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TRIBUTES  
LITERATURE AND CULTURE

Anne Brontë  
Amos Tutuola  
Eavan Boland

THE  
EMO-FUNDETT  
INTERNATIONAL PROJECT

RESEARCH  
LANGUAGE AND LINGUISTICS

BOOK  
REVIEWS

AEDEAN DOCTORAL  
SEMINAR ABSTRACTS



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MARÍA JOSÉ COPERÍAS AGUILAR

*Universitat de València*

***Anne Brontë,  
un largo  
viaje hacia su  
reconocimiento  
literario***



**A**nne Brontë nació el 17 de enero de 1820 en el hogar del Reverendo Patrick Brontë y su esposa, Maria Branwell, siendo la menor de seis hermanos: Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte, Branwell, Emily y la propia Anne, aunque solo sobrevivieron a la edad adulta Branwell y las tres hermanas más pequeñas. Anne nació ya con problemas de asma y siempre tuvo una salud frágil. Maria Branwell murió unos meses después de que la familia se hubiera trasladado a Haworth y cuando Anne contaba con apenas año y medio. Elizabeth Branwell, que ya había acudido a cuidar de su hermana durante el tiempo que estuvo enferma, accedió –algo a su pesar– a ayudar a su cuñado en el cuidado de los niños. Anne, por ser la más pequeña y la más débil, se convirtió en su favorita y Elizabeth tuvo una gran influencia sobre ella.

Durante varios años, Patrick Brontë fue el encargado de la educación de sus hijas. Aunque Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte y Emily pasaron algún tiempo en un internado para hijas de clérigos, Cowan Bridge, tras la muerte de las dos primeras por un brote de tuberculosis a la edad de doce y diez años, las dos menores abandonaron esta institución para seguir su educación en el seno del hogar. Tras sus rutinas diarias de clases, paseos por los páramos cercanos y alguna que otra tarea en la casa, los cuatro hermanos se retiraban a jugar y a inventar aventuras en mundos imaginarios. Primero fue Angria, surgido de la imaginación de Charlotte y Branwell, y, posteriormente, Emily y Anne crearían Gondal, cuyos fantásticos protagonistas poblarían más tarde también parte de su poesía.

A la edad de quince años, Charlotte fue enviada a un internado, Roe Head. Cuando culminó sus estudios allí y tras pasar tres años enseñando a sus hermanas en casa, le ofrecieron un puesto de profesora en este mismo internado y la posibilidad de una plaza gratuita como alumna para una de sus hermanas. Emily no se adaptó a la vida allí y Anne ocupó su lugar. La experiencia no fue fácil, y Anne sufrió varias crisis de salud y emocionales; sin embargo, resistió, consciente de que necesitaría una preparación sólida para poder vivir por sus propios medios en el futuro. Su paso por Roe Head desarrolló su capacidad de resistencia y estimuló su afán por escribir, que se convirtió en su refugio. Charlotte y Anne volvieron a casa y, tras recuperarse durante casi un año, Anne decidió buscar trabajo como institutriz.

Su primer empleo, con la familia Ingham, con la que estuvo nueve meses, fue un intento frustrado, en parte por su juventud, pues tenía solo diecinueve años, en parte por la actitud de los padres hacia la educación de unos hijos que habían tratado con excesiva indulgencia. A su vuelta a casa, conoció al nuevo ayudante de su padre, William Weightman; los diversos biógrafos de Anne no han llegado a ponerse de acuerdo en si Anne se enamoró de él (Gérin 1959, 142; Chitham 1991, 62-3 y 66) o si simplemente hubo una buena relación de amistad entre ellos (Langland 1989, 15-16). Al cabo de unos meses, buscó de nuevo trabajo como institutriz y fue contratada por la familia Robinson, en Thorp

Green Hall, no lejos de York. Aunque a menudo se sintió tratada con distancia y poco apreciada en su trabajo, pasó cinco años con los Robinson e incluso llegó a entablar cierta amistad con las hijas mayores. En septiembre de 1842 murió William Weightman, y poco después su tía Elizabeth. Ambas muertes supusieron un duro golpe para Anne. Fue en este periodo cuando su hermano Branwell fue contratado como tutor de los hijos varones de los Robinson; sin embargo, Branwell no estuvo a la altura de las circunstancias: se enamoró de la señora Robinson y confiaba incluso en casarse con ella. Para Anne, la situación se convirtió en insostenible y abandonó su puesto en 1845; Branwell fue despedido al poco tiempo.

