bespoke visualization tools, and to make these analyses available as empirical language research where results are replicable by reference to corpus data. The analysis of language choice, based on the concepts of enregisterment, style-shifting, intra–speaker variation and emotions discourse is also part of what the current team is embarked on.

Other secondary objectives are to feed into future work by the research team (and others using CORIECOR):

1. To enable comparative historical studies of IrE and (a) British source varieties that provided the English input into IrE, (b) other overseas Englishes that emerged in the same period of settlement and language spread in North America, the Caribbean, and the southern hemisphere, and (c) varieties that have emerged in regions of Irish settlement.

2. Online access to CORIECOR will enable original work by scholars already active and recognised in IrE studies, as well as researchers in the field of World Englishes who have expertise in the historical study of regional Englishes and the evolution of new varieties that emerged as a result of settlement and trade involving dialect and language contact.

3. The corpus and website can also be utilised for empirical comparisons of IrE with data from other sources (including literary sources) for the Late Modern English period (1700–1945).

4. The corpus and website may be used by scholars in other fields (e.g. historians, sociologists) as well as educators and students, museums, the cultural heritage sector and the general interested public.

The first CORVIZ-based workshop, since we started the setting-up of the data online, took place in June 2022 as part of the ISLE Summer School. The Summer School was organized by Karen P. Corrigan, and had a focus on corpora (historical and contemporary). The workshop, led by Karen Wade (University College Dublin) in collaboration with Amador–Moreno and Corrigan, was entitled "Social Network Analysis and the Visualization of Emigrant Correspondence Corpora." This was a good opportunity to explore future directions for CORIECOR that have already been identified for further research.

6. Research Output

The overall project has resulted so far in some 40 published research articles (the majority of which are listed in the Resources section of https://corviz.h.uib.no) and a monograph (Amador–Moreno 2019). CORIECOR data has also been used for a monograph by Corrigan (2020), a PhD thesis at the University of Manchester (van Hattum 2012), and the research on emigrant letters conducted by Hickey (2019). Apart from the three PhD theses mentioned above (De Rijke 2016; Bonness 2016; Ávila–Ledesma 2019), the corpus has produced three MA theses at the University of Bergen and one at the University of Extremadura, and a further number of workshops and research papers presented at international conferences.

The following list includes the titles of the dissertations that have come out of CORIECOR, which vouches for the training capacity of the different funded projects and teams:

PhD dissertations:

Sotoca Fernández, David. In progress. *(Im)politeness in Irish English: a Historical Perspective*. Universidad de Extremadura. Supervisor: Carolina P. Amador-Moreno.

Villamarín–González, Manuel. In progress. *The Linguistic Impact of Irish English on the Development of Australian English: A Corpus–Based Study (1700–1900)*. Universidad de Salamanca. Supervisors: Javier Ruano García and Pilar Sánchez García.

Ávila–Ledesma, Nancy E. 2019. *A Historical, Ethnopragmatic Study of the Conceptualisation of Emotions in Irish Emigrants' Personal Correspondence.* Universidad Autónoma de Madrid. Supervisors: Jesús Romero-Trillo and Carolina P. Amador-Moreno.

Bonness, Dania J. 2016. *'There is a great many Irish Settlers here.' Exploring Irish English Diachronically Using Emigrant Letters in the Corpus of Irish English Correspondence (CORIECOR).* Unpublished doctoral thesis. Universitetet i Bergen. Supervisors: Kevin McCafferty and Carolina P. Amador-Moreno.

De Rijke, Persijn M. 2016. *'[S]ince we came across the Atlantic': An Empirical Diachronic Study of Northern Irish English Phonology.* Universitetet i Bergen. Supervisors: Kevin McCafferty and Carolina P. Amador-Moreno.

Van Hattum, Marije. 2012. *'Irish English Modal Verbs from the Fourteenth to the Twentieth Centuries.'* University of Manchester. Supervisors: David Denison and Nuria Yánez-Bouza.

MA dissertations:

Hagen, Eivind. 2022. *'[T]his is a better country for to emigrate to than the [U]nited States': For to as an Infinitive Marker in A Corpus of Irish English Correspondence from the 18th to the 20th century.* Universitetet i Bergen. Supervisor: Carolina P. Amador-Moreno.

Sotoca Fernández, David. 2020. *(Im)politeness in Irish English: A Sample Study of Reproaches between Family Members in the Context of Letter Writing.* University of Extremadura. Supervisor: Carolina P. Amador–Moreno.

Bolstad, Øyvind Helle 2017. *Variable negation in 19th–century Irish English.* Universitetet i Bergen. Supervisor: Kevin McCafferty.

Myklestad, Anne Sætersdal. 2015. *'WE have had very pearlous times and lost much but through devine providance is blessed with sufficent of the nessarys of life': A Study of Subject–Verb Concord in 18th–century Ulster.* Universitetet i Bergen. Supervisor: Kevin McCafferty.

CORIECOR was conceived as a major, long-term investment. It has certainly had value at the University of Bergen, the University of Extremadura, and the University of Salamanca, where these MA and PhD theses have been produced or are currently under way. Its ultimate success, nevertheless, will be indicated by it being put to uses that we, its planners, could not have conceived of at the start.

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Amador-Moreno, Carolina P. and Kevin McCafferty. 2015b. "'[B]ut sure its only a penny after all': Irish English Discourse Marker Sure." In Dossena 2015, 179-98.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Discursive Approaches to Sociopolitical Polarization and Conflict

Laura Filardo-Llamas, Esperanza Morales-López and Alan Floyd (eds.)

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Covid-19, economic crises, political instability, terrorism, climate change, social (in)justice, discrimination based on the skin color or sexual orientation are (some of the most) prominent challenges that impact modern-day life and interpersonal relations locally and internationally. This is so because these issues carry sociopolitical and sociocultural ideologies that do not just manifest at the interplay between language and discourse, but are an open social source of social conflict (Jeffries 2019). This also calls for the importance to continue studying the interrelationship between language, conflicts and discourse. It is at the intersection between these concepts that discourses are likely to be polarized (Andersson 2022). However, despite the growing research on understanding the causes and consequences of polarizing discourses, few studies have attempted to explore this interrelationship from an interdisciplinary perspective. One reason is that scholars in humanities and social science disciplines such as sociolinguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, psychology, to name just a few, tend to delimit the scope of their studies on polarizing discourse within individual discipline alone (O'Driscoll 2019; Tsoumou 2021). To fill in this gap and go a bit further, the volume under review provides, both theoretically and methodologically, a synesthetic and comprehensive understanding of social factors contributing to polarizing discourses and their sociopolitical consequences in the management of modern-day issues facing societies across the globe. The book is both empirical and informative; and as such, it can be of a great interest to any type of audience, ranging from scholars, students, social activists to lawmakers interested in language, communication, linguistics, peace studies, international relations and conflict studies.

Edited by Filardo–Llamas, Morales–López and Floyd, the book is a collection of chapters written by scholars with broad research backgrounds and expertise. The book contains 17 chapters divided into two parts, both of which (1) explore how conflicts become polarized, and (2) examine the discursive strategies and rhetorical-argumentative resources that construct conflict and polarization from (socio)linguistic, discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis perspectives. The volume concludes with an afterword that points to the importance of interdisciplinary methodologies in the study of conflict and polarization.

To begin with, the 10 chapters contained in Part 1 deal with polarization in social and political conflicts and highlight the importance of political ideologies in the construction of discursive identities.

For example, chapter 1, which deals with the situation of majorities and minorities that refers to two different social groups with opposing opinions on the future of Catalonia, shows how the extreme degree of polarization in terms of the language used by politicians can lead to both political and social crisis in the region.

Chapter 2 shows the crucial role of discourse in the construction of two competitive realities between government and the civil society during social movements and protest events in Portugal in the midst of the Austerity Measures.

Chapter 3 tackles the role of metaphor in constructing political discourse and explores the nature of discourse related to the social renewal and political change generated by the so-called 15M in Spain. The chapter provides a discursive picture of both the Catalan and Galician coalition En Comú Podem, when referring to the territorial problem in Catalonia and Galicia.

Chapter 4, which uncovers representations of immigrants in Belgian French-speaking online political discourse, reiterates the argument that political discourses about different types of minorities often include some features of hate speech which can be more or less explicit or more mitigated in one way or another.

Humor plays a role in polarizing discourse (Tsoumou 2021). It is with this understanding that chapter 5 digs into the co-construction of conflict through humorous memes in recreating Trump and His "Others." The chapter explains how ironic responses to Trump's provocative style contribute to the construction of polarized subjectivities and enhance a negative view of Trump and his supporters.

Chapter 6 explores the representation of Muslims and Arabs as manifested in the printed news press of the Czech Republic and shows how constructing "Us" and "Them" serves as a departing point in the conflict between Muslims and Arabs in the news 1990–2018.

Chapter 7 examines the narrative of IS political and religious project through the analysis of the visual strategies used in the online magazines *Dabiq* and *Rumiyah*. What the chapter addresses is the dichotomy between supporters and enemies that IS establishes to legitimize their actions. For IS, supporters are discursively constructed as those bound to the ideology, whereas enemies include not just the Westerners alone, but anyone, Muslim or non-Muslim, who fails to follow the strict principles of the pure Islam defended by the organization and; as such, becomes a possible target.

The insights into the multimodal representations of Syrian refugee crisis are provided in chapter 8. The study focuses on Spanish and British press and explores how Europe (Spain and UK)'s harsh immigration measures push the narrative that draws the schema 'us' group, Europeans, closing borders and hindering refugees' movement into and across the EU, and 'them,' refugees, trying to advance while risking their lives to reach safety. One conclusion is that the newsmakers analyzed (i.e., *El País* and *The Guardian*) are mostly interested in showing the clash between the two groups; that is, the effects of refugees on 'our' borders and 'our' blunt response to 'them,' as well as the exact routes 'they' are following or where 'they' are blocked, that is, how close or far 'they' are from 'us.'

Polarization in terms of the students' demands and the government narrative is also explored in chapter 9. Motivated by the need to address the pivotal role the students play in the democratization of Chile, chapter 9 uncovers how the conflict is discursively constructed from hegemonic and counter-hegemonic stances, considering the voices of the collective actors involved (i.e., the government, represented by the mainstream press, and the mobilized students, represented by their use of social media platforms such as Facebook). In this context of power asymmetric, the chapter shows that conflict can take different forms depending on the actors involved, who resort to various linguistic and discursive strategies to legitimize, maintain and/or challenge hegemonic frames that shape our social actions and practices.

The term "war" is used for different purposes in different contexts. This polysemy is the focus of Chapter 10, which tackles the way the metaphoric concept of "war" was exploited in the earlier days of the covid-19 pandemic. An exploration of the different meanings the term "war" took in the narrative about Covid–19 on social media shows that "war" was not just used to refer to health problems, but also as a political response to the pandemic. By comparing its use in the US, UK and Spain, the chapter explains that activating the CONFLICT schema allows for parallelisms to be established between the fight against the virus in the health system and the confrontations between political parties.

Part 2, which is more rhetorical-argumentative, includes seven chapters that explore polarization as a symbolic and cultural phenomenon.

Chapter 11 explores polarization between denialists and non–denialists of climate change as reflected in the US Cartoons. An examination of graphic cartoons reveals not just that polarization translates to graphic humor, but also that the cartoonists very rarely use scientific content to defend their arguments on climate change.

Along the same line of exploring polarization as a symbolic and cultural phenomenon, chapter 12 deals with controversies surrounding the social debate on energy sources and climate change. What the chapter shows is, in part, that reluctance to accept the conclusions drawn by the scientific community is not just due to strategic failures and distorting factors of communication, but also to the audience's prejudices.

Chapter 13 explores the interpretation of feminism by female conservative politicians in Spain. By focusing on three right-wing female politicians (i.e., Cayetana Álvarez de Toledo, Inés Arrimadas and Rocío Monasterio), the chapter addresses the discursive and ideological processes by which these politicians reframe feminism from their own political views. Concretely, whilst some politicians view feminism as embodied democratic values of equality and liberty, others see feminism as a movement involving an authoritarian collective of women fighting a perpetual war against men.

Chapter 14 covers the media treatment of gender-related violence, by examining the case of Heidi Paz in Spain. With the understanding that gender-based violence is an issue that generates a great deal of conflict and polarization, the chapter shows—through an analysis of *El País*, *La Razón*, *elDiario.es* and *OKDiario*—that polarization tends to be mostly generated by the mentioning or avoidance of the term "gender-based violence" to refer to the murder of Heidi Paz. Along these lines, some media outlets (i.e., *elDiario.es*) consider gender violence a structural problem belonging to the public sphere and that manifests the social systematization of the inequality to which women are subjected daily. Others (i.e., *OKDiario*), however, tend to deny the existence of gender violence through the use of lexical construction that avoid any reference to Heidi as a victim.

Faith, freedom and the interpretation of the Bible have undoubtedly become controversial topics in the wake of the LGBT+ movements. It is in this respect that chapter 15 explores the discourse which gay and lesbian believers have created to make their faith and spirituality compatible with belonging to LGBT+ groups.

Chapter 16 takes a multimodal approach in the examination the discourse markers in the construction of news in the context of Cuba-US relations. The chapter shows that a) polarity is expressed by the interaction of several semiotic systems and emerges from what is "micro" in interactional processes of different complexity levels of the sign, which ends up becoming a multimodal sign; b) the syntactic and pragmatic units interchange with the intonation patterns; c) polarity, as a logical contradiction, establishes a correlation between the two poles that form the conceptual unit of the United States-Cuba conflict.

The idea that metaphor can be used as a tool to construct social reality in conflict and polarizing discourse (Jeffries 2019) is what motivates the final chapter of the volume. Through the rhetorical analysis of a textual corpus made up of journalistic and literary texts, the chapter tackles the discursive constructions of "ETA terrorists" in two Spanish media outlets (*El País* and *El Mundo*) and in a novel (*Patria* by Fernando Aramburu) and provides the reader with a hegemonic rhetorical construction, in the Spanish state, of the Basque conflict.

All in all, this volume is a must-read in terms of the diversity of the settings, the novelty of the findings and the strength of both the methodologies followed and the theoretical approaches adopted. The book enlightens the idea that the nature of discourse in particularly polarized and politically unstable systems is an important lesson for many nations and for the academic community as well. The book presents a range of linguistic approaches as a means for examining the nature of communication related to conflict.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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The Cambridge Companion to Margaret Atwood, Second Edition

Coral Ann Howells (ed.)

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021. 216 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-108-70763-3

Margaret Atwood is one of the most prolific writers of our era. The Canadian author has been writing since the 1960s, gaining relevance both in Canada and around the world throughout the decades due to her witty style and captivating narratives. As Macpherson states, Atwood's impact on Canadian and contemporary literature is unprecedented, and despite the passage of time she "continues to have the power to surprise" readers (2010, ix). Anthologies analysing her works have been published since the beginning of her career, starting with the first collection of critical essays regarding Atwood's works by Linda Sandler (1977). As Atwood steadily became a renowned writer worldwide, scholars began to publish volumes providing a general analysis of her works such as *Margaret Atwood (Bloom's Modern Critical Views Series)* (2000) by Harold Bloom, *Margaret Atwood* (2010) by Marion Wynne-Davies or *The Cambridge Introduction to Margaret Atwood* (2010) by Heidi Slettedahl Macpherson. Simultaneously, specific themes within her literary world have also been studied as in Pilar Somacarrera Iñigo's *Margaret Atwood* (1939-) (2000) which focuses on power and feminism, or Sherrill Grace and Lorraine Weir's investigation on the way that language is used in her novels and poems in *Margaret Atwood: Language, Text, and System* (2014).

In 2006, the first edition of *The Cambridge Companion to Margaret Atwood* was published and it gathered experts on the field from different areas and parts of the world to provide readers a "broader framework of contemporary issues and critical approaches" applied to Atwood's works (Howells 2006, 2). What distinguished this edition from other volumes that discussed Margaret Atwood was the variety of voices it provided discussing Atwood's works and themes as well as the approachable structure and language that it used, granting all readers the opportunity to discover the renowned author. Fifteen years later, a revision of this first edition was indispensable as Atwood had produced an important number of new works, and this is exactly what the editor Coral Ann Howells attempts to achieve in the second edition of *The Cambridge Companion to Margaret Atwood*, published in 2021. This new volume provides a general survey of Atwood's works studied by different scholars with various backgrounds, areas of expertise, and interests. As Howell argues, the aim is to encourage general readers and students to comprehend "the evolving facets of Atwood's work over nearly sixty years" (2), thus continuing the legacy of the first edition of making the book accessible to everyone.

The book contains twelve chapters in addition to an introduction by Coral Ann Howells. Each chapter of the volume deals with a different topic and discusses Atwood's works through contrasting perspectives. Perhaps one of the few aspects that could have been improved in this edition is the order of the contributions as they seem to lack a clear thematic organization. All in all, the chapters that constitute this second edition acknowledge the three key points in Atwood's narratives, namely, wilderness, sexual power politics and Canadian nationalism. However, just as Margaret Atwood does, the authors of the twelve chapters connect these themes with current topics that directly affect her works. Thus, issues such as the rise of the #MeToo movement, the seemingly unstoppable climate change crisis and the Trump era are present in the chapters of this new edition, illustrating the relevance that Atwood's work have even decades later after being published. As Howells declares in the introduction, "two new chapters have replaced those in the original edition, to reflect new developments in Atwood's immensely varied production and in Atwoodian critical studies" (xiii). These chapters include Fiona Tolan's "Margaret Atwood's Revisions of Classic Texts" and Eva-Marie Kröller's "The Hulu and MGM Television Adaptation of *The Handmaid's Tale*."

Additionally, despite maintaining the same title as in the first edition, three new authors, Sarah A. Appleton, J. Brooks Bouson and Gina Wisker, oversee the discussion of essential chapters which deal with female bodies, environmentalism, and history, respectively. The remaining chapters are written by the same authors as in the first edition; thus, readers find experts such as the editor Coral Ann Howells, as well as David Staines, Pilar Somacarrera, Elonora Rao, Marta Dvořák, Branko Gorjup, and Reingard M. Nischik. Some of the authors offer slight updates on their chapters while others incorporate more drastic transformations. As previously mentioned, the #MeToo movement alongside the Trump era or the renewed fame Atwood has achieved due to the TV adaptation of *The Handmaid's Tale* provide the authors with material for new reflections when revisiting their chapters over a decade later.

