

I International Conference

Research Group: Contextos Literarios de la Modernidad

Complementary Views on Anglo-American Fiction: A Critical Comparative Approach

25-27 November 2020

CFP English (Spanish follows)

A prominent tendency in English literary criticism during the twentieth century, among others, has been to trace the influence of Anglo-American literature on the literary production of other traditions and languages. This dominance, built upon and ensured by the colonial empire of Britain up until WWII, and by the socioeconomic sway of the United States since the post-war period, has decelerated in the panorama of decolonization and the institution of the global market.

This trend seems to have been balanced in the cultural production of the last decades of the millennium, in which the influence of the literatures of other traditions over Anglo-American literature is gradually blossoming, becoming widely and openly acknowledged not only by critics but by the authors themselves. May this be the case, for instance, of Paul Auster who in an unpublished interview with Chris Pace in 1993 stressed his dislike for Jorge Luis Borges—one of the usual suspects in Auster's intertexts—yet who would recommend the works of the Argentinian decades later in his novel *4 3 2 1* (2017)? After all, as Borges voiced in one of his stories, “That a present-day book should derive from an ancient one is clearly honorable: especially since no one (as Dr. Johnson says) likes to be indebted to his contemporaries.” (27)

To study the reverence that Anglo-American authors hold for their foreign peers is certainly not new since allusions to the masters like Dante, Cervantes or Flaubert have been a staple in the canon. As Eliot asserted in “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (1919), there can be established a continuity between the work of any given author and that of his contemporaries, a interconnectivity that extends to all texts produced in the nation, as well as to the “whole of the literature of Europe” (14). In that regard, we see efforts in literary criticism like those of Paget Toynbee and Oscar Kuhns who exposed the Dantean germ in the lines of many figures from England's poetic pantheon; or *The Western Canon* (1994) by Harold Bloom, in whose multicultural and multilingual index—albeit with a male Anglo-centric predominance—many authors could have found hypotexts for their stories.

It is the objective of this conference to invite scholars whose research has established connections of relationship, influence or rewriting of literature from other

countries on contemporary Anglo-American literary texts. This endeavour finds support in Peter Boxall's study *Twenty-First-Century Fiction: A Critical Introduction* (2013), in which its author concludes that "The Anglo-American contemporary novel is shaped by its ongoing dialogue with writers from other nations, writing often in languages other than English." (6) Boxall presents this cultural exchange as a result of the transformation of the concept of national and postnational identity that is taken place in our globalized reality, giving rise to a "global consciousness" (168). Even if we remain skeptic of this totalizing development, it is clear that the hybrid identities constituted in the aftermath of decolonization and diaspora are nurtured in multiple traditions. These, within the context of postcolonial literature, have been articulated in response to the centres of political and cultural authority since, as Bill Ashcroft neatly phrased it, "the empire needs to write back" (6).

This Conference attempts to create a space for academics of different areas, nationalities and cultures where contemporary Anglo-American literature can be approached from the angle of a comparative analysis between different traditions. Although the focus is on contemporary works and authors, submissions that study fiction or poetry from the first half of the twentieth century are also welcome. Possible topics, or areas of inquiry, may include, but not exclusively:

- Literary exchanges in European literatures: From the Renaissance to the present.
- Reception of the Boom Generation and of Latin American Magical Realism.
- Do classics other than Anglo-American matter?
- Literature of Diaspora and hybrid identities.
- Postcolonial communities: African and Aboriginal literatures.
- Legacies of the East: the Middle East and Asia.

The Conference will be held in English and Spanish.

Proposals must include:

Paper title, contact information, abstract (250 words including 4-6 keywords), bioprofile (150 words).

Proposals will undergo a peer-reviewing process in which relevance, quality, methodology and adaptation to the conference's thematic lines will be taken into consideration.

Proposals must be sent to: visionescomplementarias@gmail.com

Key dates:

- Abstract submission deadline: Tuesday, **31 March** 2020.
- Abstract submission **extended deadline**: Thursday, **30 April** 2020.
- Notification of acceptance: Monday, **1 June** 2020.
- Registration: Tuesday, **1 September** 2020 – Thursday, **15 October** 2020.
- Conference: **25-27 November** 2020

Conference Committee:

Manuel Botero Camacho

María Colom Jiménez

Glyn Hambrook

Dámaso López García

Eusebio de Lorenzo Gómez

Félix Martín Gutiérrez

Luis Martínez Victorio

Blanca Puchol Vázquez

Miguel Rodríguez Pérez

Eduardo Valls Oyarzun

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