## *Las hermanas juntas*

Después de una estancia en Bruselas, más prolongada en el caso de Charlotte que en el de Emily, con el objetivo de prepararse para la posible apertura de una escuela propia, las tres hermanas se encontraron viviendo de nuevo juntas en Haworth. Todas ellas habían estado escribiendo poesía durante algún tiempo y, cuando Charlotte fue consciente de ello y vio los poemas de sus hermanas, no cejó hasta que consiguió que vieran la luz. El volumen *Poems of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell*, de la pequeña editorial Aylott & Jones, fue publicado bajo pseudónimos que correspondían a las iniciales de sus nombres y apellido y, aunque recibió algunas críticas favorables, solo consiguió vender dos ejemplares. Sin embargo, para Anne fue el catalizador que la hizo verse como escritora. De hecho, antes de que el libro estuviera a la venta, Anne ya había empezado a trabajar en la que sería su primera novela, *Agnes Grey*, basada en sus experiencias como institutriz. Por su parte, Charlotte y Emily también habían estado trabajando en sendas novelas: *The Professor* y *Wuthering Heights*. Anne y Emily vieron sus novelas aceptadas por Thomas Cautley Newby, pero no así Charlotte. Su novela fue rechazada también por Smith, Elder & Co., si bien la animaron a escribir una novela más larga que pudiera ser publicada en tres volúmenes; el resultado fue *Jane Eyre*. Las tres novelas vieron la luz en 1847.

Tras el rechazo de la señora Robinson y el despido como tutor de sus hijos, Branwell se refugió primero en la bebida, y más tarde en algunas drogas, contribuyendo a un rápido deterioro físico y psíquico. Muy posiblemente, la figura de Branwell está en el origen de su siguiente novela, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, en la que su protagonista, Helen Graham, abandona a su marido a causa de su tendencia a la bebida, su disipación y su infidelidad, para así proteger a su hijo de su nociva influencia. La novela se publicó en 1848 y fue un éxito de ventas, de tal manera que a las pocas semanas salió una segunda edición. Ambas novelas, así como las de Charlotte y Emily, habían sido publicadas bajo pseudónimos, pero, como consecuencia de un malentendido creado de manera interesada por Newby, el editor de Anne, se hizo necesario desvelar la identidad de las tres hermanas escritoras.

Lamentablemente, la felicidad de su éxito se vio truncada primero por la muerte de Branwell en septiembre de 1848, y después por la de Emily en diciembre de ese mismo año. Anne, al igual que Emily antes, enfermó de tuberculosis y murió en mayo de 1849 en Scarborough, adonde había acudido acompañada de Charlotte y de una amiga de esta, Ellen Nussey, con la intención de curarse con la cercanía del mar.

Es cierto que, al ser la más joven de la familia, siempre es citada en último lugar en cualquier referencia a sus hermanos. También es cierto que tuvo que hacerse un hueco en una familia de artistas –Branwell pintaba y también escribía– y, especialmente, entre sus dos hermanas novelistas. Y es asimismo innegable que, dada su frágil salud, su padre, su tía y sus hermanas siempre sintieron la necesidad de protegerla en exceso. Sin embargo, todo ello no es razón suficiente para justificar que Anne haya sido siempre la gran desconocida de las hermanas Brontë.

## La otra hermana

Uno de los primeros autores en fijarse en ella, George Moore, ya dijo hace casi un siglo que a Anne le había tocado hacer el papel de Cenicienta literaria al haber sido juzgada siempre en referencia a sus hermanas (1924: 260), a la sombra de sus enormes figuras literarias, tal como también ha sido reconocido mucho más recientemente (Stoneman 2002: 217; Ellis 2017), y en los márgenes del mito de las Brontë (Han 2017: 57). Elizabeth Langland, una de sus biógrafas, añadió al nombre de la autora el subtítulo de “The other one” (1989), ya que con frecuencia es presentada como “la otra hermana” de Charlotte y Emily, o también como “la tercera hermana” (Villacañas 1993: 190; Stoneman 2002: 217). Otros han visto en Anne a alguien que tuvo una vida casi a escondidas del mundo (Davies 2000: 11) y cuya existencia y obra han quedado cubiertas con un velo que pocos se han molestado en levantar (Thormählen 2014: 331), quedando por tanto como la olvidada de las tres hermanas (Miller 2002: 157; Holland 2016).