Before the introduction, the volume offers a brief chronology of Margaret Atwood's life, underlining her publications as well as important events in her life. Despite its concise structure, it already gives readers a hint of why this second edition is necessary, as fifteen new entries have been added to the previous one. In this updated chronology, the events in Atwood's life are presented until the year 2020 and it concludes with the collection of poems *Dearly*, while the previous edition only gathered information until the year 2006. Thus, works like her graphic novels, collection of poems, short fiction, and novels such as *Hag-Seed* and *The Testaments* are now included.

In accordance with the first edition, there is an introductory chapter written by its editor. In it, Howells gives readers an overview of who Atwood is, putting the spotlight on what she has achieved. It also provides an overview of the literary works she has published since the previous edition which include "four dystopias, three collections of short fiction, two nonfiction books, two revisions of classic texts, and two poetry collections, as well as three children's stories and four graphic novels" (1-2). Additionally, Howells briefly discusses some of the issues that concern Atwood, which are further explored in several of the chapters of the book, such as her Canadian identity, climate change, the wilderness, or feminism. The chapter concludes with an overview of similar works which have studied Atwood's production and a brief outline with the novelties that this volume provides, such as the inclusion of a chapter analysing the television adaptation of *The Handmaid's Tale* or Atwood's revisions of classic texts.

In Chapter 1, "Margaret Atwood in Her Canadian Context," David Staines focuses on Atwood's Canadianess throughout her career. This is one of the several chapters that remain practically the same as in the first edition. Her Canadianess as a central theme in her works withstands the passage of time, thus the necessity of providing at least one chapter solely dedicated to this topic. Staines distinguishes three phases in Atwood's career and her relationship with Canada, first as a country to be explored to ultimately defending its literature as having its own identity.

The following chapter, "Margaret Atwood on Questions of Power," is written by Pilar Somacarrera, who transforms her text significantly by adding an analysis of several new novels by Atwood, such as *The Heart Goes Last* (2015) or *The Testaments* (2019). This chapter discusses the importance that the topic of power has for Atwood and how she integrates various kinds of power relations—whether at a global scale or at a personal level—into her works.

In Chapter 3, "Home and Nation in Margaret Atwood's Later Fiction," Eleonora Rao analyses the representation of these concepts in various works by Atwood. Ranging from *The Blind Assassin* to the *MaddAddam* trilogy, Rao provides an overview of how the concept of home changes as it is no longer a safe and stable place, and how it mirrors the idea of nation as well.

In Chapter 4, titled "Margaret Atwood's Female Bodies," Sarah A. Appleton offers a distinct perspective on how the female body is depicted in Atwood's works. Appleton provides a thorough review of how women are "modified, disembodied, reconstructed, and more" in Atwood's novels as a faithful reflection of how society treats them in the real world (74).

The fifth chapter maintains the title "Margaret Atwood and Environmentalism," but with a new author, as it is now J. Brooks Bouson who offers her reading on this fundamental topic in Atwood's works. Focusing mainly on the *MaddAddam* trilogy, Bouson discusses Atwood's worries towards the future of nature and humanity while depicting ideas such as the Anthropocene, eco-terrorism, and deep ecology.

Chapter 6 is written by Gina Wisker and it examines the presence of history in Atwood's works through a new light. Wisker discusses Atwood's interest in history, particularly on Canadian history and how this is reflected in her works, primarily *Alias Grace*. Moreover, she reflects on Atwood's attentiveness towards giving voice to those who are oftentimes silenced by history and how it can be manipulated and reconstructed.

Chapter 7, written by Fiona Tolan, focuses on Atwood's revisionist reading of *The Odyssey,* particularly the character of Penelope and the twelve maids, and her reinterpretation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, hence the title "Margaret Atwood's Revisions of Classic Texts." With the publication of *The Penelopiad* and *Hag-Seed*, Tolan argues that these novels represent both an homage and rewriting of the traditional texts, providing new interpretations for modern readers.

The eighth chapter, by Marta Dvořák, is entitled "Margaret Atwood's Humor" and it analyses this element together with Atwood's unique narrative style. Dvořák compares Atwood's writing style with the Carnivalesque and highlights the use she makes of parody, travesty and metatextuality alongside irony and satire.

In accordance with Atwood's significant poetic work, for she has written numerous collections of poetry, this genre is given a chapter on its own titled "Margaret Atwood's Poetry and Poetics." Written by Branko Gorjup, the chapter briefly deals with the poetry collections that Atwood has published and how they oftentimes offer a dualism that must be transcended while dealing with themes such as power, nature, and Canada.

In Chapter 10, "Margaret Atwood's Later Short Fiction," Reingard M. Nischik analyses the three short fiction collections published by Atwood since the first edition of the *Companion*. Thus, while in the first edition Nischik examined Atwood's early and middle-period short fictional stories, in this edition she conducts a comprehensive study of *The Tent* (2006), *Moral Disorder* (2006), and *Stone Mattress: Nine Tales* (2014). As Nischik argues, if one wants to have a "comprehensive" understanding of Atwood's short fiction, both chapters must be read together (169).

Written by the editor Coral Ann Howells, Chapter 11 offers an updated analysis of the latest dystopian novels published by Margaret Atwood. Whilst in the first edition Howell examined *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985) and *Oryx and Crake* (2003), this new chapter offers a deeper understanding of Atwood's dystopian worlds. Howell explores the complete *MaddAddam* trilogy with the publication of *The Year of the Flood* (2009) and *MaddAddam* (2013), as well as *The Testaments* (2019), the much-anticipated sequel to *The Handmaid's Tale*, in addition to the stand-alone novel *The Heart Goes Last* (2015), and she discusses the differences she finds amongst them, examining the structure, narrative style and content of each one.

Closely linked with the previous chapter, Eva-Marie Kröller concludes the volume with her chapter "The Hulu and MGM Television Adaptation of *The Handmaid's Tale*," which is possibly the most innovative as it deals with the adaptation of the novel into the television series that is still being produced to this day with its fifth season recently released. As Howell argues, this chapter provides "a new popular dimension to the reception of Atwood's work, signalling new directions in Atwoodian studies" (xiii).

The second edition of *The Cambridge Companion to Margaret Atwood* is an excellent acquisition for anyone interested in studying what Atwood has published, whether they are experts in the field or newcomers to the Atwoodian world, as the volume provides a variety of essays dealing with different topics in addition to a useful list of further readings. As Howells argues, this second edition provides readers with a revisiting of Atwood's earlier works as well as a "charting of new directions" which she has explored (2). The book can be used for personal interest or literary classes as it offers a wide range of topics such as power politics, feminism, and environmentalism in a way that is accessible for all readers. This second edition is the only recently published volume that deals with Margaret Atwood and studies her latest works, demonstrating the richness of Atwood's novels, poems, and short fiction throughout the decades and the need to continue having a fluid and diverse conversation regarding the figure of Atwood and her impact on the contemporary literary world.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Imaginative Ecologies: Inspiring Change through the Humanities

Diana Villanueva-Romero, Lorraine Kerslake and Carmen Flys-Junquera (eds.)

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As a latecomer in the area of the Environmental Humanities, I write this review in a rapture of enthusiasm, marvelled at the profusion of ideas, proposals and projects contained in this volume, and astonished at the fact that such important concerns should not be radically more part and parcel of our everyday teaching and, more generally, treading the world. I am sure that they are for many of you, but I confess not without embarrassment that I have not paid sufficient attention to environmental and ecological matters so far in neither my teaching nor my research. Yet I trust I can still mend these shortcomings, and reading this inspiring collection of essays is only one of the first steps undertaken in that direction. These confessions are relevant because perhaps some of my comments in what follows may sound too naïf for experts in the area, of which for our good fortune there are quite a few in Spain. Together with that of the editors, and of the whole team of the GIEGO research group of which they are part, efforts such as those of Margarita Estévez-Saá and María Jesús Lorenzo-Modia as editors of the also precious volume *The Ethics and Aesthetics of Eco-caring, Contemporary Debates on Ecofeminism(s)* (2019), or those of the Ecological Humanities Group at the University Politècnica de València, deserve praise without reserve. Surely quite a few other research groups in Spain incorporate concerns about the environment in their analysis of cultural practices even if it is not their most visible signpost, as is the case, for instance, of the good work of HEAL, based at the Universidad de Oviedo. An exhaustive list of initiatives or groups which work in this direction is beyond the scope of this review, but their vision needs to be acknowledged in increasingly urgent times.

Other books published in Spain in recent years and which tread territories contiguous to the valuable publication under review here, are *Arte y ecología* (2015) by Tonia Raquejo Grado and José María Parreño Velasco, and *Humanidades ambientales: Pensamiento, arte y relatos para el siglo de la gran prueba* (2018), edited by José Luis Albelda, José María Parreño Velasco and José Manuel Marrero Henríquez. Surely many others deserve mention, and I apologize in advance

for unintended omissions. In English, a wealth of publications in this area guarantee the relevance of the present contribution, such as Bill and Cox, *Arts Programming for the Anthropocene: Art in Community and Environment* (2018), Demos, *Ethical Actions: A Critical Fine Art Practice* (2017), Kusserov, *Picture Ecology: Art and Ecocriticism in Planetary Perspective* (2021), Morton, *All Art is Ecological* (2021), or Meiris and Rippl (2018), *Cultural Sustainability: Perspectives from the Humanities and Social Sciences.* Together, of course, with the comprehensive *The Routledge Companion to Contemporary Art, Visual Culture, and Climate Change* (Demos, Scott and Banerjee, 2021).

Similarly to these, *Imaginative Ecologies: Inspiring Change through the Humanities* is based on the premise that it is possible to imagine different and better worlds than the one we have as we have it, and then act in ways so as to approach and hopefully attain such worlds. In the same way as self-created narratives about the world that surrounds us ordain our being it in, the speculative narratives that we project into the future can and in fact mark a sense of direction as to where and how we want to progress. When it comes to imagining, the Humanities play a pivotal role, be them in the form of literature, art, or philosophies lived by, which can be either ancestral or posthuman—two categories which often converge, as some pieces in this collection show.

The essays composing this volume are allocated into three main sections, plus an epilogue. The first of these is "Humanists in Conversation," and brings together three key pieces to situate the discussion. In the chapter "Environmental Humanities and the Public Intellectual," Scott Slovic, a foundational figure in the area, defends the critical need for intellectuals to go down to the world and become shamelessly hands-on activists. Next, Villanueva-Romero interviews Christof Mauch, the founder of the Rachel Carson Centre for Environment and Society in Munich, Germany. Here we have two valuable accounts of how to undertake institutional change and put things in motion: The veteran journal *ISLE* among other initiatives in the first essay, and the mentioned Research and Teaching Centre together with a few subsequent actions (of which the genesis is explained in detail), in the second. Always from a transdisciplinary stance, both scholars give also interesting clues in the pedagogical direction, where conspicuous efforts need to be made. The first section closes with "'El buen vivir' is Harmony with the Earth," where Amazonian philosopher Rafael Chanchari Pizuri is interviewed by the scholar and documentary maker Juan Carlos Galeano, an Amazonian himself. The ancestral concept of "Good living" is about communal work ("mingas") and about relationality: with the earth and with the multitude elements which compose it, where human animals are only one tiny part. The extractive ethos of human animals is exposed by Chanchari for what it is: a destructive leviathan which it is imperative to tame.

Part II, "Interpreting Eco-visions," offers exegetical accounts of cultural contributions to environmental consciousness, with good balance between literary and artistic input. Both "Environmental Imagination and Wonder in Beatrix Potter," by Lorraine Kerskale and "New Worlds Beyond Reality: Imagined Futures in Laura Gallego's *Las hijas de Tara*," by Irene Sanz-Alonso, propound analysis of literary works from different times and scope. Potter's visionary concern for animals and her preoccupation for cultivating empathy towards them in human beings in the heyday of colonialism, and hence of the exploitative ethos which has characterized modernity, is convincingly argued and extolled. Complementing that essay, the eco-concerned analysis of the speculative fiction of Laura Gallego, one of the most successful young adult fiction writers in Spain, shows that this prolific genre can also very productively (and pedagogically) imagine more sustainable worlds. The literary part is completed with Imelda Martín-Junquera's study of works by Simon Ortiz and Joy Harjo, of eloquent title: "Towards Regenerative Societies and New Worlds." The piece shows that, as suggested above, ancestral philosophies can merge with contemporary concerns (such as technology in the case of Ortiz) and illuminate the right paths to follow. The importance of locality and situatedness is emphasized, in both writers, as the only possible way to achieve a unity with the more-than-human world which as of today is severely maimed, but which can still be recovered.

Combining literature and art, the work of Helen Mayer and Newton Harrison, particularly the poetic-artistic installation *The Serpentine Lattice*, is analysed by Chris Freemantle and Anne Douglas in "Foregounding Ecosystems: Thinking with the Work of Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison," and interpreted as a means towards "an epistemology based on perception, recognition, and awe" (83). This is an alternative to dominant rationalistic approaches to understanding which sideline a sense of continuity with ecological systems. The chapter and the artists' oeuvre emphasize how visual impact and storytelling in conjunction are able to induce new forms, as well, of interaction with the world around.

In "When Matter Takes a Position: Post-Anthropocentric Landscapes in Contemporary Art," visual artist and scholar Barbara Fluxà Álvarez-Miranda continues by presenting the reader with several ecologically conscious artistic works by a number of artists, herself among them, who bridge disciplines in their multiple treatments of matter as participating of both the artistic and techno-scientific realms, an intersection where "they have been driven to work" (153) in post-Anthropocentric times. Like the rest, her article is rigorously informed at the theoretical level, invoking stimulating ideas from Castoriadis, Guattari or Latour.

Part III, "Inspiring Change," compiles three chapters which project themselves into future interventions and community growth even more than the previous ones. "Sense of Place as an Enhancer of Empathy and Ecological Consciousness in the

Baix Llobregat," by Carme Casulà, relates an engaging experience linking artistic intervention, community life and sense of place and which took place in this metropolitan area of Barcelona. The intervention meant the imaginative recovery and valorisation through art, memory and ecological intervention of this industrialized area where nonetheless large agricultural pockets persist against the odds. Cartographies of emotion in the form of "affection maps" and "connectivity maps," where all the community contributed, were created, and different forms of ecological intervention took place, strengthening the importance of the "5 R's: Reduce, Repair, Reuse, Recycle and Regularise" (179) and boosting the relationship of the people with their place and landscape, something which was in danger of being all but lost in this peripherical, heavily urban/ised area, in many ways typical in spite of its many singularities.

Carmen Flys-Junquera and Beatriz Lindo-Mañas contribute the third interview compiled in the collection, this time to American activist and ecofeminist Starhawk, widely known for her involvement in movements related to modern paganism, Goddess religion and Wicca, and Permaculture. The focus of the interview is however her facet as novelist, and the discussion turns around the key idea of "the power of stories to envision a change" (184). One of the many constructive codas we can retrieve from this piece is Starhawk's explanation of her five criteria for judging things, namely, "usefulness, beauty, sustainability, nourishing for the earth (or not damaging) and nourishing for the soul" (189). The power of rituals as life sustainers and that of spirituality are also underscored.

The last essay, "Eco-interactions: Art and Community," is signed by artists *cum* scholars Elena Sánchez Vizcaíno and Lucía Loren Atienza, although it consists of an essay written by the first one about some relevant artistic interventions of the second one. The work of Loren Atienza has developed in close relation with nature, searching to nurture what geographer Yi-Fu Tuan named as "topophilia," that is, "the human being's affective ties with the material environment" (198) (a purpose which we saw replicated in the intervention in Baix Llobregat explained earlier). This artist's research goes deeply in tune with the earth's rhythms and pulsations, and is moved by an ethics of care for both humans and the more-than-human world. Her purpose is deeply pedagogical, proposing art, once again, as an educational tool for change in the appropriate direction. Sánchez Vizcaíno carefully unpacks several of Loren Atienza's interactions, a term the artist prefers to that of interventions, foregrounding the relevance in this artist's work philosophy of the concept of interdependence—a concept which resonates throughout the book.

The collection closes with an epilogue which self-denominates itself "a short story": "Chickens like Celebrities," by José Manuel Marrero Henríquez. Here the narrator shares in tragicomic undertones his epiphany about meat-eating, or rather, about ceasing to eat meat… onboard a plane. Next we learn of the little or not so little inconveniences that his new situation, that is, refusing to eat meat, brings about in his social life—for the time being, we are to hope.

Imaginative Ecologies: Inspiring Change through the Humanities is a volume of enormous import. For newcomers in the area like myself, it is informative and affordable, familiarizing the reader with the academic foundations of terminology also current in non-specialized circles such as Anthropocene, Gaia, Ethnopoetics or Posthuman. For specialists, it provides rigorous insight and daring advances in different strands of the Environmental Humanities as connected to literary and artistic production and philosophical thought. More generally, this book offers a succulent catalogue of ideas and experiences which guides us towards a clearer understanding of our imbrication with the rest of the world, one which gently entices us in the direction of "Good living," the long-treasured and now somewhat forgotten "Buen Vivir."

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Mediating Specialized Knowledge and L2 Abilities: New Research in Spanish/English Bilingual Models and Beyond

Linda Escobar and Ana Ibáñez Moreno (eds.)

Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. 368 pp.
ISBN: 978-3-030-87475-9 (hbk), 978-3-030-87476-6 (ebk)

The beginning of the third millennium AD witnessed some of the major breakthroughs in the future of bilingual education in Europe.[1] It was in 2001 when the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) was presented to foster the standardization of European citizens' foreign language assessment (Council of Europe 2001). Since then, terms such as CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) or EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction) have permeated current research in the field of foreign language teaching. This explains the need of this book, entitled *Mediating Specialized Knowledge and L2 Abilities: New Research in Spanish/English Bilingual Models and Beyond,* which is edited by two well-known Teaching English as a Foreign Language specialists, namely, Dr. Escobar and Dr. Ibáñez Moreno.

[1]This work is supported by the Service-Learning Project "Escuela para madres y padres sobre el bilingüismo y la enseñanza del inglés."

The book here reviewed represents a triumph of bilingual education research in Spain and abroad. The editors have gathered 26 experts in the field of bilingual education and teaching of English as a Foreign Language for general, specific, and academic purposes. The book contains 16 chapters, which are equally organized into three main sections. The first part addresses different English/Spanish bilingual contexts. The second one revolves around the teaching of English for Specific Purposes. Finally, the last section covers the field of English for Academic Purposes and its teaching in international contexts.

Part I, which focuses on different bilingual contexts of education, contains 5 contributions. Chapter 1 ("Tertiary Bilingual Education: The Iberian Spanish Case versus Multilingual Contexts," written by Linda Escobar) delves into the context bilingual education in tertiary contexts by fostering the adoption of "English as a Lingua Franca via English-Medium Instruction" (3). The author here explains how English is a commodity in Madrid, that is, a "marketable skill to compete in the neoliberal job market" (10).

Chapter 2 ("Translanguaging and Language Mediation in EMI Contexts: Emotional Stances and Translation Issues," written by Esther Nieto Moreno and Alicia Fernández) also discusses English and EMI implementation as "a marketisation strategy for internalisation purposes" (18). The chapter also explains how EMI contexts allow "mediation language activities establish a bridge from one language to another" (20) and both teachers and students' ideologies about the use of the L1 and L2.

Following "the cultural turn" in translation (36), Chapter 3 ("Translator Competence in Second Foreign Language Teaching: Acquisition of Intercultural Competence," written by Laura González) moves to the study of the development of the translator competence putting emphasis on the intercultural competence. The author proposes a "combination of communicative and collaborative approaches" (55) to help introduce this content in the translation and interpreting studies curriculum.

In Chapter 4 ("The Making of Future School Mediators: Using Digital Narratives for Mediation Purposes," written by María Victoria Guadamillas), the teacher is seen as both a cultural and linguistic mediator. However, the author identifies the lack of the instruction of the linguistic mediation competence in foreign language classes "notwithstanding the regulations that have referred to it in the past few years" (64). Thus, it is proposed to use picture books as "a powerful material for the school teachers when acting as mediators" (67) and help foster it.

Chapter 5 ("CLILing EMI for Effective Mediation in the L2 in Pre-Service Teacher Education: A Case Study at a Spanish University," written by Magdalena Custodio and Alfonso López) describes a "significant pressure on the provision of pre-service teacher education" (81) due to the students' need to show proof of English mastery in Madrid, leading to more EMI programs for prospective school teachers. This contribution also provides the reader with an extensive explanation of EMI, ESP, and CLIL programs and their implementation, as it "reinforces the ideas of the benefits of CLILing EMI in higher education" (101), which is "a successful model of linguistic mediation in pre-service teacher education" (103).

Part II, which analyzes ESP teaching experiences, is the longest section of the book and it contains 6 contributions. Chapter 6 ("Positive Psychology and L2 Motivation in ESP," written by Imelda Brady) focuses on the role of motivation in ESP. The author points out Dynamic Systems Theory (DST) as beneficial approach to language teaching because it rejects learning linearity and rather relies on the acquisition process of the individual as unique (Martín González 2022, 62). In this line, DST is a "more flexible, holistic way to explore more effectively the wealth of variables encompassed under the parasol of Positive Psychology" (127).

Chapter 7 ("Using English-Learning Apps inside Tourism and Business Class: Analysis and Critical Review," written by Yolanda Calvo) analyzes the benefits of using English learning apps in ESP course for tourism and business as well as some of the current ways for improvement in their use, concluding that "there continues to be a lack of apps which offer Tourism and Business English students materials" (150) that combine theory and practice.

Chapter 8 ("ESP for Tourism: Does it Meet Employers' Needs and Prepare Students for the Workplace?," written by Gloria Chamorro, María Vázquez and María del Carmen Garrido) also focuses on ESP for tourism. The authors list all Spanish universities offering an undergraduate program for tourism to analyze their syllabi and whether those course contents meet the needs of the students' potential employers. The questionnaires filled out by employers demonstrate "the importance of being proficient in English to be able to work in this sector" (175) and that "all companies believe that students are not prepared to perform [core] functions [of the job] in English" (176). Interns thus show problems with oral skills, "which were attributed not only to reduced academic training but also to psychological constraints such as shyness and lack of self-confidence" (177).

Chapter 9 ("Teaching Spanish Medical Students How to Write a Case History," written by Ariel Sebastián) revolves around English for medicine at a private university in Madrid. The author shows "the principal characteristics of medical discourse […], especially those which have some relevance with the production of a case history" (201).

Chapter 10 ("Teaching ESP through Data-Drive Learning: An Exploratory Study in Health Sciences Degrees," written by Jorge Soto and Gema Alcaraz) also delves into ESP for health sciences from the perspective of data-driven learning, which is "a constructivist, inductive, bottom-up, learner-centred approach […] to promote learners' autonomy and discovery learning in a technology-based medium where the teacher is a consultant, guide, coach, and/or facilitator rather than a dispenser of linguistic knowledge" (211).

Chapter 11 ("Division of Labour and the Development of Professional Literacies: Problematizing SP Learners' Preparedness for Workplace Writing," written by Tayba Al Hilali and Jim McKinley) closes the ESP part of the book by addressing professional literacies in an ESP course conducted in five private companies in Oman. The authors' findings show that "the college plays/should play in preparing graduates for workplace writing" (244). In this sense, this contribution addresses students' beliefs about the ESP teaching practice, showing their dissatisfaction when it comes to learning certain types of writing genres.

Part III, which addresses EAP teaching experiences, contains 5 contributions. Chapter 12 ("Insights from an ERASMUS Teaching Programme on Academic Writing: The French Case," written by Ourania Katsara) opens this section by describing Erasmus experiences by French students, due to their prominence in the involvement in Erasmus mobilities. France is "one of the five most active countries in sending teachers abroad on teaching assignments […] [and it is] one of the five most popular destinations for staff teaching assignments" (252). The authors here show a writing experiment they have carried out that proves that "there is a need to design targeted Erasmus academic writing courses giving prominence to student-centred approaches" (266-67) and putting emphasis on intercultural aspects.

Chapter 13 ("A Case Study on Needs Analysis in English for Academic Environmental Purposes," written by Octavia Zglobiu) shows a case study designed for environmental science and engineering, analyzing "the didactical consequences of the switch from face-to-face teaching to entirely remote teaching during the pandemic of Covid-19" (276).

Chapter 14 ("Navigating Corpora for Self-Directed LSP Writing: A Comparative Study of Digital Method and Resource Integration in L1 versus L2 Language Courses," written by Loredana Bercuci, Ana-Maria Pop, Mădălina Chitez, and Andreea Dincă) "explores the potential of corpus linguistics for self-directed academic writing […] by focusing on a parallel intervention in different language course settings" (290). Additionally, the authors here point out students' perceptions of their intervention comparing their usefulness for the L1 and the L2.

Chapter 15 ("Corpus-Based Discourse Analysis: Titles in Civil Engineering Research Articles," written by Ana Roldán) delves into titleology, that is, the study of titles, which "play a key role […] to introduce the topic, research aims, methods […] or any elements that the author intends to highlight" (311). This contribution thus analyzes "the lexical, syntactic and sequential elements most frequently used in civil engineering research article (CERA) titles" (312) to draw potential readers' attention.

Finally, Chapter 16 ("Tales from the Philippines: Fostering Intercultural Language Learning Through a Literary Journey around the Philippine Archipelago," written by Ana Sevilla and María Alcantud) describes TALIS, "a UNESCO-funded project for the compilation, dissemination and promotion of the oral literature and languages from the Philippines" (333-34). Additionally, the authors in this chapter take the Sustainable Development Goals as their point of departure, making this contribution socially responsible and committed to meet the needs of our society.

The growing number of universities offering EMI courses proves once again that "the current role of English as the main academic lingua franca is beyond any doubt" (Lasagabaster 2022, 1). Together with EMI and CLIL, ESP and EAP courses encompass most of present-day research in bilingual education, and this book contains most of the basic contemporary terminology in the field with a few exceptions such as EMEMUS (Dafouz and Smit 2020). For this reason, we cannot think of a better book than this one for any scholar interested in the most current and updated theories and practices in contemporary bilingual education research.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Read Books, Repeat Quotations: The Literary Bob Dylan

Christopher Rollason

Tyne and Wear: Two Riders, 2021. 219 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-9196390-0-0

Christopher Rollason is a British independent scholar especially well-known for his numerous publications on Bob Dylan both in print and online. His writings on Dylan have appeared in academic journals (like *Oral Tradition* and *Atlantis*) and also in newspapers and Dylan fanzines (*Fanzimmer*, *Parking Meter*, *The Bridge*) to which he has been a regular contributor since 2002. Rollason has also been a co-editor of the Bob Dylan Critical Corner website and is currently an editorial board member of the *Dylan Review*. He has participated in major Dylan conferences (Caen, 2005; Tulsa, 2019) and has spoken on Dylan in several universities, such as those of Coimbra, Alcalá de Henares and Seville. In 2017 he chaired a symposium on the translation of Bob Dylan into Spanish and Portuguese at the Madrid Book Fair. Apart from that, Rollason obtained his PhD with a thesis on Edgar Allan Poe, which is also relevant to the contents of this book.

Indeed, this impressive curriculum on Bob Dylan's work constitutes an appropriate presentation of *Read Books, Repeat Quotations*, a book that, in Rollason's words, "is the distillation of a lifetime's listening to (and reading) Bob Dylan," a long-lasting dedication that has always been a source "of insights and pleasure" (195-96), invaluable experiences that many of us, as hard-core Dylanites, have also felt. In keeping with Rollason's publications on literary subjects, this volume explores Dylan's songs as literary texts, focusing on the complexity and ambiguity of their language, and paying special attention to their intertextual echoes, as the title of the book anticipates. The author is very much aware of the "abundance of Dylan material" (195), so he does not intend to study the totality of Dylan's literary production, "which no one individual can grasp in full" (195), but just put together his in-depth analyses of a number of Dylan's songs belonging to different musical periods of his extensive career.

Thus, *Read Books, Repeat Quotations: The Literary Bob Dylan* consists of a compilation of essays on a selection of Dylan's lyrics, most of them previously published, which have been revised and updated, and presented in such a way that they can be read independently. The publication history of the essays is given at the beginning of each text. The book is divided into thirteen chapters, all of which are preceded by a note on texts and method, a preface written by scholar and poet Stephen Scobie—author of several books on Bob Dylan's work—and a brief introduction that follows an acknowledgements paragraph. Chapter thirteen is in fact a two-page conclusion that also looks into Dylan

studies and the future. The volume ends with a bibliography section separated in two parts (A-Dylan; B-Other) and a song index.

Scobie's preface is especially relevant to the contents of Rollason's book: it highlights the evocative power of quotations and the pervasiveness of intertextuality. In fact, the volume's title phrase is a quotation taken from Dylan's song "Love Minus Zero/ No Limit" (1965), a most suitable point of departure to analyse the highly intertextual nature of Dylan's lyrics. In turn, the proliferation of literary allusions ties in with the endless debate over plagiarism: as Scobie points out, repeating quotations may result in "breaches of copyright protocol" but they are also inextricable from "the legitimate and inevitable workings of intertextuality" (6).

Chapter one, titled "Dylan and the Nobel" focuses on the controversy about the granting of the Nobel prize for literature to Bob Dylan in 2016. As Rollason notes, this Nobel award was considered by many as a dangerous innovation, since Dylan is above all a musician and songwriter, rather than a literature author. While some writers, singers and critics received the news of the prize with enthusiasm—Joyce Carol Oates, Stephen King, Salman Rushdie, Leonard Cohen, Bruce Springsteen—others expressed their disagreement about the award, such as Mario Vargas Llosa—another literature Nobel prize. Rollason classifies the objections to Dylan's award into five types and refutes them in a meticulous and scholarly manner, providing valuable and convincing arguments in support of Dylan's Nobel. However, as Rollason observes, it is only the songs themselves—the combination of lyrics and melody—that possess the real power of appeal: "I invite those who do not know his songs to discover them, and those who know them to return to them—to read the words first, and then listen to the texts as sung" (20).

Chapters two to ten are devoted to the analysis of the following song lyrics, which cover a span of fifty seven years (1963-2020): "Bob Dylan's Dream," "Lay Down Your Weary Tune," "Every Grain of Sand," "Desolation Row," "Shelter from the Storm," "Señor (Tales of Yankee Power)," "Man in the Long Black Coat," "Dignity," "Ain't Talkin'," "Red River Shore" and "Murder Most Foul." All these chapters contain a similar structure: Rollason starts by establishing a "default" text—the lyrics that Dylan sings on the first released studio recording of a song—as the basis for his study, including also the account of its variations: the original recordings, the officially published lyrics, the variorum edition (Dylan 2014) and bootleg concert performances. Statistics on the number of live performances of these songs are also provided. Furthermore, Rollason sums up the most important critical readings of the song in question as the starting point for his analysis. Prestigious Dylan scholars, such as Michael Gray, Aidan Day, Greil Marcus and Stephen Scobie are quoted in these chapters, all of which end with an exhaustive list of references. Needless to say, Rollason's approach to the songs is textual rather than biographical, which distinguishes his publication from the majority of Bob Dylan books.

The analysis of these lyrics proves to be instructive in a number of ways, since not only does it foreground Dylan's artistic evolution and elusive identity—protest singer, visionary, trickster—and his diversity of interests—political, religious, literary, cultural—but also the proliferation of meanings that the images and intertextual allusions of the songs evoke. As Rollason points out, Dylan's sources are many and varied: they include canonical works and authors, such as the Bible, the Greco-Roman classics, Shakespeare or T.S. Eliot, but also folk ballads, song lyrics by other musicians or even by himself and in general, texts of ambiguous or uncertain origin—therefore difficult to trace and pin down. In this regard, the interpretation of a song like "Señor (Tales of Yankee Power)" remains more inconclusive than that of "Desolation Row" with its accumulation of well-known, iconic figures (Cinderella, Ophelia, Cain and Abel, Bette Davis, Romeo, the hunchback of Notre Dame, to mention just a few) and its evocation of *The Waste Land*. In any case, whether "Señor" features a Mexican—the Señor of the title—and a Yankee or is just a prayer addressed to the Lord/Señor—my own personal reading—depends on the background and subjectivity of the reader. As Dylan said in an interview, "it doesn't really matter where a song comes from. It just matters where it takes you" (Hilburn 2004, n.p.).

The final book chapters—eleven and twelve—are devoted to the intertextual relationship between Bob Dylan and two popular writers: Edgar Allan Poe and Salman Rushdie. Just as Dylan's work is full of Poe echoes, Rushdie's writings convey numerous Dylan references—already present in *The Satanic Verses*. Employing two lines of research, Rollason explores the power of literary influence—*on* Dylan and *of* Dylan—and discusses how the work of the artistic model becomes an ongoing presence both in the authors' life and in their literary production. In the chapter on Dylan and Poe, Rollason notes significant points in common between Dylan and the Gothic writer: both are emblematic cultural icons, both stand at the intersection between high and popular culture and both—"masters in the art of intertextuality" (148)—have been involved in accusations of plagiarism. In fact, the tenuous dividing line between intertextuality and plagiarism is always a matter of critical debate, as Scobie remarks in the preface. Interestingly, rather than accusing Poe or Dylan of plagiarism, Rollason prefers to employ the notion of "embedded quotation," a kind of literary allusion that implies change and adaptation: there is always an ongoing dialogue between authors and works of different periods and origins through "tell-tale signs" (159), a fitting phrase that recalls both Poe's tale "The Tell-Tale Heart" and Dylan's album *Tell Tale Signs.* Poe's clever definition of originality could also be added to reinforce Rollason's approach to the issue: "There is no greater mistake than the supposition that a true originality is a mere matter of impulse or inspiration. To originate is carefully, patiently, and understandingly to combine" (1845, 354).

In his conclusion to the book, Rollason argues that Bob Dylan's work is "an object of serious study" (195), an affirmation validated not only by the Nobel award, but also by the creation of the Bob Dylan archive in Tulsa (Oklahoma) and that of the *Dylan Review,* an online academic journal that publishes peer-reviewed articles, reviews, opinion pieces and editorials. Undoubtedly, these words—"serious study"—describe the intellectual rigour of Rollason's essays, which in turn highlight the scholarly background of its author, his knowledge of literature and his academic approach to Dylan's songs as literary texts. As the book title suggests, *Read Books, Repeat Quotations* should be read not only by Dylanites, but also by all those interested in literature and its intertextual wiles and last but not least, by those still skeptical about Bob Dylan as a winner of the Nobel prize in literature.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Samuel Beckett and Translation

José Francisco Fernández and Mar Garre García (eds.)

Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021.
261 pp.
ISBN 978 1 4744 8382 7 (hbk), 978 1 4744 8384 1 (pdf), 978 1 4744 8385 8 (epub)

The main intention of the collective work *Samuel Becket and Translation*, edited by José Francisco Fernández and Mar Garre García, is to shed light upon the role played by translation within the oeuvre of Samuel Beckett. The editors include a long, well documented and descriptive introduction, where they review the evolution of the research on Samuel Beckett's translations and detail the current state of the art as well as the chapters incorporated in the book. As stated in this introduction, the relationship between Samuel Beckett and translation constitutes a relatively new field of research: quoting Beer, the editors declare that Beckett's bilingualism "functioned as a medium for artistic self-renewal" (1994, 210). Moreover, the editors keep deepening in this idea, quoting Goulart Almeida and de Vasconcelos Magalhaes Veras, when affirming that "more than an activity, the process of translation and the manipulation of two languages is part of his [Beckett's] poetic inspiration" (2017, 103). The opinion that Beckett's bilingualism was a further source or trigger for his literary creation was consolidated in the 5th International Conference of the Samuel Beckett Society on May 2019 at the University of Almería (Spain).

Reading this collaborative project could be interesting for researchers in both Literature and Comparative Literature as well as Translation Studies. As aforementioned, the role that bilingualism and translation played in the oeuvre of Samuel Beckett was a central part of his creation, since, as the editors of the book under review state, "he was doing something other than writing his texts in one language and making them available in another. He was, on the one hand, stating the unfinished quality of his writing. On the other, he opened language to multiple possibilities of interpretation. Seen this way, when the whole process of translation is problematised, it becomes a methodological approach with enormous potential" (5).

The book integrates thirteen papers sent by researchers from diverse parts of the world, which makes for a global, not too Europe-focused point of view. Several of the collaborators have published a long line of work related to Samuel Beckett, including Pim Verhulst, John Pilling, José Francisco Fernández, Alan W. Friedman and Dirk Van Hulle, and are quoted in quite a few of the book's chapters.

The chapters are organised in three main parts, which centre on different aspects of the relationship of Beckett with translation, and a fourth one which contains three commentaries from translators who collaborated with Samuel Beckett—Antoni Libera, Gabriele Frasca and Erika Tophoven—and a personal note by Professor Alan W. Friedman.