La identidad de las tres hermanas Brontë quedó difuminada desde un principio cuando utilizaron pseudónimos ante el deseo especialmente de Emily de no tener un reconocimiento público. Esta circunstancia fue aprovechada por Newby, el editor de Emily y Anne, ante la popularidad que la primera novela de Charlotte, publicada por otra editorial, había alcanzado, y anunció que *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* era del mismo autor que *Jane Eyre*. Muchos de los lectores de la época se preguntaban por la identidad de esos autores apellidados Bell y fácilmente asumieron que las novelas podían haber sido escritas por una persona, dos a lo sumo, pero no por tres distintas (Stoneman 2002: 217). En lo que respecta a Anne en concreto, Pike considera que su legado se ha caracterizado por ser víctima del olvido, el descuido y los errores, y da toda una serie de ejemplos

que van desde la equivocación de Charlotte al poner su edad sobre la tumba de Anne, su fecha de nacimiento inexacta en algunos documentos biográficos de la familia, o directamente la omisión de su nombre (2016: 135-6).

Las razones que se pueden aducir para este desconocimiento de la figura y la vida de Anne Brontë son diversas. Para algunos autores, Anne –de naturaleza tímida y retraída– habría contribuido casi de manera voluntaria a este olvido en el que tantas veces ha caído (Davies 2000: 9; Han 2017: 57). Es cierto que, a diferencia –por ejemplo– de su hermana Charlotte, que dejó innumerables cartas con opiniones y detalles de su vida, muy pocos documentos de Anne han sobrevivido (sus novelas, unos poemas, algún breve escrito y unas cuantas hojas sueltas a modo de diario, algunas de ellas escritas junto con Emily) y, por lo tanto, tenemos poca información de primera mano sobre sus sentimientos o aspiraciones. En consecuencia, gran parte de lo que sobre ella ha llegado hasta nosotros ha sido a través de la mirada de otros, especialmente la de su hermana Charlotte, la de una amiga de esta, Ellen Nussey, y la de la primera biógrafa de Charlotte, la también novelista Elizabeth Gaskell.

## El público victoriano

A pesar de que la segunda novela de Anne, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, fue un éxito de ventas comparable al de *Jane Eyre* (Matus 2002: 101; Duckett 2017: 87), ninguna de las novelas de Anne parece haber sido muy del gusto de los lectores victorianos (Matus 2002: 99; Pike 2016: 135) y recibió críticas ciertamente desfavorables que expresaban condescendencia y menosprecio por su obra, especialmente en comparación con la novela de Charlotte (Allott 1974: 227, 259). La novela de Emily, *Wuthering Heights*, también había sido criticada duramente por algunos lectores, y a esto se añadía que años después de la publicación de las primeras novelas, e incluso después del fallecimiento de Emily y Anne, todavía existía la confusión sobre la autoría de sus obras. En 1850, Charlotte preparó una nueva edición de *Wuthering Heights* y *Agnes Grey* con Smith, Elder and Co., a la que añadió una nota biográfica sobre sus hermanas con la que quería, por una parte, atribuirles la autoría de sus obras y, por otra, librarlas de toda posible mácula en su carácter. En el retrato que aquí dibujó de ellas, Emily siempre salió favorecida pues, aparte de reconocer su valor como poeta, algo que no hizo con Anne, alababa la fuerza y la originalidad de Emily frente a la carencia de estas virtudes en Anne, a quien atribuía un carácter tranquilo y sumiso, y hacia la que siempre utilizó un tono condescendiente hasta el punto de afirmar que la elección del tema de su novela *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* fue un completo error. Lamentablemente, la imagen que Charlotte creó de Anne en esta semblanza ha servido como primera fuente de información (Stoneman 2002: 217) y como modelo para opiniones posteriores sobre ella (Langland 1989: 50; Thormählen 2014: 331; Han 2017: 157), algo