Part I is titled "Beckett's Self–Translations." It contains five articles whose point of convergence is, as one could easily guess from the title, the "realm of Beckett's self–translations" (10). In the first essay, " '... bouche en feu...': A Genetic Manuscript Study of Samuel Beckett's Self–Translation of *Not I*," Shane O'Neill presents a study of the self-translation Beckett carried out of his play *Not I* into the French *Pas moi*. For that purpose, she examined the manuscripts of the translation in order to deepen into the challenges Beckett faced during the translation process, which were related mainly to the musical or rhythmic cadences of the English version. Following O'Neill's work, in "Tracing Translation: The Genesis of *Comédie* and *Film* (fr)," Olga Beloborodova focuses on the self–translation of *Play* and *Film* which, according to the writer, contain several interesting parallels. Failing to his main goal of impoverishing the original English texts when translating them into French, Beckett enhanced and enriched them in their translated version. The third chapter of this first part is a study titled "The Self–Translation of the Representation of the Mind in Samuel Beckett's Trilogy," by Waqas Mirza. Mirza focuses on the effects of Beckett's translations throughout the Trilogy, paying special attention to the use of pronouns in French. According to the author, the French version is more assertive than the English original, this due mainly to the grammatical differences between both languages. Chapter 4 turns our eyes to poetry. Titled "Vagaries of Bilingualism. A Curious Case of Beckett's Translations of his Own Poems" and written by Sławomir Studniarz, this chapter focuses on Beckett's self–translation of poetry, which has not been as deeply studied as texts from other genres. The main questions posed in this paper deal with the final product of the self-translation process, which is considered more and more frequently as a second original. To explore this, Studniarz begins his study analysing previous works on two short poems from *Poèmes 37–39, Dieppe* and *Elles viennent*. However, the main content of his paper will deal with the three poems first published in *Transition* 48.2, June 1946: *je voudrais que mon amour meure, je suis ce cours de sable qui glisse, and que ferais-je sans ce monde sans visage sans questions*. In the fifth and final chapter of Part I, "Literal Translation vs. Self–Translation: *The BeckettPinget* Collaboration on the Radio Play *Cendres* (Embers)," Pim Verhulst focuses on the translation of the radio play *Embers/Cendres* "in order to better understand the significance of collaborative translation for Beckett and its impact on his bilingual poetics of self-translation" (91).

Part II includes four chapters which deal with the translations Beckett made of texts written by others. As stated by Fernández and Garre García in the book's introduction, "all accounts […] confirm that when dealing with the texts written by others, Beckett was diligent, pragmatic, efficient and, in many cases, brilliant" (11-12). Chapters 6 and 7 centre on Beckett's translations of two poems initially composed in Spanish. In the first one, "Esperando a Goethe: Translation, Humanism and 'Message from Earth,'" Patrick Bixby dives into Beckett's translation of *Recado Terrestre* into *Message from Earth*. In Chapter 7, "'A stone of sun': José Juan Tablada's Poems in Samuel Beckett's Translation," María José Carrera analyses "the specific challenges posed by the poems […], challenges which go beyond their Mexican-ness or lack of it" (123) aiming to widen "the overall perspective on Beckett's contribution to the UNESCO commission" (124). Chapter 8, "Translation's Challenge to Lyric's Immediacy: Beckett's Rimbaud" by Amanda Dennis, draws attention to Beckett's translation of "Le Bateau ivre" in order to examine how translation handles the complexity of the poem's temporality and pretensions to immediacy. The last chapter in Part II, "Are Beckett's Texts Bilingual? 'Long after Chamfort' and Translation," Matthijs Engelberts analyses the English translation of Chamfort's originally French prose by posing three questions: "Are Beckett's texts bilingual?," "What does 'translation' amount to (when it is apparently not a burden) for Beckett?," and "Must Beckett mean what he translates (and writes)?"

The last four chapters of the book are compiled in Part III and take a good look at Beckett's poetics of translation. Chapter 10, entitled "*Au Plaisir*: Beckett and the Neatness of Identification" by John Pilling, begins with a close, detailed look on Beckett's dualism throughout his literary oeuvre, and suggests that Beckett was thinking in terms of translation when he wrote many of his critical texts. Dirk Van Hulle verifies the presence of the doppelgänger theme in Beckett's oeuvre in Chapter 11—"A Poetics of the Doppelgänger: Beckett as Self–Translator"—and connects it with his self-translations. He also presents the fact that the very act of selftranslating and the thus arising selfperception might have become a tool for developing the doppelgänger. In Chapter 12, "Tuning Absent Pianos: Watt and the Poetics of Translation," Fábio de Souza Andrade focuses on the Gall's piano turning episode as a metaphorical point of view to analyse the limits and possibilities of translation from a Beckettian perspective. Finally, the last of the book's thirteen chapters, titled "'The absolute impossibility of all purchase': Property and Translation in Beckett's Postwar Prose," Martin Schauss turns his eyes onto the political implications of Beckett's self-translation, deepening into the idea of the *property of language*.

Samuel Beckett and Translation provides the reader with a wide range of studies and analysis of the traces that the relationship between Beckett, bilingualisms and translation left in his oeuvre. This relationship is examined from a variety of points of view, focusing not only on the translations carried out by the very Samuel Beckett of his own works, but also on the translations he made of works written by other authors. These first two parts are followed by a rather more abstract part which deals with the poetry of Beckett's translation. The chapters reflect their authors' innovative research work and conclusions in an objective, detailed and clean way, which makes the book extremely valuable and very

recommendable, as aforementioned, for researchers both in Literature and Comparative Literature as well as Translation Studies. Especially for the latter, the figure of bilingualism and translation as a trigger for creation could be really interesting since it adds to the innovative research line which focuses on the translator as creator. It might also be of use to observe this collaborative project taking as viewpoint Umberto Eco's *traduttore-traditore* or translator–traitor character, presented in the book *Dire quasi la stessa cosa* (2003). Given that the English and French versions of Beckett's oeuvre are *almost* the same, and given the presence of subtle changes in Beckett's translations of other people's works as well, several parallelisms could be drawn from Eco's theories. From my point of view, the editors have clearly achieved their main purpose, since the contributions provide high quality information about the relation between Samuel Beckett and translation and its implications on his oeuvre.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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El talón de hierro, de Jack London

Jesús Isaías Gómez López (ed. y trad.)

Madrid: Letras populares / Cátedra, 2020. 456 pp.
ISBN: 978-84-376-4146-1

There is no death. Life is spirit, and spirit cannot die (London 1915, 329)[1]

La presente edición crítica de *El talón de hierro*, del escritor estadounidense Jack London (12 de enero de 1876-22 de noviembre de 1916), quien inauguró el siglo XX como uno de los novelistas más prestigiosos de su época gracias a publicaciones emblemáticas como *La llamada de lo salvaje* (*The Call of the Wild*, 1903) y *Colmillo blanco* (*White Fang*, 1906), fue publicada por la colección de Letras populares/Cátedra en el año 2020.[2] La traducción, así como la introducción y las notas, corren a cargo del versado Jesús Isaías Gómez López, quien traduce fielmente y analiza la primera edición de la obra, *The Iron Heel*, publicada por la editorial Macmillan Co. en Nueva York en el año 1908. Tal y como reza la contraportada de esta edición, se trata de la primera novela distópica de naturaleza política dentro de la literatura en lengua inglesa y, probablemente, una de las inaugurales distopías literarias actuales de la literatura universal.

Es preciso señalar la relevancia de esta edición en castellano con respecto a sus predecesoras (London 1956, 1980, 1988, 2000, 2011, 2016, 2018), siendo especialmente destacables las ciento veintiocho páginas que Jesús Isaías Gómez López destina a una espléndida introducción y a una íntegra bibliografía. A ello se une la magnífica labor de traducción por parte del citado experto, la cual es fluida y hermosa, de manera que facilita el disfrute de esta obra maestra futurista-distópica.

En el primer apartado de la introducción, "Jack London: un socialista romántico," aparecen retratados los aspectos más relevantes de la vida personal de Jack London (padres, formación, viajes, etc.) que lo influenciaron sobremanera y perfilaron su personalidad. Sus experiencias personales (ya sea como buscador de oro, recolector de ostras clandestino, trotamundos, granjero, periodista, poeta, etc.) impregnaron sus obras, personificadas por sus diversos *alter ego* a través de los cuales este escritor explicó su particular visión del mundo, así como su propósito de transformarlo desde la nueva perspectiva política: la socialista.

[1] A mis padres, Manuel Bonachera Belmonte (9 de noviembre de 1947-31 de marzo de 2022) e Isabel García Martín (8 de agosto de 1953-17 de julio de 2022). Vuestra vida fue un regalo, un tesoro y un amor que me dejasteis.

[2] Este trabajo forma parte del proyecto realizado por el grupo de investigación Lindisfarne en el marco del CEI Patrimonio, Universidad de Almería.

En el segundo apartado, "*El talón de hierro*: fundamento y origen de la distopía política," esta obra de Jack London es presentada como la pionera de un nuevo género, la *ciencia ficción distópica* (Hillegas 1961), en la que, como señala Jesús Isaías Gómez López (42), su autor erige una estructura sociopolítica alternativa y angustiosa sometida o dominada con violencia por un capitalismo implacable e inhumano mediante el manejo de la clase social y política autoritario, la Oligarquía.

En el tercer apartado, "*El talón de hierro*: el socialismo en formato distópico," Jesús Isaías Gómez López (48) apunta a *El talón de hierro* como la primera narración de origen y motivos socialistas que relata el principio y la crónica de una conflagración obrera inigualable contra el poder despótico, totalitario, decrépito y opulento del modelo capitalista americano. La contestación del Estado a esta sublevación será la legitimación de una Oligarquía, una asociación de poderosos capitalistas y empresarios que constituirá el Talón de Hierro, cuya imagen se alza como la expresión máxima de la parte más desalmada y depravada de la Oligarquía; este tiene el poder de sumir al país en las tinieblas y el caos si así logra sus ambiciosos planes de mantener, e incluso aumentar, su poder, riqueza y expansión, erradicando toda esperanza de creación de una verdadera sociedad progresista e igualitaria. Cabe destacar que la novela presenta extensas y abundantes secciones que podrían ser juzgadas como verdadera propaganda pedagógica de las teorías socialistas. Al sumarle a estas secciones las notas a pie de página realizadas por el historiador y narrador heterodiegético, Anthony Meredith, nace así un profundo y auténtico tratado de las primeras teorías socialistas. De este modo, tal y como advierte Jesús Isaías Gómez López (55), los lectores reciben unas interpretaciones didácticas de un ideario cuyo objetivo principal es poner fin a las injusticias sociales y conciliar a la humanidad mediante la "Hermandad del Hombre socialista."

En el cuarto apartado, "Tematología del personaje: entre personajes de ideas e ideas personificadas," los personajes e instituciones principales del relato son presentados y analizados en profundidad: Avis Everhard, Ernest Everhard, el profesor Cunningham, el obispo Morehouse, Jackson, los Filómatas, el señor Wickson, los Granjeros, los Mercenarios, las Centurias Negras y los Grupos de Combate, entre otros. Jesús Isaías Gómez López indica que, así como sucede en el género distópico, donde las ideas estructuran el desarrollo de los personajes y estos sirven al mismo tiempo como trasmisores de las mismas, en el caso particular de esta novela se produce una doble articulación de las ideas: por un lado, aparecen los personajes "que dan voz a sus vivencias, ideologías y reflexiones," y, por otro lado, las instituciones "que consolidan y perpetúan la fuerza de las ideas de Jack London, que inventa distintas asociaciones como el Talón de Hierro, la Oligarquía y la Gente del Abismo como catalizadores temáticos de los principales asuntos tratados" (58-59).

En el quinto apartado, "*El talón de hierro*: una distópica alegoría de las maquinarias políticas," Jesús Isaías Gómez López define las *maquinarias políticas* como una superestructura formada por un espectro más amplio que engloba a todos los engranajes que conforman la maquinaria del poder:

> **En la novela, estas *maquinarias políticas* adquieren una representación simbólica donde la estructura que representan, como la justicia, la Iglesia, la burguesía y el Estado, son términos concretos pero indefinibles que permanecen *in absentia*; mientras que el Talón de Hierro, la Oligarquía, la Gente del Abismo y el Manuscrito Avis son términos imaginarios concretos, que permanecen *in praesentia* de principio a fin de la obra. (100, énfasis en el original)**

En el sexto y último apartado, "*El talón de hierro* y su legado: desde la Comuna de Chicago hasta la habitación 101," salen a la luz importantes influencias literarias en *El talón de hierro*, como *Mirando atrás: Del 2000 a 1887* (*Looking Backward 2000-1887*, 1888), de Edward Bellamy; *La máquina del tiempo* (*The Time Machine*, 1895) y "En el abismo" ("In the Abyss," 1897), de Herbert G. Wells; o *La Jungla* (*The Jungle*, 1905), de Upton Sinclair. La trascendencia y el poder de influencia de esta novela tras su publicación no tienen parangón; esta marca el camino a seguir por otras ficciones distópicas durante la primera mitad del siglo XX. Asistimos, por tanto, al nacimiento de una sucesión de obras herederas indiscutibles de la distopía política de Jack London, muchas de ellas pertenecientes a escritores de gran popularidad, las cuales manifiestan, desde perspectivas similares, estructuras y motivos bien diferenciados, como *Nosotros* (*My, My*, 1924), de Ivánovich Zamiatín; *Un mundo feliz* (*Brave New World*, 1932), de Aldous Huxley; *Eso no puede pasar aquí* (*It Can't Happen Here*, 1935), de Sinclair Lewis; *Oscuridad a Mediodía* (*Darkness at Noon*, 1940), de Arthur Koestler; *1984* (*Nineteen Eighty-Four*, 1949), de George Orwell; o *Fahrenheit 451* (1953), de Ray Bradbury. No obstante, como sostiene Jesús Isaías Gómez López (117), la originalidad de la obra de Jack London radica en la integración del prisma utópico y el componente distópico, aspecto que sus sucesoras no han sabido continuar y que la dota, por tanto, de gran excepcionalidad.

Con un tipo de comienzo *in medias res*, desde un futuro utópico (Ardis, 27 de noviembre de 419 de la Hermandad del Hombre; año 2632 d.C.), Anthony Meredith, con un relato no focalizado, como investigador del documento histórico, el Manuscrito Everhard, y con sus continuas notas a pie de página a lo largo de la novela, presenta una exégesis de los acontecimientos historicista, y, por tanto, aparentemente neutral. La autora del Manuscrito Everhard es Avis Everhard, narradora autodiegética y protagonista de la novela, considerada también por el editor/traductor de esta edición como la primera heroína de la literatura distópica, quien, desde un pasado distópico y una perspectiva subjetiva, habla sobre su

esposo Ernest Everhard, protagonista del manuscrito. Este documento describe de forma lícita el carácter de las gentes que vivieron en aquel confuso periodo que abarca desde 1912 a 1932. Ahora bien, los acontecimientos y escenarios descritos en la novela no solo se limitan a este periodo, pues, tal y como subraya Jesús Isaías Gómez López (10), con tan solo observar nuestra situación geopolítica actual, desafortunadamente, semejantes contextos planteados en *El talón de hierro* continúan siendo habituales.

En la novela no solo se halla retratado nuestro pasado, sino también nuestro presente, nuestro tiempo. Se trata de una obra maestra que no deja indiferente a quienes se detienen a leerla y que retrata con inusitada precisión el lado más inhumano del capitalismo; un verdadero descenso a los infiernos. A través de sus diversos *alter ego*, Jack London nos invita a reflexionar sobre nuestro pasado, pero también sobre nuestro presente y futuro, es decir, de dónde venimos, dónde estamos y hacia dónde vamos como sociedad.

En definitiva, la lectura de *El talón de hierro* resulta especialmente conveniente en la actualidad y esta edición en castellano es la mejor oportunidad para hacerlo. El motivo, quizás, porque, al igual que en el año de su publicación, todo parece estar a punto de transformarse. Jack London, aunque nacido en la segunda mitad del siglo XIX, es un indiscutible escritor del siglo XX, con una vida colmada de experiencias sociales de lo más diversas y aventuras por el mundo capaz de atrapar a aquellos que se conceden el deleite de leer sus obras. Sin lugar a dudas, esta edición a cargo del especialista Jesús Isaías Gómez López, con una introducción analítica completamente original y una traducción de lo más lúcida y certera, permite una mejor comprensión y un mayor disfrute de esta obra única de Jack London.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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American Quaker Romances: Building the Myth of the White Christian Nation

Carolina Fernández Rodríguez

Valencia: Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2021. 190 pp.
ISBN 9788491349082 (pbk), 9788491349099 (ePub), 9788491349105 (pdf)

Carolina Fernández Rodríguez's work exemplifies the academic interest that mass-market romance fiction generates around the globe, particularly in Spain. To this day in our country, three research projects have successfully secured public funding to investigate issues as varied as gender roles, race, neo-colonialism and language contact situations, in a myriad of popular romance texts. This book is, as the author herself states early in the volume, a child of the project "The Politics, Aesthetics, and Marketing of Popular Women's Fiction: History, Exoticism and Romance" (FFI 2016-75130-P; AEI/FEDER, UE). Said project revolved around a corpus of historical romance novels set in exotic locations and sought "to revisit these texts from a postcolonial and gender perspective, critically engaging with the patriarchal ideological patterns weaved into the narrative, their (mis)use of historical material, and the (in)conspicous neo-orientalist approach to their respective cultural and geographical contexts" ("Welcome to HER" 2016).

American Quaker Romances pursues the same objectives. However, the focus here lies on the US setting and characters, as portrayed in the virtually unexplored territory of Quaker romance novels, a subgenre within Christian romances that, as Fernández Rodríguez states, "has received little in-depth analysis" (23-24). This book significantly contributes to fill this gap in the existing research as it aims to identify the reasons behind this subgenre's popularity. After close reading thirty-nine Christian historical romances featuring Quaker protagonists, Fernández Rodríguez concludes that the appropriation of Quaker dogmas, together with the depiction of gender and race relations in these texts, foster an image of the US as a White, heterosexual and Christian nation that appeals to the readership. In this regard, the book

is in tune with other works in the field that study the White agenda encoded in popular romance literature, including Hsu-Ming Teo's *Desert Passions: Orientalism and Romance Novels* (2012), Jayashree Kamblé's *Making Meaning in Popular Romance Fiction: An Epistemology* (2014) and most recently, María Teresa Ramos-García and Laura Vivanco's edited collection *Love, Language, Place, and Identity in Popular Culture: Romancing the Other* (2020).

Fernández Rodríguez builds her argument slowly and progressively over the course of the five chapters that make up the book. *American Quaker Romances* opens with an introduction to the Religious Society of Friends, as Quakerism is officially known. This summary of the sect's history and religious tenets serves the purpose of helping readers navigate the subsequent analysis of the novels' plots and characterisation. In addition, the introduction provides an explanation of the corpus selection process. While the particulars of this discussion are beyond the scope of this review, it must be noted that in devoting some pages to it, Fernández Rodríguez demonstrates her understanding of the pernicious consequences that generalisations based on random sample analyses have had for the romance novel reputation and its dismissal as a conservative genre.

Chapter 1 examines the books' approach to history. The fact that most of the Quaker historical romances under study are set in a time and place linked to the birth and consolidation of the United States (e.g., Philadelphia during the Colonial Era, the American Civil War) suggests that writers and readers are looking for a way to (re)affirm their identity as true Americans. In deploying Quaker characters involved in momentous events in the country's history, Fernández Rodríguez contends that these texts glorify the US and define it as a nation of freedom and prosperity, obviating the racist, imperialist and misogynistic attitudes that have traditionally pervaded American society.

Chapter 2 refutes the hypothesis that Christian romances are either completely regressive or revolutionary in terms of gender issues. Here, the author argues "[t]hat the heroes and heroines in these romances […] pivot between traditional gender roles and others that are less so" (66). Similarly, she claims that the novels under consideration do not shy away from sensitive topics such as violence against women or sex. The former is "ostensibly dealt with" in many of these books, and "the sphere of sexual relations […] also offers some heroines the chance to show sexual desire" (77-78). Admittedly though, Fernández Rodríguez concurs with other experts in Christian romance when she asserts that "God's supreme precedence is unquestionable" in these texts, a fact that makes Quaker romances closer to Evangelicalism than to the Society of Friends (86-87).

Chapter 3 focuses on the reasons behind the appropriation of Quakerism—mostly a White religious group—by Evangelical and secular publishers alike. The author links the commodification of this group to the social backlash against hypermodernity. In the end, Fernández Rodríguez states, "Quaker protagonists add to romances the perfect touch of exoticism without seriously compromising Evangelical beliefs […] and, more importantly, without forcing readers o question their understanding of American history nor of the country's long history of unequal race relations" (112).

Finally, Chapters 4 and 5 tackle the books' pervading racism, as shown in the portrayal of race and racial relations. Firstly, African American and Indigenous characters invariably play the part of victims, sidekicks or walk-ons, whereas "Whites are systematically portrayed as saviors, rescuers, good Samaritans, and Sanctified Christians" (127). Secondly, interracial relationships of any kind are hardly present in the books, and whenever present, they are doomed to fail. Time and time again, the writers of these novels "insist on choosing situations that present Whites in privileged positions, which then allows them to show their humanitarian concerns and their Christian values" (155-56).

The book ends with a reflection on the cultural work that Quaker historical romances do for their readers, i.e., providing them with a retreat from the threat that feminism, the Black Lives Matter movement and the LGBTQI+ community pose to the status quo. The author does not hesitate to give her opinion on the political implications of such behaviour and concludes by exhorting romance writers and readers to debunk the myth of the US as a White Christian nation. Particularly praiseworthy is her final request to open up the romance novel to more diverse love stories, stories that represent the reality of American society and its true history as a multicultural country.

All in all, in approaching the understudied subgenre of Quaker historical romances from a feminist and postcolonial critical standpoint, *American Quaker Romances*: *Building the Myth of the White Christian Nation* constitutes a timely and much-needed contribution to the field of popular romance scholarship. Nevertheless, those interested in contemporary American society and White supremacist discourses will also find Fernández Rodríguez's book enjoyable and enlightening, thanks to its exploration of the links between popular literature and the (re)creation of the US history and national identity.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Asexual Masculinities in U.S. Post-Millennial Media: The Big Bang Theory *and* Dexter

Petra Filipová

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ISBN: 9788483844618

Petra Filipová's latest book, published in 2021, *Asexual Masculinities in U.S. Post-Millennial Media:* The Big Bang Theory *and* Dexter, is a beautifully written work that deals with "the ways asexual masculinities are represented in current U.S. television fiction" (14). Tracing the roots of asexual representation and linking it to how masculinities are both performed and represented in media while analyzing the TV shows *Dexter* and *The Big Bang Theory*, the book answers the question of how this representation, and particularly the characters of Dexter and Sheldon, offers new ways of understanding the relationship between asexuality and masculinities. Divided into three main chapters besides the introduction and conclusion, Filipová's book offers its readers a detailed and engaging account of the manner in which male asexual characters have been portrayed on screen and examines whether these two characters, who do not openly identify as asexuals but are certainly coded as such, "offer sustainable role models" (15) to what asexual masculinities could be understood as. In the first chapter after the introduction, Filipová traces the historic scholarship on the topic of asexuality as well as its relationship with masculinities. The following chapter focuses on the historic representation of asexuality in U.S. media, and the examples used to illustrate this history range from tv shows to online spaces. The last chapter before the concluding one examines the characters of Dexter and Sheldon, giving a detailed analysis of how their potential asexuality relates to their gender.

One of the main reasons that this book stands out is that the theoretical framework the analyses conducted are grounded on does not only consist of academic works, but rather Filipová masterfully blends this type of hegemonic scholarship with knowledge found in spaces outside of academia, like internet communities, not only validating alternative epistemological sources of knowledge but also giving the reader a better understanding of asexual identities. Furthermore, the work is written in an academic yet accessible way, which makes the book a great source of information even for those readers who are not particularly knowledgeable regarding these topics.

The first chapter after the introductory one, divided into four sections and named "The History of (A)sexuality" (19), sets out to explore "the development of the concept of asexuality as a sexual orientation" (19). The first two sections trace a chronological evolution of asexuality's history. Filipová starts in the eighteenth and nineteenth century with accounts that are mainly driven by a negative attitude towards lack of interest in sex. Although these accounts are not explicitly stated as asexual, they are "nonetheless important to understand the historical reach of the idea that all human beings are naturally sexual—and in clarifying that despite the difficulty in pointing out accounts of asexuality in history, it has not been completely absent from the lives of people throughout the centuries" (22). The chapter continues explaining how this negative attitude, enhanced by a severe medicalization, is also present in the twentieth century, and Filipová offers a wide range of scholars like Kinsey, Storms, or Myra T. Johnson to examine how society viewed asexuality. The chapter then moves on to the twenty-first century, which offers a shift regarding previous centuries in that alternative spaces are created for the asexual communities and thus not only identity discourses are created but they also facilitate researchers the task of finding asexual people willing to participate in their studies (27). Filipová then gives the reader a year–by–year list of studies that range from Nicole Prause and Cynthia A. Graham (2007) to Karli J. Ceranowski and Megan Milks (2014), and she explores the impact these studies have had on the understanding we have about asexualities.

The other two sections within this chapter deal with debates around asexualities and masculinities. Regarding the first one, it deals not so much with societal and scholarly perception of asexuality as with the problematization of its definition (39) or the differentiation of types of attraction (37). The section on masculinities, on the other hand, deals with the historization of masculinity studies as well as defining what traits masculine identities entail, namely "structures of power, hierarchies, and specific personality traits" (70) as well as the performance of "(heterosexuality) in particular" (70). This chapter does a brilliant job giving the reader a full picture of what asexualities and masculinities are, as well as critically engaging with different types of media not regularly explored in academic settings, such as the AVEN website.

The next chapter, "Asexuality in the U.S. Media," attempts to "map the attitudes towards asexuality presented in the media" (71), using a wide range of primary sources to do so. Filipová divides this chapter into two subsections. The first one deals with the early mentions of asexuality in media (71), which traces back explicit mentions of asexuality to as early as 1978 (72). From there, Filipová moves on to the more recent media coverage (83) and examines how, because of the internet, throughout the past decades there has been a slight increase in media coverage regarding asexuality, although not without its issues, as the "generalized sensationalist coverage of asexuality" (95) can be. Overall, this chapter gives a great overview of how asexuality has been represented in U.S. media and how it holds a mirror to the societal perception towards that same identity.

The last chapter before the conclusion is called "Asexuality in U.S. TV fiction," and here Filipová examines "how asexual and masculine identities interact—or contradict each other—in the portrayal of male asexual characters on television" (107), focusing particularly on the characters of Dexter and Sheldon, from *Dexter* and *The Big Bang Theory* respectively. In order to do so, Filipová departs from Kimmel's four rules of masculinity to structure the analysis. The first one, the "no sissy stuff" (112) refers to how masculinity is sometimes constructed by keeping their distance from anything remotely related to what is perceived as feminine. In Sheldon's case, Filipová explores Sheldon's attitudes towards women in terms of recurring to misogyny and homophobia, while in Dexter's case she argues that he rarely, if ever, participates in misogynistic and homophobic jokes (162) but he does show "signs of complicity" (176). The second rule, namely, "be a big wheel" (126) refers to the importance of "power, status and success" (126). According to Filipová, for Sheldon, this is reflected in the way he claims physical spaces (127) and his need for "intellectual superiority" (137), while on the other hand, for Dexter it manifests in the performance of heterosexuality to be accepted by society (185). The third rule, which is that of "being a sturdy oak" (138) refers to the way a man should not show emotions and should appear tough (138). Sheldon does perform the first part of appearing emotionless, although as Filipová argues the toughness and self-reliance part rarely applies to him. Somewhat similarly, according to Filipová Dexter adheres to this rule through "the control of emotional responses" (195). The last rule, that of "Give 'em Hell" (147), talks about how men should be "daring, violent and aggressive" (147) as well as "competitive" (147). For Sheldon, this manifests as part of his characterization as a geek man, a community where competitiveness is a strong element of the subculture (148). On the other hand, the theme of violence is ever-present throughout the series for Dexter, and it is one of the main ways through which he can create emotional bonds (196). All in all, this chapter offers a thorough analysis of Dexter and Sheldon's characters and is successful in connecting the ways in which masculinities are portrayed in the shows with the representations of asexuality.

In conclusion, this book proves to be an excellent account of scholarship written on asexualities, but also in how gender intersects with that particular identity in the two shows chosen for analysis. Through an accessible and brilliant writing style, Filipová's work fills a very prominent gap that had been left mostly unattended in academia, which is that of the intersections between asexualities and masculinities, and she leaves the door open for further research from different theoretical lenses. Anyone interested in scholarly areas such as queer studies, masculinities, and contemporary representations of queerness in the U.S. and media studies will find this book captivating as well as utterly compelling.

BOOK REVIEWS

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Changes in Argument Structure: The Transitivizing Reaction Object Construction

Tamara Bouso

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1. Introduction

Changes in Argument Structure looks at a major question within the history of English, namely the trend towards transitivization of verbal constructions, through the lens of the Reaction Object Construction (ROC), as exemplified below:

(1)Pauline smiled her thanks

This construction combines a prototypically intransitive verb (*smile*) and a direct object (*thanks*) that is typically used to express a reaction from the subject (*Pauline*). Crucially, the verb expresses the manner with which the reaction is expressed, so that the construction takes the meaning "Pauline expressed her gratitude by smiling." Bouso takes the Reaction Object Construction to exemplify a broader syntactic development in English that favours constructions with a more complex valency structure over intransitive constructions and sets out to compare it with other valency increasing constructions such as the cognate object construction (*The heart lept a great leap*) or the *way*-construction (*She giggled her way up the stairs*) within the framework of Construction Grammar.

This is an unusually clear and empirically rich study which uses an overlooked construction in English to explore a broader development in the grammar and to engage with current trends in theoretical linguistics. This means that Bouso's results are of interest not only for researchers in English grammar, but for historical linguists in general and usage-based linguists in particular. Overall, this monograph has a lot to offer to specialists in several different subdomains, but herein lies perhaps its most obvious weakness: the multiplicity of the invoked themes necessarily limits the possibility of giving a detailed account of all of them. Nonetheless, the final assessment can only be positive, as this is a highly relevant addition to the field of English Linguistics and Diachronic Construction Grammar.

2. Summary

The book consists of eight chapters.

Chapter 1 introduces the reader to the processes of argument remapping, reduction and augmentation, and introduces the research questions: How to account for the nonprototypical features of the ROC; how the ROC relates to other, similar constructions; when the ROC emerges; and how and why it develops. Bouso also formulates two hypotheses to be tested in the empirical part of the study: Firstly, that the formal restriction of coreferentiality typical of present-day use of the ROC started to appear in Early Modern English. Secondly, that the ROC follows a diachronic development which is parallel to that of the cognate object and *way*-constructions. Finally, the introductory chapter closes with an overview of the monograph.

Chapter 2 focuses on valency and the phenomenon of transitivization that has affected English grammar since the Old English period. Different typologies of intransitive and transitive verbs are discussed with a particular focus on an increasing number of 'amphibious' verbs (Visser 1963-73), i.e., verbs which may be used both transitively and intransitively. Potential causes of this development are examined, and the loss of transitivizing/ causativizing affixes and the inflectional syncretism generalized in Middle English are proposed as the two major driving forces.

Chapter 3 reviews existing work on constructions with objects, before moving on to more specialized accounts of the ROC and the cognate object construction and *way*-construction. The three constructions are then compared based on the nonprototypical nature of their objects, and the constraints of these object types are discussed and contrasted with the behaviour of prototypical transitive objects.

Chapter 4 gives an overview of Construction Grammar, the chosen theoretical framework of the study. The chapter presents different constructionist approaches as well as their shared tenets: the construction as a single analytical tool for all levels of linguistic variation; the constructional status of argument structure; the organization of constructions in an ordered network; variability as the normal situation in language; and the emergence of linguistic structure from language use. Bouso especially supports the last point, as the empirical part of this monograph draws on token frequency and type frequency to make predictions. Finally, Bouso presents the framework of Diachronic Construction Grammar (Hilpert 2013; Traugott and Trousdale 2013).

Chapter 5 marks the start of the empirical part of the study and can be further subdivided into two sections. Section 5.1 concerns a Construction Grammar analysis of the ROC in present-day English. The construction is situated within the network of English argument structure constructions, such as ditransitives (*Joe gave Sally the ball*), resultatives (*She kicked him unconscious*) and the experiencer construction (*Bob likes Sue*). Bouso argues that the ROC is a hybrid construction which inherits features from all of these: the sentient agent from the experiencer, the resultative meaning from the resultative, and the communicative meaning from the ditransitive.

Section 5.2 turns to the diachrony of the ROC, which is analysed using a bottom-up approach that takes as its point of departure 645 verbs mentioned in previous research (Jespersen 1909-49; Visser 1963-73; Levin 1993). Searches for these verbs in various diachronic corpora yield concordances of authentic historical examples of the construction, and 81 verb types occurring in the ROC are identified, the vast majority of which are first attested in the construction in Late Modern English.

Finally, the analysis compares the development of the ROC to the developments that are seen in the cognate object construction, the *way*-construction, and the dummy *it*-construction (*Snake legs it to freedom*). Bouso argues that these constructions have followed a similar trajectory, occurring first with transitive-like verbs (manner of speaking and non-verbal expression verbs) before expanding to an increasing number of intransitive verbs in Modern English.

Chapter 6 investigates the development of the ROC during the Late Modern English period, using data from CLMET 3.0. The analysis retrieves data for a set of 40 of the verbs which, in Chapter 5, were found to occur in the construction. The resulting tokens were then manually pruned, resulting in a dataset of 305 examples, in which only 26 of 40 verb types were attested. A collostructional analysis of the data identified the verbs *mutter*, *murmur*, *smile*, *nod*, and *wave* as highly attracted collexemes, though these results largely align with the raw token frequency values (perhaps unsurprisingly, given the size of the data set). Based on the corpus data, Bouso gives an overview of the different constructional schemata involved in the construction at varying degrees of abstraction: a more general schema involving a sentient agent causing an object noun to become expressed by means of an intransitive verb and verb-specific subschemata involving verbs of manner (*mutter* and *murmur*) or nonverbal communication verbs (*smile*, *nod* and *wave*).

This chapter also discusses the diachronic distribution of the verb classes and their distribution across different textual genres, where the consolidation of the ROC coincides with the emergence and subsequent development of the English novel as a literary genre. On the linguistic level, the observed increase in token frequency and range of collocates throughout the course of the Late Modern English period is interpreted as post-constructionalization constructional changes (see Chapter 8 below).

Chapter 7 turns to the analysis of data from COHA to investigate whether the ROC is a British innovation that subsequently spread to American English. Given that the object here is not to identify formal variants, but rather to assess productivity, Bouso choses a top-down approach focusing on delocutive nouns like *hello(s)*, *goodbye(s)* and *thank you*. The attested frequency in British English of these nouns and their ability to occur with many different verb types make them appropriate for exploring productivity. Corpus retrieval and manual disambiguation results in 961 examples with 80 different verbs, which are grouped into six types: sound emission (*bark*), gesture (*nod*), bodily processes (*snuffle*), instrument of communication (*phone*), activity (*dance*), and light emission (*flare*). The results are compatible with the hypothesis of the ROC being a British innovation that has become increasingly productive throughout the period and peaking in the second half of the 20th century. A secondary aim of the chapter is to assess whether there are parallel developments of the ROC and the way-construction in American English, and the data point to some interesting similarities: both constructions develop gradually from the start of the 19th century, increase their productivity continually and become more schematic over the course of the 20th century.

Chapter 8 provides a summary and conclusions, but Bouso also ties together the empirical findings from the previous chapters in an account that contextualizes the findings according to Traugott and Trousdale's (2013) theoretical framework. She concludes that the construction established itself in Early Modern English, after a series of pre-constructionalization developments (neoanalysis of intransitive gesture verbs as transitives, fixation of its formal restriction of coreferentiality and host-class expansion to other intransitive verbs). Once established as a construction, the ROC increased its frequency considerably in Late Modern English, and Bouso points to both intralinguistic (a rise in transitivization) and extralinguistic (the development of the sentimental novel) factors for this development. This is seen as parallel to the development of the way-construction, together with a series of post-constructionalization changes (morphophonological reduction and fixation of some of its constructs).The chapter ends with a discussion on the theoretical implications of her findings, as well as suggestions for future research.