por lo que Charlotte ha sido criticada posteriormente (Bauman 2007: 23). La imagen de dulzura y docilidad salpicó también otros testimonios tanto de gente que la conoció; este fue el caso de Ellen Nussey (Davies 2000: 10; Shaw 2013: 330; Pike 2016: 140), como de otros que no, como, por ejemplo, Elizabeth Gaskell. En la biografía que publicó en 1857 sobre Charlotte, Gaskell se basó en lo que aquella le había contado sobre su hermana pequeña, y de este modo continuó fomentando el mito de Anne como una mujer amable y dulce, pero también carente de nervio personal y creativo.

En 1848, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* tuvo dos ediciones en apenas unas semanas y, a consecuencia de algunas de las críticas inmediatas que recibió, Anne incluyó en la segunda edición un prefacio explicando cuál había sido su intención al escribir la novela. Tras fallecer Anne, y con el mismo objetivo de proteger su reputación, Charlotte pidió que esta novela no volviera a publicarse. Sin embargo, en 1854, un tal Thomas Hodgson sacó al mercado una versión abreviada y sin el prefacio de la segunda edición; lamentablemente, fue esta versión la que sirvió de base para la mayoría de las ediciones posteriores y, aparte de una versión completa en 1931 en la colección Shakespeare Head Brontë, no se pudo recuperar dicha edición, incluido el prefacio, hasta el último tercio del siglo XX (Han 2017: 50). Esta difusión incompleta de la novela, evidentemente, ha perjudicado que la obra de Anne pudiera ser conocida en toda su extensión y como corresponde. Otro hecho que tampoco ha facilitado la popularización de su obra es que, a diferencia de *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights* o la misma *Agnes Grey*, que siempre han tenido mucho éxito entre las jóvenes lectoras, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, debido a su temática central, donde se representa la desintegración de un matrimonio, ha sido considerada una novela para adultos (Thormählen 2014: 334). Las circunstancias mencionadas inevitablemente han influido en que una menor cantidad de críticos se interesaran por estudiar su obra y, aquellos que lo han hecho, con frecuencia ha sido como mero acompañamiento de la de sus hermanas, y con reparos y prejuicios (Stolpa 2003: 225-7; Hallemeier 2013: 251-2).

## La lenta recuperación

El inicio de la lenta recuperación de la figura literaria de Anne Brontë se podría situar en el elogio que George Moore le dedicó cuando dijo que *Agnes Grey* era “the most perfect prose narrative in English letters” (1924: 243). Cinco años después se publicaría la primera biografía dedicada exclusivamente a la figura de Anne (Hale 1929). Aunque tuvieron que pasar treinta años hasta que alguien más mostrara interés en la vida de esta autora, en 1959 se publicaron dos biografías: la de Winifred Gérin y la de Ada Harrison, que iba acompañada de un estudio crítico de su obra a cargo de Derek Stanford. Sin embargo, Fannie Ratchford (1960: 366), en una reseña conjunta de ambos libros, declaraba que la figura de Anne no era merecedora

de una monografía, y mucho menos de dos. En 1968, W.H. Stevenson publicó un estudio sobre Emily y Anne Brontë; sin embargo, de las algo menos de ciento veinte páginas que tiene el libro, tan solo nueve están dedicadas a Anne. En opinión de Marianne Thormählen (2014: 333), las biografías de Elizabeth Langland (1989), Maria Frawley (1996) y Betty Jay (2000) han cumplido un papel admirable en la revisión de la figura de Anne, labor a la que también contribuyó la que escribió Edward Chitham en 1991. Por su parte, las monografías de P.J.M. Scott (1983) y Elizabeth Hollis Berry (1994), con revisiones críticas de su obra, o la colección de trabajos reunidos por Julie Nash y Barbara A. Suess (2001) han aportado nuevas perspectivas al estudio de Anne Brontë y sus obras literarias. Recientemente, se han publicado hasta tres biografías: dos a cargo de Nick Holland (2016 y 2020), la última para celebrar el segundo centenario de su nacimiento, y otra escrita por Samantha Ellis (2017). Y en las últimas dos décadas, autoras como Davies (2000), Stolpa (2003), Hallemeier (2013), Shaw (2013), Thormählen (2014) y Han (2017) han publicado artículos imprescindibles para la recuperación de la figura de Anne.