3. Discussion

Bouso does an excellent job synthesizing previous research and the book is filled with side-by-side tables providing the reader with overview of differences and similarities between authors or grammatical constructions (though it should be noted that some of the tables containing corpus data could have been shortened). The literature review is extensive, and the book contains over 450 numbered examples in total. The empirical part reflects a good command of current corpus-linguistic tools, and the discussion covers both classical accounts from several theoretical backgrounds as well as more current linguistic theory.

One example of the latter is the acknowledgement of interactions between constructions at different levels of abstraction (Dabrowska 2020). Such a view on constructions is explicitly present in Bouso's work when she sets out to "make predictions regarding the levels of specificity of the ROC in people's minds, that is, whether we retain more general, or lower-level ROC verb-specific subschemas" (112). This is a research question that truly engages with current theory. Somewhat disappointingly, however, Bouso decides not to explore this distinction when confronted with the fuzzy boundary between ambiguous examples of verbs of speaking and verbs of sound emission in her data, despite the existence of analytical and statistical tools to address these issues (cf. Glynn and Robinson 2014). Instead, Bouso concludes that she sees these levels of specificity "primarily as units of linguistic description rather than mental representations of particular individuals" (323), in contradiction with the previous quotation.

However, being cautious about making strong claims regarding mental representations in a corpus study is understandable, and Bouso shows her willingness to engage with current linguistic theory on other occasions. For instance, by suggesting that future research should have a closer look at the interaction between the sentimental novel and the development of the ROC, in accordance with the view that speaker's knowledge of constructions include extralinguistic knowledge such as text type (Goldberg 2019).

In conclusion, this is a highly recommended read for anyone interested in changes in argument structure that will hopefully pave the way for other empirical studies on related constructions in English as well as other languages.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Translating Samuel Beckett around the World

José Francisco Fernández and Pascale Sardin (eds.)

Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2021. 263 pp.
ISBN 978-3-030-71729-2 (hbk), 978-3-030-71730-8 (ebk)

Translating Samuel Beckett around the World is the twelfth title in the book series 'New Interpretations of Samuel Beckett in the Twenty–First Century' which started off in 2010 with the goal of providing an outlet for offbeat approaches to the works and legacy of Samuel Beckett. The main merit of this title is that, in offering the innovative perspective that the book series guarantees, it also covers untrodden ground. The almost exclusive focus in Beckett Studies on the French, English and German translations of Beckett's works gives way in Translating Samuel Beckett around the World to the vicissitudes of Beckett's works in as many as eleven languages—Icelandic, Swedish, Dutch, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, Turkish, Hebrew, Urdu, Hindi and Chinese—thus providing the reader with a rich palette of insights into when, why, and how Samuel Beckett has been translated around the globe, how those translations have been received by critics and whether the author has influenced the receiving national literature or not.

Organized into three major sections—Northern Europe, Southern Europe and South America, Middle East and Asia—the book's stated purpose to discuss Beckett's position as a world author relies on a wide range of hands-on experience provided by scholars many of whom are translators.

The first part delves into the reception and translation of Beckett's works in Iceland, Sweden and the Netherlands. The reader gets an impressive amount of detail about how the Irishman has fared in these three countries and languages. The account of the dedicated efforts of a number of theatre directors and literary critics in Iceland—a culture that favors more linear narratives and still finds Beckett's works too radical—is followed by a very different account of an equally dim reception in Sweden, where even universities are remiss to include Beckett in their programs on account of the culture's ambivalence towards translated texts. If the first chapter leans more towards the reception side, the second one delves into the specificities and differences in approach in the two Swedish translations of *Waiting for Godot*. The third chapter concludes that Samuel Beckett needs to be better served in Dutch after providing a thorough documentation of Beckett's defense of the exclusivity of Jacoba van Velde's translation rights and the Estate's refusal to grant those for some of the most canonical works.

Spain, Italy, Argentina and Brazil are covered in the second part of the book. The account of Beckett's translations in Spain is a low-key debunking of the accepted lore that Franco's dictatorship is responsible for Beckett's marginal position in Spanish culture (though, the author admits, censorship often made the texts senseless). Instead, the blame is put on the low quality of the contemporary translations at the hands of renowned poets and writers. Be that as it may, democracy has not improved the state of affairs and Beckett's marginal status in Spain continues to be in force. A warmer reception awaited Beckett in Argentina where he was and continues to be a source of influence on the national drama in particular. The situation presented by the co–existence of translations in peninsular Spanish and Argentinean Spanish is replicated by that of peninsular and Brazilian Portuguese, as we learn in the fourth chapter of this second section. The cultural associations of one variant make the translation unsuitable for the audiences of the other variant and Brazilian translations of the existing Portuguese translations are made, which replicates the Irishman's process of self-translation. Beckett's self-avowed lack of confidence with his Italian at a later stage in life is brought to the fore in a chapter devoted to that language which provides a lot of detail on Beckettt's exchanges of letters with the translators and discusses the translations of *Waiting for Godot* as offering an 'existentialist, cleansed, almost Catholic' Beckett—no need of censorship in this case, as it seems.

The least known of the stories told in the book come in the third part, which tackles the Middle East and Asia. The chapter on Beckett's reception in Turkey holds the tenet that Beckett's drama has many similarities with the Turkish theatrical tradition, such as its lack of mimetic detail. If this chapter stresses Beckett's political side, so does the one on Beckett's reception in Israel with its description of a unique translation into Hebrew and Arabic protagonised by two Palestinian labourers, which introduces the Israeli socio–political reality of the period in the play. The nation's reality also contributes to the 'domestication' of Beckett's texts in Muslim Pakistan. We learn that, by leaving out the religious matter of the original, Urdu Beckett is made even more religious; and we learn about a 2008 adaptation of *Waiting for Godot* that introduces the gender–based issues affecting Pakistani women and the social gap between the powerful and the powerless. India favours the slapstick side of Beckett's play and has produced numerous translations in may of its twenty–two official languages. In China, *Waiting for Godot* began to circulate in 1965—more than a decade after its first publication—and then, in very restricted circles. State censorship starts to loosen up and Beckett's translations slowly increase, but it will be 2006 when both translations and incorporation of the author in university curricula begin, leading to a unique project for the translation of the author's complete works in 2013 (published in 2016–17).

What constitutes the main merit of this work is its wide-encompassing approach. It necessarily brings to mind Mark Nixon's and Matthew Feldman's *The International Reception of Samuel Beckett* (2009) where Beckett's evolving critical reception in and outside Europe was presented for the first time. Alongside the discussions of the problems encountered by (and the achievements of) the translators of specific works, *Translating Samuel Beckett around the World* also includes commentaries on the critical reception of Beckett's texts and discusses the fates of different early and contemporary performances.

There is no fixed pattern in the diverse approaches adopted by the different contributors. The amount of detail given in each chapter will result in the book appealing more to readers interested in specific chapters or languages. Having said this, going through all the very different national experiences presented by the book's contributors through different lenses—some rely more on issues of translation and analyses of actual translations while others discuss in more detail the author's influence on their national literary cultures—it is possible to reach some conclusions about Beckett's fate around the cultures of the globe. How closely connected the reception of Beckett's texts is with the historical circumstances of the receiving nation is, perhaps, the most striking of those. A fascinating story that had to be told.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Indigenizing the Classroom: Engaging Native American/First Nations Literature and Culture in Non-Native Settings

Anna M. Brígido-Corachán (ed.)

Valencia: Biblioteca Javier Coy d'Estudis Nord-Americans. Publicacions de la Universitat de València, 2021. 204 pp. ISBN: 978-8491347477

As the editor herself explains, this essay collection stems in great part from the symposium "Teaching and Theorizing Native American Literature as World Literature," held at the Facultat de Filologia, Traducció i Comunicació of the University of Valencia in 2018, which she evokes together with other inspiring workshops and seminars. The book constitutes a timely intervention in the area of the pedagogies of Native American cultures and literatures, mainly focusing on tertiary classrooms but with some attention paid as well to other EFL contexts. As regards Spanish universities, this area was recently visited by José Manuel Correoso Ródenas in the articles "Bringing Native American Literature to Spanish Students" (2020) and "'The Story Must Be Told As It Is': El texto y el contexto. Enseñando literatura Nativo–Americana en la Facultad de Humanidades de Albacete" (2019). Besides the book editor herself, outstanding names in the field of Native American Studies in Spain appear in the list of contributors, as we shall detail further on, but at this point we wish to acknowledge the relevant contributions in the area

of Native American studies by other Spanish scholars, especially Silvia Martínez–Falquina (2017) and Aitor Ibarrola–Armendariz (2019), both of whom also participated in the aforementioned symposium, and who among other scholars have contributed extensively to the consolidation of Native American Studies in Spain.

In the "Introduction," Anna Maria Brígido–Corachán provides an insightful foreword on pedagogical practices when teaching Native American or First Nation literatures and cultures. Taking into account Indigenous-centered methodologies as a way to counter stereotypes and provide realistic views to students and concentrating also on the added challenges of non-American classrooms, the editor of the volume advocates for a holistic perspective which focuses on context and historical continuity. This introductory chapter is also filled with relevant bibliography which points to further reading, while also summarizing what can be found in the ensuing chapters.

Phillip H. Round's chapter, "Pedagogies of Language Sovereignty," focuses on reading Native American texts with a linguistic focus that places "the struggle of Native nations to revive and maintain their languages front and center in the classroom" (25). As a strategy based on a decolonizing practice, Round, a renowned international scholar, notes the similar experience of teaching Native American literature at US and Spanish universities since US students often are unfamiliar with their own nation's history (25). Round provides several examples that can be used in the classroom, from bilingual poets such as Jeanette Armstrong (Okanagan) and Ofelia Zepeda (Tohono O'odham Nation) and argues for the need to provide comparative information on the linguistic diversity of Native literature. Establishing a connection between the way in which the differences in languages arise from precise geographies, Round offers a detailed explanation of the difficulties we might encounter when teaching such texts. The chapter concludes by noting the benefits that may be derived from the incorporation of Native literature into university syllabi, i.e. "the chance to think about the relationship between colonialism and language" (38) and makes a strong case for inviting students to reflect on this relationship. Next, Chris LaLonde focuses on the possibilities of teaching beyond the common stereotypes about *indians* (following Gerald Vizenor's use of the italicized and lowercase term to refer to the construction of the Native population by the dominant society). In this chapter, "Addressing matters of Concern in Native American Literatures: Place Matters," LaLonde concurs with Phillip H. Round that US college students are not necessarily more aware of Native cultures than foreign students, and often their scarce knowledge is rooted in pervasive stereotypes. In order to address the reading of the texts, LaLonde frames the theoretical discussion around Spivak's "transnational literacy" and Vizenor's continental liberty and a literary Ghost Dance (42) as a way to dismantle stereotyping. It is in the practical examples derived from LaLonde's experience as a teacher that the chapter offers useful insights on ways of teaching Native American texts.

The chapter titled "Buffalo Man: Human-Animal Transformations in American Indian Fiction and its Reception by Polish University Students" offers an insightful account of the methodology that its author, Gabriela Jelénska, has developed in her long experience teaching Native American texts in a Polish university, and which she calls "Tribally Informed Empathic-Intuitive Response." This methodology combines the emphasis on context and cultural specificity (claimed by most if not all scholars herein compiled) with the students' personal reception of each story. Interestingly, Jelénska has detected in her students a shift from expressions of cultural distance and subsequent misunderstandings in the past, towards increasingly morally conservative reactions in the present. This she attributes to Pope John Paul II's legacy's appropriation by conservative governments in the country, which has resulted in "many students [… being] held prisoners by an odd form of political correctness mixed with moral righteousness" (63). In this context, in her classes she strives for her students to understand these culturally diverse texts, fighting both paternalism and the possibility of dismissal on their part (as she explains that her students often fail to grasp the story rationale or characters' behaviors). Jelénska illustrates her efforts very usefully with a dissection of Leslie Marmon Silko's story "Storytelling," where she shares her strategies to win her students over to the "all-encompassing beauty" (55) of these texts.

In the chapter "An Interdisciplinary Approach to Teaching Pocahontas," Teresa Gibert delves into an outstanding number of (audio-)visual and written representations of Pocahontas as a way to exemplify the methodology used in the university course unit she teaches about John Smith, where the famous female Native American plays a central role. While acknowledging the interest aroused in students by Pocahontas, and the fact that Spanish pupils might only know her from her 1995 Disney depiction, Gibert starts with some biographical details to then compellingly consider the stereotypical image of Pocahontas in contrast to historical portrayals, starting with a revisionist perspective where student research is promoted. Gibert also refers to the Pocahontas "rescue" scene and John Smith as an "unreliable narrator" (78), in order to go on and explore the many visual representations of that event, even questioning the reality of the rescue episode ever taking place. The author shows extensive knowledge of the existing depictions of Pocahontas throughout history, while critically questioning their accuracy and referring to the sexualization of the character as a way "to emphasize that she is fully in harmony with nature" (80). While aiding students develop their critical thinking skills, Gibert brilliantly finishes the chapter and teaching unit dealing with the objectification and commodification of the images of Pocahontas and opening up a debate towards the effects this may have had on Native Americans nowadays.

Elena Ortells writes the following chapter, titled "'With them was my home': The Politics of Native Space in *A Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison*," with the objective of helping instructors deal with this text in class, an aim which she

successfully achieves. She starts by questioning whether the text can be considered a captivity narrative (or whether it has more in common with Indian autobiographies), as well as reflecting on the concept of home. Ortells focuses on those captive women who did not return to civilization but adapted to their new Native American lives, calling them "*transculturated* women" (94). The notions of home and identity are cleverly intertwined in the chapter, arguing that "also their new homes become sites of resistance to white supremacy" (94), as choosing to stay with the "captives" entailed a challenge to the colonial establishment and to patriarchal white societies. In turn, Ortells takes the reader through the intricacies of this transcultural movement, allowing for the breaking of stereotypes of both race and gender. Taking Henri Lefebvre's theory of space aids Ortells in strongly making her point and, through Jemison's depictions of the home she left and the new home she created, the author argues that Jemison built a new space to live in "based on the construction of social and emotional relationships" (101). The historical relevance of Mary Jemison's text is explained as a redress of patriarchal views of Native American societies as subordinating women, illustrating matrilineality and matrilocality from a non-native perspective, while revering the values of her new home. All in all, Ortells provides a timely insight into the ways in which this particular type of captivity narrative can serve to debunk stereotypes in the classroom and delve into the complexities of US 19th century race, gender and identity relations.

Another thought-provoking case–study is presented by Márgara Averbach in "Teaching Native American Literature in Argentina," where she exposes some problems she comes across in a country which shares relevant continuities with North America, such as colonization and imperialism, of which nonetheless her students are not necessarily aware before taking her course. After foregrounding some crucial problems of power distribution activated by both the frequent necessity of translation, and by the very writers' need to keep "reinventing the enemy's language" (115), an idea she takes from Joy Harjo and Gloria Bird, Averbach enumerates the main differences between the European worldview unconditionally interiorized by Argentinian students and relevant aspects that the diverse Native American worldviews hold in common. In all she lists seven aspects where European and Native philosophies diverge, such as differences in their conception of time and in their relation with nature, or the tension between individuality vs. group identity in either of them, among others. Averbach illustrates each of these aspects with appropriate examples, basting a highly pedagogical proposal which any teacher may use as a guide.

The pedagogical suggestions for teaching Native American texts focus on the use of children's literature in the EFL class in the next chapter, "Native American Children's Literature in the English Language Education Classroom," by Dolores Miralles–Alberola. The chapter discusses the benefits to be reaped from introducing literature in the EFL classroom at early stages, not necessarily only reserved for learners at the highest level, as well as the possibilities derived for the teaching of intercultural competence. From this perspective, Miralles–Alberola makes a strong case for expanding the canon of literary texts that are traditionally included in the EFL class and thus offers the inclusion of Native American texts as a way to dismantle stereotypes. The author suggests paying attention to the texts teachers use in class and to provide a context for them so that not only are aspects of orality addressed but correct and respectful research on the context is also conducted. Of particular interest are the contextual elements Miralles–Alberola provides in order to place the texts in their appropriate context as well as to help teachers choose their syllabus. All in all, the chapter provides very valuable tips on how to incorporate an intercultural approach to the teaching of Native American texts.

If this is possible, a still more obvious pedagogical vocation guides "Identity (and Other) Lessons: Creative Writing in the Classroom as a Door into the Poetry of Ralph Salisbury," where Ingrid Wendt pays homage to this late poet of Native American descent and her lifelong companion. Wendt unlocks her poetry writing pedagogical toolbox and guides us through step by step, using Salisbury's poems to point to complex matters of identity, belonging, ecology or ethics, and providing us with a workshop structure which can be adapted depending on our contexts and tastes.

To conclude the collection, and somewhat stepping aside from the general tone of the other chapters is "Indigenizing Afroperipheralism in Wayde Compton's The Outer Harbour," an excellent piece which, for once, fully treads Canadian territory. Vicent Cucarella–Ramon sagaciously analyses this short story collection as an extended sampler of transethnic kinship(s), where Afroperipheralism, in this case identified with the Black Pacific (an area a priori neglected by Gilroy's paradigm of the Black Atlantic), draws indispensable political and poetic connections with Indigenous communities. The collection foregrounds stories of oppression silenced in a nation–construct pervaded by the "sedative politics" (153–54), an expression the author borrows from Smaro Kamboureli, of a Canadian Multiculturalism with obviates or flattens non–white experiences. Compton's stories explore and celebrate the complicities and hybridities emerging in those contact zones of the nation which remain both symbolically and geographically marginal, and highlight their political import. The stories, thus "fostering transethnic understandings and alliances as the feasible way to challenge exclusionary policies" (160-61), recover a sense of "Indigenous 'intellectual sovereignty'" (160), as named by Lee Maracle and Daniel Heath Justice, and put forward a sense of "Indigenous survivance" (160), an expression coined by Gerald Vizenor. While this is mostly an exegetical piece, it emphasizes that Compton's collection "brilliantly illustrates the many possibilities to teach and explain the histories of dispossession and acculturation in unison and not in isolation" (163).

In definitive, this a very useful compendium of pedagogical inputs which will inspire anyone engaged in the teaching of Native American, but also of other minoritized literatures and cultures.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Transhumanism and Posthumanism in Twenty-First Century Narrative: Perspectives on the Non-Human in Literature and Culture

Sonia Baelo-Allué and Mónica Calvo-Pascual (eds.)

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Transhumanism and Posthumanism in Twenty-First Century Narrative: Perspectives on the Non–Human in Literature and Culture belongs to the series "Perspectives on the Non-Human in Literary Culture," edited by Karen Raber and whose aim is the questioning of the "comfortable" categories through which the world has been understood so far. The present volume, edited by Dr Baelo-Allué and Dr Calvo–Pascual, is, in my view, a valuable contribution to emerging studies dealing with the posthuman and how this complex concept has been addressed by contemporary texts and cultures. The book relies on landmark studies on the subject, such as Rosi Braidotti's *The Posthuman* (2013) and *Posthuman Knowledge* (2019), Stephan Herbrechter's *Posthumanism: A Critical Analysis* (2013) or Francesca Ferrando's *Philosophical Posthumanism* (2019), among others. The subject area is becoming more and more used within academic circles, partly due to its proposal of new tools for the analysis of what it is to be human and how the posthuman condition affects our ways of understanding the complexities of our current technologically–based worlds.

The term posthuman is complex and has led to contradictory interpretations and theories. The contributions included in this edition manage to shed light into this notion and provide accurate analyses of texts that depict the posthuman and its after–effects. Precisely because of this, the book is an ideal complement to other studies, such as the also edited volumes *Reconfiguring Human, Nonhuman and Posthuman in Literature and Culture* (Karkulehto, Koistinen and Varis, 2019) and *The Bloomsbury Handbook of Posthumanism* (Rosendahl Thomsen and Wamberg 2020) or Carmen Laguarta–Bueno's

Representing (Post)Human Enhancement Technologies in Twenty-First Century US Fiction (2023). Consequently, this book would surely interest academics working on the posthuman and, due to the analyses provided, any scholar interested in literary analysis and/or cultural studies.

The volume is coherently structured around four sections, bringing together scholars from different countries and disciplines, with the purpose of illustrating the possibilities offered by key narratives in the questioning of anthropocentrism, human exceptionalism and the centrality of the human being. Adopting a critical posthumanist perspective, the different chapters delve into the contradictions the term posthuman have brought to our understanding of what it means to be human, while also offering an ethical reading of contemporary texts that helps readers reflect, and ultimately adopt, a posthumanist positioning. The very idea of questioning positions of power is in tune with the philosophy of critical posthumanism and the volume can, therefore, be considered as a significant contribution to the field.

Especially relevant is the introductory section, in which the editors clarify the confusion that the term posthuman has entailed due to the dissimilar use of it by transhumanism and critical posthumanism in the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution, a complex time in which our bodies and selves are subject to change due to technological advances. Quoting key scholars on both movements (Hayles, Braidottti, Herbrecher, Vint, Ferrando, Bostrom, Alaimo or Thacker, among others), the editors claim contemporary literature to be key in the exploration of such contradictions, and "[w]hile transhumanists see the fourth industrial revolution as empowering and human-centred, critical posthumanists champion instead the change of our anthropocentric viewpoints" (11). As a movement, transhumanism opts for a radical transformation of the human condition by existing, emerging and speculative technologies, such as regenerative medicine, radical life extension, mind uploading and cryonics, among others. For transhumans, the posthuman is the desired result of these practices, a superior being that somehow reinforces the importance of the human over other living beings. The posthuman can be regarded, then, as "the last stage in transhumanist evolution, which will be reached when former humans have changed so much to have become something else, something Other than humans" (Ferrando 2019, 27). Hence, "rather than questioning what defines humanity, transhumanism can be considered an intensification of Humanist ideology" (Ranisch and Sorgner 2014, 17). On the contrary, according to critical posthumanism, the body is affected and affects the mind and other bodies in a non-hierarchical symbiosis. The posthuman body is a polymorphic body, one that is not reduced to sexual difference, one that takes into account the complex set of differences that pass into our beings. This clarification is key for understanding the various readings offered by the volume and is indeed taken up by several scholars to support their arguments in the chapters.

The contributors illustrate such contradictions from different angles and perspectives. The first three chapters analyze the inherent ambiguity of certain transhumanist discourses from a rather theorical point of view. The problem, Stefan Herbrechter states in the first chapter, is that in our context of technological and ecological change "we (humans) have no idea what it means to be human" (21). He proposes critical posthumanism as a valid tool for "evaluating, contextualising and historicising the transformative potential posthumanism promises" (21). Another concern in this section is the impact that digital literature and media have on critical thinking and the consequences of new reading habits for education. Calling for disciplines of attention, in Chapter 2 Maite Escudero-Alías points out the negative effects of transhumanist models of learning through online platforms that, ultimately, "homogenize us all, teachers and students, at the cost of emptiness and shallow knowledge" (34). Precisely, and in order to prevent this shallowness, in Chapter 3 Alexandra Glavanakova, arguing that "[f]iction has turned into fast food" (50), offers specific strategies of reading literature online in order to foster critical thinking in students.

Following this line of thought, chapters 4-6 focus on the contradictions of transhumanism and the consequences of some transhumanist practices as depicted in several key narratives and Ted Talks given by leading transhumanists, an interesting approach that makes spectators/readers become aware of the dangers that human enhancement may bring. One such contradiction, explored by Loredana Filip in Chapter 4, is the way in which leading transhumanists such as Bostrom or Vita-More present their ideas in Ted Talks. They rely on and continuously "highlight" the senses despite insisting on cognitive mastery and bodily disposal (74). The inherent optimism of the transhuman discourse is also criticized by Francisco Collado–Rodríguez in his analysis of Shirley and Gibson's "The Belonging Kind" and Egger's *The Circle*. Collado–Rodríguez points out the idea that these texts bring to the fore, among other issues, the idea that only a very limited group of (mostly wealthy) people can reach sophisticated human enhancement, fostering hence a discriminatory class hierarchy. Another consequence in this formulation of the posthuman, Collado–Rodríguez points out, is that humans are "an easy target of mass media manipulation" (80). In a similar vein, and focusing on Mc Carthy's *Satin Island*, in Chapter 6 Margalida Massanet Andreu brings to the fore the contradictions of the increasing importance of big corporations in western capitalist societies and highlights the power of writing in a "Networked present" (95).

Chapters 7-9 add the idea of trauma as a direct consequence of the excesses of transhumanist practices. Susana Onega, Carmen Laguarta–Bueno and Miriam Fernández–Santiago offer interesting analyses of 21st–century posthumanist fiction and film to show how issues like dehumanization, disembodiment or body enhancement ultimately lead to traumatic experiences on the part of the protagonists, advocating for ethical responses. Onega focuses on the novel

C by McCarthy to show how dehumanization, together with incest trauma, leads to suicide. A similar critique of dehumanization, Laguarta-Bueno argues, is found in DeLillo's *Zero K*, which further denounces certain transhumanist practices, such as cryopreservation. Fernández-Santiago goes a step further and, drawing on disability studies, concludes that "transhumanism projects an extreme ableist, self-sufficient ideal as the supremacist norm against which the merely organic, natural(ized) human being is rendered as disabled" (143).

The last section, which includes chapters 10-13, delves into dystopian scenarios to explore the way certain contemporary narratives portray the negative effects of human actions over the planet. The notion of the Anthropocene is especially relevant for the essays included in this section. The contributors make readers aware that we coexist with other nonhuman beings and, as Vint argues in relation to Marshall's *The Migration,* "[w]e can no longer simply by default prioritize human life continuing as currently configured—a default in which we always prioritize our own 'kind'" (217). This same premise is shared by the rest of the contributors in this section, Jutus Poetzsch, Monica Sousa and Esther Muñoz-González, who respectively analyze works by Jeff Vandermeer, Cixin Liu and Margaret Atwood from a critical posthumanist perspective.

On the whole, all the chapters seem to be well-balanced and interesting, each of them showing a problematic of human exceptionalism in different contexts and its consequences. Moreover, the book proposes a specific perspective on the posthuman that proves to be effective for the analysis of the contemporary texts under discussion. As mentioned above, critical posthumanism stands as a valid position from which to challenge prevailing humanist discourses from an ethical and inclusive angle that advocates a nature-culture continuum. Precisely, the texts chosen for analysis focus on this problematic and ultimately make readers consider/rethink the concepts that have traditionally governed the humanist perception.

In short, the book certainly offers an important contribution to contemporary theories within the fields of transhuman and critical posthuman studies and I highly recommend its reading, especially in our post-pandemic times. As the editors claim in their conclusion at the very end of the book, "[c]ritical posthumanism might give us the tools to navigate this changing world that can bring out the best and the worst in us" (227).

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BOOK REVIEWS

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A Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Poetry, 1960–2015

Wolfgang Görtschacher and David Malcolm (eds.) Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2021. 635 pp.

ISBN: 9781118843208 (hbk), 9781118843246 (pdf), 9781118843253 (epub)

Written with the aim of broadening the readership of contemporary British and Irish poetry, *A Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Poetry, 1960-2015*, edited by Wolfgang Görtschacher and David Malcolm, compiles a series of poets and commentators who help readers parse the contemporary poetical scene in the British Isles. Although there are other books in the market whose aim is potentially similar, such as *The Cambridge Companion to Twentieth-Century English Poetry* (Campbell 2003), *Contemporary British Poetry* (Wheatley 2015) or *The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary British and Irish Poetry* (Peter 2016), Görtschacher and Malcolm's edition differs both in method and approach. Not only does it consider both Irish and British poets alongside each other, but it does so by adhering to the "technical analysis of rhythm, meter, and sound" (xvii) of the different poets the edition compiles.

Following this aim, the book is conveniently divided into three clearly demarcated sections, "SECTION 1: Introduction—1960-2015: A Brief Overview of the Verse," "SECTION 2: Contexts, Forms, Topics, and Movements," and "SECTION 3: Poets and Poems: Canon, Off–Canon, Non–Canon." Encompassing the shortest part of the book, and divided into three sub-sections, Section 1 briefly introduces readers to the editors' overall intention for the collection: the belief that "the best and fullest engagement with poetry is an engagement […] with individual poems" and that "this engagement involves an analysis and interpretation of what we would call technique, that is, the formal properties of a piece of verse" (3). It also showcases the procedure the individual essays will follow by presenting the short analyses of 20 poems by authors such as Philip Larkin, Seamus Heaney or Anne Stevenson, who will feature in subsequent sections. This selection, the editors claim, serves as an illustration of "our story about British and Irish poetry since 1960: technically complex in its working of order and disorder; engaged […] with literary and social traditions" (24), while also acknowledging that theirs is not a definite corpus but rather an approximation, leaving it in the hands of the reader to decide as to whether the choice has been wise.

Section 2 constitutes a global approximation to the different poets and the period. Divided into four sub-sections, this part tackles the timeline from various perspectives, thus offering an overarching picture of the timeframe in question. Section 2a, "Institutions, Histories, Receptions" offers an approach from an institutional lens. The opening chapter, Görtschacher's "Some Institutions of the British and Irish (Sub)Fields of Poetry," considers such entities as little magazines, poetry presses, British and Irish poetry prizes and the difficulty of offering poetry in translation, introducing the reader to a different landscape of poetry: "magazines, publishers, policies of publishing" (31). Section 2a.2, "Anthologies: Distortions and Corrections, Poetries, and Voices," by David Kennedy, offers a succinct review of the controversy created by anthologies, arguing that this has been caused by their not being "really concerned with poetry per se but with poetry as a mirror of the nation and its moral life" (63). Daniel Bourne's "Minding the Trench: The Reception of British and Irish Poetry in America, 1960-2015" offers a refreshing perspective on location by setting the focus on the reception of British and Irish poetry overseas. Countering the alleged existence of a difference at either side of the Atlantic in poetic terms, Bourne considers the poems of such authors as Seamus Heaney, Eavan Boland or Anne Stevenson and their reception in the American literary scene. Reflecting on the imprint of Irish and British poets on American literature, Bourne contends that this is intimately related to the creation of American self-identity and thus likely to diminish, as "the dynamics between poet, poem, and reader [are] refracted by matters of place and cultural background in ways that are more case specific" (84), in an explicit reference to American writers of Hispanic origin. The closing chapter in this sub-section, Juha Virtanen's "Readers: Who Reads Modern Poetry?," considers the audience of contemporary British and Irish poetry. Stemming from Jeremy Paxman's 2014 Forward Prize controversy, where the former declared the connivance of poetry at its own irrelevance, Virtanen ponders over the seemingly widespread conception that poetry is elitist writing only to dismiss the claim. Based on her own experiences and on recent poetry sales figures, Virtanen argues that "a committed and dedicated readership of modern poetry clearly exists, and it evinces no signs of decline" (91).

Section 2b, "Genre, Kind, Technique" constitutes an approach to the period from a technical point of view. After Daniel Weston's considerations on manifestos in which he concludes that most poets' consensus lies on their perception "of poetry as being in thrall to poetry itself first and foremost" (103), the sub-section offers insightful and stimulating approaches to the different genres in vogue in contemporary Irish and British poetry, with Gareth Farmer's special emphasis on the orthodox and innovative *urtext*-species. The sub-section subsequently explores contemporary usages of the elegy, "skeptical and anticonsolatory, [but] remarkably resilient as a form" (126); the sonnet, "the form that might both capture the evanescent moment in the democratic–demotic and retain its historic contact with conscious art" (140); free-verse and open form, "offer[ing] a privileged arena in which to pursue communication, or conceptual experiment" (156); satire, whose "most enduring duty [is] to jab a challenging forefinger squarely in the chests of its readers" (165); the traditional short-lyric poem, "spinning in a universe of its own making, reinventing an array of experiences and emotions through language and breath" (178); (post)modern lyric poetry, experimenting a "resurgence of an overwhelming interest in [its] possibilities and problems" (187), and the long poem after Pound, which "sits awkwardly in modern poetic history" (191).

Section 2c, "Groupings, Themes" provides readers with various classifications of the selected poets according to the several groups they can be labelled under. Thus, classifications can consider a temporal approximation, as in Robert Hampson's "Generations"; it can also be spatial, as in Robert Hampson's "The Liverpool Poets" or Martin Ryle's "Poets of Ulster." Groupings can also be created according to themes, as in Małgorzata Grzegorzewska's "The Martian School: Toward a Poetics of Wonder," Hugh Dunkerley's "Religious Poetry," Eleanor Spencer's "Love Poetry," Ian C. Davidson and Jo Lindsay Walton's "Political Poetry," Alan Riach's "Radical Landscape Poetry in Scotland," or Erik Martiny's "*Coincidentia Oppositorum*: Myth in Contemporary Poetry." Further classifications according to the poets' belonging to minority groups are also present in the collection, such as Bartosz Wójcik's "'Here to Stay': Black British Poetry and the Post–WWII United Kingdom," David Malcolm's "Anglo–Jewish Poetry," Prudence Chamberlain's "Gay and Lesbian Poetry," or Marc Porée's "Women Poets in the British Isles." As a final but not definite category, poets can also be determined by their school of poetry, as Robert Sheppard's "The British Poetry Revival 1960-1978" or David Malcolm's "The Movement" show. On perusing this sub-section, two things stand out. First, the eclectic nature of many of these groupings, with diffuse, porous barriers, often making it difficult or impossible to define them "in a coherent and cohesive way" (213), as Malcolm argues in "The Movement." The second thing is their transversality, as many of the poets featuring in one grouping appear in subsequent classifications. Suffice as an example the poet Philip Larkin, who is first mentioned by Hampson in "Generations," then by Malcolm in "The Movement," and subsequently in "Love Poetry" by Spencer.

Shorter in length and in scope, Section 2d, "The Past and Other Countries" reconnoitres how contemporary British and Irish poets deal with the past and with the experience of exile. Jerzy Jarniewicz' "History and Poetry" considers how British and Irish poets have reacted to the historical events which shaped the twentieth century, "annulling much of the language with which this world is described" (417). Equally interesting is Jarniewicz' consideration of poets whose need to rewrite "the past in the name of underprivileged or silenced groups, such as women" (422) has led them to offer a different approach to history. Glyn Pursglove's "British and Irish Poets Abroad/in Exile" both closes Section 2 and anticipates what the reader will find in the following section. By offering an analysis of a series of poems

by Peter Russell, James Kirkup and Desmond O'Grady, Pursglove shows how exile can prove beneficial for the poet's creative impulses.

The final part or Section 3, "Poets and Poems: Canon, Off–Canon, Non–Canon," is the synthesis of the collections' overall aim as it offers well-grounded individual readings of various poets. Ralf Hertel examines John Agard's poetry as representative "of the experiences of immigrants who […] had arrived from the West Indies in the 1970s and 1980s" (449). Peter Hühn's consideration of Eavan Boland's usage of the female figure in Irish myth as a source for her writing leads him to assert that her "attempt to present the reality of Irish women in her poetry is marked by self–consciousness and a paradoxical quality" (457). Jessika Köhler remarks how Paul Durcan's inventive, free-verse style "emphasizes the transformative qualities of language [with] the poet remain[ing] faithful to portraying exactly what he perceives" (470). Discussing four of his poems, David Malcolm argues that the poetry of James Fenton is accessible, written in traditional forms and yet it configures "a deeply dangerous world [which] carry nevertheless a resonance beyond themselves" (482), underpinning the need to remember history. Ian C. Davidson maintains that Bill Griffiths' life mobility imbued his poetry to the point that it challenged "the boundaries between different art forms and between art and other things" (497). For Tomasz Wiśniewski, Thom Gunn's poetry is characterized by the myriad of voices which populate his verses, exploring a diversity of "excluding, if mutually enriching, visions of life" (508).

Robert Sheppard remarks on the fragmented nature of Lee Harwood's work, which creates a "paradoxical complexity that nudges (rather than forces) the reader into co–creation" (511). Jean Ward considers the extent to which Elizabeth Jennings' poetry thematises silence, suggestive of contentment "to live with mystery in an attitude of contemplative listening, without trying to master or understand it" (531). Paul Batchelor's assertion that "Barry MacSweeney was a poet of excess" (535) is certainly proven by Batcherlor's analysis of MacSweeney's almost excessive musical effects, emotion, allusion, or influence, as well as by his having written hundreds of poems "with fluency and speed, greedily appropriating styles, voices, forms and tropes, surfing on associations, digressions, overstatement, and flights of fancy" (545). Edwin Morgan's poetry is, according to Monika Kocot, "determined by various games of sense creation" (558), driving the reader to distant universes while Pilar Sánchez Calle suggests that Grace Nichols' poems tackle the fluidity of her identity, her ability "to be at ease with herself in many locations" (570). British South African F.T. Prince—Will May contends—synthesises the many poetry schools which he drank from into his creative *oeuvre*, where his variety of form, "the particularity of his syntax, and the range of his intellectual interests can challenge the reader" (573). Glyn Pursglove argues that Kathleen Raine's vision of poetry is that it should aim "to illuminate every age with a vision of higher realities" (583), crafting her *ars poetica* accordingly. A similar contention can be sustained for Peter Riley's work, which—Peter Hughes remarks—questions "the interrelationships between people and their physical, social, cultural, and linguistic environments" (595). Eleanor Spencer contends that Anne Stevenson's dual nationality (being British and American) gave her a vantage point of view when questioning issues such as "influence, inheritance, and affiliation" (607), while Wolfgang Görtschacher maintains that Paula Meehan's poetry showcases the "re–emergence of the ancient tradition of *dinnseanchas*, the lore of naming the place, as a trope" (619).