## Reivindicando a Anne Brontë

La mayoría de los autores que reivindican la figura de Anne Brontë lo hacen en torno a tres aspectos de su obra: el tratamiento realista en sus novelas, la denuncia de la situación de la mujer, y la complejidad narrativa, especialmente en *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. El principio que rigió la escritura de las dos novelas de Anne Brontë fue la de contar las cosas tal cual eran, sin restarles un ápice de realidad. El mismo comienzo de su primera novela, *Agnes Grey*, ya parece una declaración de intenciones: “All true stories contain instruction” (Brontë 1991: 1), que luego se vio superada en la siguiente narración. En el bien conocido Prefacio a su segunda edición y en defensa de las críticas recibidas por el realismo con que describía algunas agrias escenas y los más indignos comportamientos de algunos de los personajes, Anne dijo: “I wished to tell the truth, for truth always conveys its own moral to those who are able to receive it” (Brontë 1993: 3). En el mismo Prefacio, Anne se quejaba también de las críticas a *Agnes Grey* por, supuestamente, haber puesto demasiada imaginación en algunas escenas cuando ella simplemente las había copiado de la vida misma, y tampoco entendía que luego se la criticara por haber sido excesivamente cruda en la descripción de determinados pasajes en *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. Esta adhesión a la verdad, a reflejar lo que pasa en la vida real, es lo que ha llevado a algunos autores a destacar su marcado realismo como uno de los puntos fuertes de *Agnes Grey* (Langland 1989: 114), y a otros a reconocer a Anne Brontë como la primera escritora realista inglesa (Harrison and Stanford 1959: 232), así como precursora de un realismo social que más tarde se vería en algunas de las novelas de Elizabeth Gaskell o George Eliot (Badowska 2015). Sin embargo, también ha llamado la atención su drástica transición

de un mundo ficticio y fantástico, el de Gondal, por el que se paseó durante años, y cuya huella es discernible en su poesía, a esta postura en la que reclama de manera radical la verdad y la realidad (Thormählen 2014: 335). En el Prefacio, de nuevo, Anne manifiesta: “I would rather whisper a few wholesome truths therein than much soft nonsense” (Brontë 1993: 3). Está claro que en sus novelas se alejó de los elementos más sentimentales (Sellars 2005: 247) y rompió con el intenso romanticismo de los mundos de Angria y Gondal que puede percibirse en las novelas de Charlotte y Emily, razón por la cual, según Han (2017: 54), quizás nunca alcanzó la popularidad de estas.

## La mujer del siglo XIX

Con frecuencia se ha destacado la relación entre el empeño de las novelas de Anne por representar la realidad con su interés por la cuestiones de la mujer en el siglo XIX (Badowska 2015; Han 2017: 56). Por una parte, en *Agnes Grey* la autora se ocupa de la situación de las institutrices, una de las pocas salidas profesionales para las mujeres de clase media en la época, y su compleja posición social al no ser parte de la servidumbre, pero tampoco alcanzar el nivel social de sus empleadores. Por otra, en *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, la protagonista, Helen Graham, huye de un matrimonio turbulento en el que su marido la somete a numerosas humillaciones, llevándose a su hijo para protegerlo de la influencia del padre, aspirando a mantenerse con su trabajo como pintora. El hecho de que Helen huya de este matrimonio como si fuera una prisión y que pretenda conseguir su independencia labrándose una carrera como artista ha sido descrito por Sandra Gilbert y Susan Gubar como un preámbulo del movimiento de liberación de la mujer (1979: 80). De la misma manera, Beatriz Villacañas considera que el paso dado por Helen era realmente revolucionario para una mujer de aquel tiempo y situación (1993: 196). En la novela, Anne se adentra en algunas de las cuestiones sociales y legislativas más candentes de la época: el sistema educativo, que concedía a los hombres un poder arbitrario, y las leyes de la propiedad, que convertían a las mujeres en uno más de los bienes de sus esposos (Davies 2000: 13), la violencia doméstica y las leyes de matrimonio y custodia de los hijos (Matus 2002: 108; Shaw 2013: 334), y en general la situación de desprotección de las mujeres, y también de la infancia. Al mismo tiempo, defendía la igualdad entre hombres y mujeres, al menos como escritores y como lectores. En su opinión, y tal como apuntó en el Prefacio de *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, el apreciar una novela no debería depender de si el autor es hombre o mujer; ningún hombre debería escribir nada que fuera ofensivo para una mujer ni una mujer debería ser censurada por lo que escribe, y todas las novelas deberían estar dirigidas por igual a hombres y mujeres lectoras (Brontë 1993: 5). De esta manera, Anne se opone a la idea tan popular en el siglo XIX de la esferas separadas, social y culturalmente, entre hombres y mujeres, imponiendo patrones de conducta muy diferentes entre unos y otros (Shaw 2013: 332). Esta postura, en opinión de Lucasta Miller (2002:

157), convertiría a Anne Brontë, en una escritora más audaz que Emily o Charlotte, la cual ha sido aclamada con frecuencia como precursora del feminismo en el siglo XIX (Shaw 2013: 337).

*Agnes Grey* ha sido considerada en general una novela sencilla y de fácil lectura; sin embargo, autores como P.J.M. Scott cuestionan que la supuesta simplicidad narrativa sea un motivo para subestimarla (1983: 9); otros autores, como Stolpa, comparan la estructura de la novela con la de un sermón, desdeñando cualquier atisbo de simplicidad en la forma o los objetivos de la novela (2003: 237). Respecto a la estructura narrativa de *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, nadie cuestiona su mayor complejidad: en primer lugar, la historia rompe con el orden cronológico y, además, nos encontramos con dos voces narrativas y dos estilos. La novela comienza con una carta del que será el segundo marido de la protagonista, Helen Graham, que a su vez incluye fragmentos del diario de esta que sirven para revelar su historia más íntima. Mientras que esta doble voz narrativa ha sido considerada fallida con frecuencia (Matus 2002: 99), en tiempos recientes ha despertado el interés de los lectores, que han sabido apreciar las posibilidades técnicas que los diversos niveles de la historia ofrecían (Thormählen 2014: 332).

## La leyenda alrededor

La leyenda que Charlotte empezó a construir alrededor de la dulce y amable personalidad de Anne y que tanto eco ha tenido a lo largo de los años, ha sido cuestionada en diversas ocasiones. May Sinclair ya destacó la valentía de Anne frente a la de sus hermanas. Según Sinclair, Charlotte y Emily eran audaces por naturaleza, mientras que Anne lo era como consecuencia de una fuerte voluntad (1912: 47-48). Anne fue una persona disciplinada y dispuesta a hacer cualquier sacrificio para conseguir aquello que consideraba necesario. Por ejemplo, aguantó con entereza el tiempo que pasó en Roe Head para poder formarse, y persistió tenazmente en sus puestos de institutriz durante casi seis años –algo de lo que no fueron capaces en la misma medida ni Charlotte ni Emily– a pesar de que no era feliz. En sus novelas, defendió con franqueza sus ideas sobre la educación de los niños, o el derecho de la mujer a liberarse de un matrimonio equivocado (Davies 2000: 10; Shaw 2013: 331), y lo hizo siendo conocedora de los debates contemporáneos sobre las cuestiones sociales más importantes que influyeron en la sociedad de la primera mitad del siglo XIX (Thormählen 2014: 338).

El carácter decidido de Anne es también visible en la manera en que marcó la diferencia con sus hermanas. En el Prefacio a la segunda edición de *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* no deja ninguna duda: “Respecting the author’s identity, I would have it to be distinctly understood that Acton Bell in neither Currer nor Ellis Bell” (1993: 5). Aunque es cierto que las tres hermanas mantuvieron una intensa relación y compartieron casa y vida durante