A Companion to Contemporary British and Irish Poetry, 1960-2015 is certainly a significant scholarly accomplishment. Luscious both in breadth and in approach, the volume provides experimented academics and amateurs alike with innovative and insightful approaches to the contemporary poetical scene in Britain and Ireland while retaining the essence of poetic analysis: respect and admiration for its technical qualities, its inner rhythm, metre and sound. Definitely, a well-wrought desk-companion for any poetry lover.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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Television Series as Literature

Reto Winckler and Víctor Huertas-Martín (eds.)

London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2021. 344 pp.
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At a moment when Television Studies have come into their own as an area of study, many teachers and scholars from a literary studies background find ourselves involved, whether because of our own choice of exploring such a culturally significant phenomenon, or prompted by our students' desire to work on this material. Although much has been published on individual series (for instance, Wayne State UP's *TV Milestones* collection, begun in 2004), most general approaches foreground sociology and reception (Wasko and Meehan 2020; Quintas-Froufe and González-Neira 2021) or center on TV history, production and technology, often with a didactic purpose (Gray and Lotz 2019; Bignell 2012). In this context, Winckler and Huertas-Martín's edited collection, with its well-informed and thoroughly documented papers, covers an understudied area and provides valuable tools to prompt reflection and aid critical practice both on television series and on literature.

The book comprises an introduction, a postscript and seventeen essays, divided into "Theory" and "Practice," selected from a call for papers which received over eighty proposals. It is a truly international collaboration, from the editors (from South China Normal University, Guangzhou, and the University of Valencia, Spain, respectively) to the contributors, brief notes on whom are provided. Ten different countries are represented, reflecting, however, a mostly first-world, Western approach which is also present in the selection of series studied (almost all produced in the United Kingdom or the United States). This would open up the possibility for a further study emphasizing the truly global nature of the phenomenon of TV series: the Turkish market, which is now reaching Spain, the overwhelming popularity of series in Latin America, and the proliferation of Chinese historical blockbusters such as *Story of Yanxi Palace*, the most googled series of 2018 (Redacción BBC News Mundo 2018).

However, the volume does draw together scholars from very different academic backgrounds, evidencing the increasingly interdisciplinary work both in Humanities and Communication Studies. With an understandable predominance of literary studies, they include communication and media studies, film and adaptation, philosophy, music, and creative writing, thus providing a multifaceted approach which contributes to the editors' purpose of "opening up an area of enquiry" rather than imposing a single theoretical framework (8).

Huertas-Martín and Winckler's introduction provides a thorough survey of some of the theoretical concerns raised by the "as literature" approach, from the (mostly obsolete) question of high- and low-brow culture to the need to consider the specifics of both television and literature as media. The editors ultimately defend the applicability of tools from literary study to series insofar as television series fall, like literature, under the definition of a "text" as "any item of culture that users deem to have enough coherence to treat as a single object" (Gray and Lotz 2019, 20, quoted in Winckler and Huertas-Martín 2021, 6).

Such issues recur in both sections of the volume, since neither are limited to pure "Theory" or "Practice." Karen Renner's opening reflection on the process of establishment of new disciplines such as Television Studies presents a lucid vision of how the links to literature claimed by certain series reinforce their prestige and thus a hierarchical vision of culture. Her essay also introduces key notions that will be taken up in several other papers, such as the ways in which DVD formats and streaming enable the development of increasingly complex and "literary" plots and narratives. Lukas Schepp continues to build on another key notion, the distinctive features of televisual storytelling and how far they diverge from literary narrative. By proposing a series of categories which work outward from "theme" to "style," and arguing that most of the differences are found in the outermost layers of this "sphere" system, through an approach based on narratology and on the practice of scriptwriting, he provides a useful, if perhaps too general, framework to structure and limit the danger of "impressionistic" readings.[1] Also from the perspective of screenwriting, Pedro López-Osa argues for the literary value of some scripts that go beyond prescriptive guidelines, supported by a close reading of two examples from "quality" series.

Natalja Chestopalova and Kelly Beck introduce a recurrent philosophical issue, that of the mental and emotional processes involved in certain forms of viewing or "reading" series, in contrast with the processes involved in reading literature. Chestopalova, supporting her argumentation on the series *Black Mirror* and *Russian Doll*, defends that such viewing might connect with the literary objective of "learning how to see that which refuses to be easily seen or felt" (76). On her part, Kelly Beck draws on Simone de Beauvoir's theories about freedom and literature to question whether viewing series can achieve the same results as "engaging with authentic literature": "encountering one's situation in a way that can potentially change that situation" (105). Using *Breaking Bad* as an example, she also provides a most pertinent analysis of the way viewing via digital platforms conditions spectators' choices and orients the experience, in contrast to the conditions for reading literary texts.

Sara Tanderup Linkis deftly analyzes the revival of serial modes in literature as a result of the popularity of serialized narrative on television, exemplified at one extreme of the élite/popular spectrum by Mark Z. Danielewski's highly experimental serial novel *The Familiar* (2015+) and at the other by the creation of serialized audio content for easy consumption in Storytel, a Swedish audiobook subscription service, both of which parallel the structure of television series. From the perspective of teaching, Giancarlo Lombardi discusses the introduction of "complex" TV series in literature courses, using it as a basis for the development of the "portable skill" of close reading by a combination of approaches derived from literary studies—such as genre or stylistics—and media studies—such as reception and production analysis—insisting again on the need for literary scholars to familiarize themselves with "a nuanced understanding and decoding of audiovisual language" (132). His course materials also extend the usual range, including French, Scandinavian and Italian examples.

Turning to the "Practice" section, it opens with the most "global" of the essays, Louie Jon A. Sánchez's study of the Philippine *teleserye*, that views this soap-opera-like genre as a combination of novel and drama, closely linked in its development to the didactic and nationalistic impulses which shaped the origins of post-colonial Philippine literature. The paper suggests that audience awareness of historical conditions may be raised through their reflection in the development of the series selected for study, if not in its conventional endings (157), and carefully considers some of the recurrent theoretical questions involved in the "as literature" perspective. Jenna Clake and Katre Talviste's essays approach the connection from the less usual angle of poetry: Clake links *Atlanta* to the tradition of New Absurd poetry and drama, also examining the repercussion of this mode in the "conspiracy theories" elaborated by viewers in attempting to make sense of what is ultimately meaningless (178). Talviste's essay, viewing poetry and narrative as complementary, not oppositional modes, presents a sensitive and persuasive reading of the lyrical nature of recurrent leit-motifs in police procedural *NCIS*, opening a valuable new avenue for analysis.

Juan José Bermúdez de Castro uses narratology in his reading of *Black Mirror* as a series of fables about technology and humanity. Although some of the specific connections may be slightly stretched, the framework, with its combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis, is well suited to the formulaic nature of even "complex" television series.[2] The most typical "adaptation study," Sarah Olive's comparison of Colin Dexter's Inspector Morse novels and the series derived from them, defies expectations by examining the effect of the television series on the novels written after it begins to be aired, and arguing that the series is in fact more critical of higher education than the books, thus providing "a useful example with which to challenge overgeneralizations about the depoliticizing nature of literary adaptations for television" (236). Arturo Mora-Rioja's study of song lyrics in series concentrates on one of the most distinctive features of

[1]Incidentally, a serious mistake in summarizing the plot of Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*, used as an example in Schepp's paper (49), should not have escaped the author, the reviewers and the editors.
[2]A slightly disconcerting feature is Bermúdez de Castro's use of highly specific gender terminology such as "heterosexual Asian cis videogame characters" (211) in one paragraph only of his essay, while in the rest he simply refers to "interracial couple Frank and Amy," for example.

audiovisual, as opposed to literary, narration, which allows the simultaneous presentation of several layers of information. His categorization of the different modes of interaction between song lyrics, themes and action in a variety of genres can serve as a useful model for similar studies. Susan C. Ronnenberg brings up significant theoretical considerations when reflecting on the differences between the reading and viewing experience as she interprets the series *Rectify* as a televisual novel. Beyond establishing formal similarities and differences, the author draws on neurological studies that assert that the creation of empathy as well as the "co-creation" based on the individual's own experience are greater in the process of reading than even in the more attentive viewing processes demanded by "complex" series.

Walter C. Metz and Hyujeong Lee's, and Víctor Huertas-Martín's papers delve into the intertextual references to literature and myth in the construction of character and theme in *Mad Men* and *Boardwalk Empire*, respectively. The former authors apply Bakhtinian concepts of polyphony and heteroglossia to reveal the broad network of allusions to the "high" Western tradition that gives depth to the figure of the protagonist, and examine the literary references appearing within the series itself, which provide spectators (like the lyrics analyzed by Mora-Rioja) with a simultaneous and additional layer of meaning. Huertas-Martín centers on this second approach in his own study, inflected by trauma theory, paying attention to both embedded, specific references to individual texts, and to the rereading and deconstruction of the Horatio Alger plot and the redemption narrative.

Reto Winckler's essay on the sitcom based on William Shakespeare, *Upstart Crow*, ties up with the Postscript in reflecting on "high" and "low" culture, as well as on the permeability and interactions between both. Drawing connections between Shakespeare's time and the present, he highlights the role of literature and television as entertainment, and the paradox that this sitcom returns to literature via the creator's publication of the scripts. O'Brien and Nicholls' Postscript, describing the process of writing a collaborative sonnet sequence based on a British reality show, *Married at First Sight*, presents a most unusual experiment. To my mind, however, the resulting rather Larkin-like poems do fulfill the authors' desire of being empathic with the protagonists of the show, but hardly their stated aim of avoiding a "high-brow" translation of a "low-brow" experience (338).

The volume contributes to the field in its deep reflection on the true nature of the divide, and the connection, between literature and television, foregrounding the different conditions of the viewing vs. reading experience, particularly in the digital framework, and emphasizing the technical, technological and commercial specifics of televisual creation, about which much valuable information is provided for those lacking a background in communication studies. It is also seriously concerned with the effects of both literature and television on producing active viewer involvement and empathy, and with their potential for provoking some change in the viewer's relation to self and reality. In all this, it provides frameworks and tools that will help to systematize further studies, from which all those who are researching, teaching or supervising work in this area will certainly benefit.

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BOOK REVIEWS

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The Discursive Construction of Economic Inequality: CADS Approaches to the British Media

Eva M. Gómez-Jiménez and Michael Toolan (eds.)

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Gómez-Jiménez and Toolan's volume deals with the discursive representation of economic inequality in the United Kingdom, paying particular attention to how pay, income and wealth disparity are portrayed in the British context. The book, which was initially conceived as a 2018 symposium held at the University of Birmingham, contextualizes ideas of precarity, economic inequality and financial exploitation through Thatcher's austerity measures, the economic crisis of 2008 and the rise and naturalization of late capitalism and neoliberalism (Fairclough 2012; Graham 2012; Sandel 2012). Drawing from critical linguistics, the volume attempts to explore how language, and specifically, the language of mass communication, policies and political and public discourse serves to re-think and re–contextualize issues of class and inequality in Britain's recent history. By using a multidisciplinary approach that relies not only on different areas of applied linguistics, such as critical stylistics and corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS), but also on other disciplines that lay outside the area of humanities such as criminology and political theory, this volume is able to engage with discursive representations of inequality and the working-class throughout the decades. In doing so, it successfully argues that "the public discourse has helped in making increased inequality look more normal in UK society today" (11).

The first chapter is written by Nuria Lorenzo-Dus and Sidip Almaged and it focuses on the discursive representations of poverty and social exclusion (PSE) in Labor and Conservative Party leaders' speeches, going from 1900 all the way to 2014. This paper offers a brief overview of the linguistic scholarship on PSE (Baker and McEnery 2015; Koller and Davidson 2008), and uses keyword and ideo-textual analysis (Jeffries 2010, 2014) to explore the depiction of social and economic inequality. The paper concludes that Labor and Conservative leaders use similar strategies through time, as both seem to resort to "packaged-up information structures that enabled them to present their propositions as

entities to be taken for granted" (31). This tendency, in combination with an emphasis on material actions and impersonalization strategies, results in PSE being portrayed as "issues to be acted upon rather than issues that those suffering from PSE could actively change" (32) during this time period.

The second chapter follows Joe Spencer-Bennett's work on the language of the Ministry of Information's propaganda during the Second World War. Spencer–Bennet portrays this period as one that was highly influenced by mass communication and political speeches, and describes the conflict as a "war of words," drawing from Briggs and Burke (2009, 17). Spencer-Bennet conceptualizes the discursive patterns of the Ministry as an example of linguistic egalitarianism, which allows him to examine the connections between inequality, accessibility and language from a critical perspective.

In Chapter 3, Isabelle van der Bom and Laura L. Paterson discuss the history of the welfare state and use a CADS methodology (Gregory and Paterson 2020) to examine its discursive representation from 1940 to 2009 in the *Times*. Their approach relies on an understanding of newspapers as narrative spaces where hegemonic perceptions of class, economic vulnerability and income inequality are constructed and naturalized (50)—an approach that is clearly aligned with themes and goals of this edited volume. Their findings suggest that the representation of the welfare state in the *Times* has remained relatively stable since 1970s, as "there is a relatively consistent narrative which holds that the welfare state is responsible for the economic and moral shortcomings at the time of reporting" (65) and defends neoliberal and capitalism values.

The next chapter also uses a CADS methodology to examine representations of income inequality in the *Times*. Michael Toolan compares the portrayal of child poverty in the 1970s and the 2000s, relying on keyword analysis and key semantic domains to dissect how these narratives of economic vulnerability differ between the decades. The paper concludes that in the 1970s there are signs of unified support of "a generously funded universal child benefit" and "more state investment in social housing and schools" (88), while the 2000s seem to be characterized by neoliberal narratives of individual responsibility and meritocracy that deliberately ignore the role of state policy and capitalist structures of power in perpetuating cyclical poverty.

Chapter 5, by Ilse A. Ras, draws from criminology and penal law to study the discursive representations of modern slavery and company fraud in UK newspapers. Using critical stylistics and corpus methodologies and drawing from discoursal techniques of neutralization (Sykes and Matza 1957), her work examines how notions of (un)fairness, responsibility and accountability are constructed through language in this particular context, as well as the ways in which newspapers and media shape the public perception of economic responsibility and violence. She concludes that while there are significant differences in the ways responsibility is assigned in stories of modern slavery and company fraud, the results also shed light over a clear tendency to negate the central role of capitalism in creating economic inequality, social vulnerability and financial divides.

Chapter 6 continues to weave the social, the economic and the linguistic tightly together. Jane Mulderrig relies on a multimodal approach to critical discourse analysis (CDA) to examine the representation of obesity and working-class communities in UK policy documents, social media adverts and TV campaigns. Borrowing from Foucault's work on governmentality (2007), Mulderrig provides a rich political context of inequality, food justice and obesity, and skillfully argues that "through its current anti-obesity policy strategy, the UK government helps reinforce, rather than challenge, the inequalities which underlie this classed social problem" (107). The results of her analysis point out that both national policy and advert campaigns seem to ignore the role of class in relation to health inequality, and that these discourses tend to reproduce neoliberal logics and arguments, rather than acknowledge how the health crisis disproportionally affects working-class communities.

Chapter 7 focuses on Leslie Jeffries and Brian Walker's work on the representations of austerity in British newspapers, with a particular emphasis on the periods from 2009 to 2010 and from 2016 to 2017. Both authors describe austerity as a catalyzer for greater economic inequality and vulnerability and investigate not only how the conception of austerity itself has evolved with time, but also how "naturalizing the ideology of austerity may have influenced our perceptions of reality" (125). Their work relies on both corpus and critical stylistics and uses keyword analysis and concordances, as well as naming and transitivity strategies, and their results suggest that while there is a shared tendency to portray austerity as inevitable and necessary, it became "peripheral as a negative background to other concerns" (140) during the 2016 and 2017 period and it is overall less present in current political discussions.

The next chapter is written by Richard Thomas and explores the bulleting coverage of "poverty, wealth, the squeezed middle and income inequality" (PWSIE) between the years of 2007 and 2014, paying particular attention to the ways in which the context of the economic crisis shapes discourses of class. He relies on CDA to research coverage and thematic patterns in these texts, and notes how these stories seem to be reported thematically, meaning that

the issue was covered in general terms, without relying on an example or personal story to define it" (147) and categorized as finance stories, ignoring their social nature. Overall, Thomas argues that "both BBC and ITV seemed intent on regularly defending a neoliberal approach" (153), and that there is a strong disposition to report PWSIE through an uncritical lens.

The last chapter is by Wolfgang Teubert, and it deals with the relationship between class, democracy and public discourse, centering the ways in which public opinion has described and framed the notion of democracy. Building on Gramsci's ideas of hegemony and power (1971), Teubert criticizes both the social and economic inequality present in Western democracies (see Toolan 2018) and newspaper and public discourses of neoliberalism and meritocracy, arguing that we must critique "exploitative conditions in which [working-class communities] are forced to live" (180) when discussing economic inequality.

The volume ends with a brilliant afterword by Danny Dorling, where he explains that the book shows "how the UK and its media have been an object lesson in the greedy […] taking back control" (184). By going back to Sandel's work on market economies and neoliberalism (2012), Dorling is able to establish clear parallels with the foreword of the volume, creating a cyclical structure that renders the connections between the different chapters clear and highlights their critical nature.

Overall, *The Discursive Construction of Economic Inequality in the UK* is a thoughtful exploration of class, language and inequality, and its detailed and well-researched nature makes it an engaging and productive read for anyone interested in CADS, critical stylistics or economic inequality.

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