casi toda su existencia, Edward Chitham (1991: 134) cuestiona que la imagen de plácida armonía doméstica entre las tres hermanas fuera tal como ha llegado a través Charlotte, Ellen Nussey y Elizabeth Gaskell. Tal como se ha comentado anteriormente, Anne rompió en sus dos novelas con el intenso romanticismo que caracterizó tanto sus historias juveniles y parte de su poesía como, sobre todo, las novelas escritas por su dos hermanas: Jane Eyre y *Wuthering Heights*. Elizabeth Langland hace referencia a un breve ensayo titulado “The Three Guides”, que Anne escribió cuando las tres hermanas acababan de publicar sus primeras novelas; según Langland, en este ensayo Anne critica a sus hermanas y establece criterios alternativos a los de ellas (1989: 42). Son diversos los autores que inciden en la idea de que, en concreto, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* era una crítica tanto a *Jane Eyre* como a *Wuthering Heights* (Thormählen 2014: 337), reflejada en aspectos como que, mientras en *Jane Eyre* el matrimonio es una aspiración de la protagonista, en *The*

*Tenant of Wildfell Hall* se cuestiona dicha institución y la situación legal de la mujeres casadas (Langland 2002: 30), pero también en similitudes entre los personajes de las tres novelas, o la coincidencia en las iniciales de algunos de los nombres de los protagonistas o de los nombres de las mansiones (Langland 1989: 29-59; Chitham 1991: 133-157).

Anne Brontë también ha sido considerada como una precursora que, en *Agnes Grey*, preparó el camino para el tipo de institutriz que luego se haría popular en la figura de Jane Eyre: una joven, no demasiado atractiva físicamente, que pone un anuncio para conseguir un trabajo de institutriz y así alcanzar su independencia (Thormählen 2014: 337; Pike 2016: 141). Más que a la sombra de sus hermanas, Anne debería ser examinada en contraste con ellas, así como una figura independiente de la familia, para otorgarle el reconocimiento que se merece en la literatura inglesa del siglo XIX.



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***Amos  
Tutuola's  
Legacy:  
“mock,  
heroic and  
irreverent”***

***“Can an African ever learn English well enough to be able to use it effectively in creative writing? is certainly yes. If on the other hand you ask: Can he ever learn to use it like a native speaker? I would say, I hope not. It is neither necessary nor desirable for him to be able to do so”***

***(Achebe 1965: 29).***

## Introduction



On behalf of the celebration of Amos Tutuola's centenary of his birth (1920-1997), I have the honour to write a note on his literary prevalence in Nigerian Literature. Amos Tutuola is one of the great names of African Literature and the first one in writing a novel in English in Nigeria. According to Alastair Niven's Obituary for *The Independent* (16, June, 1997), the writer was not the first African author in using English but he was the first one in “attracting international attention.” The reason for this has to do with the fact that his first novel, *The Palm-Wine Drinkard and His Dead Palm-Wine Tapster in the Deads' Town* (henceforth, *The Palm Wine Drinkard*), was recommended for publication in Faber and Faber by T.S. Eliot in 1952 and was reviewed for the first time by Dylan Thomas (1952: 7)<sup>1</sup>:

**This is the brief, thronged, grisly and bewitching story, or series of stories, written in young English by a West African, about the journey of an expert and devoted palm-wine drinkard through a nightmare of indescribable adventures, all simply and carefully described in the spirit-bristling brush-thronged, grisly and bewitching.**

This is the brief, thronged, grisly and bewitching story, or series of stories, written in young English by a West African, about the journey of an expert and devoted palm-wine drinkard through a nightmare of indescribable adventures, all simply and carefully described in the spirit-bristling brush-thronged, grisly and bewitching.

The two canonical writers anticipated the significance of a Nigerian writer who was completely unknown outside Nigeria. They valued the cultural impact Amos Tutuola had on collecting and beautifying Yoruba folktales and contributed to the opening of a literature, the one written

in Nigeria, to the rest of the world. If we bear in mind that the literacy rates in Nigeria in the 1952-3 incomplete census were rather low —85-90 per cent (UNESCO 1957: 38, 70)—, Tutuola's legacy broadens. However, the census ignores an essential element of Nigerian cultural landscape, the Onitsha Market, a place situated in the delta of the Niger, where southern Nigerian cultural backgrounds met. The Onitsha Market Pamphlets reveal the extraordinary connection between oral and written culture and bring together different communities into a single task: literacy. The oral tradition preserves and transmits the local catalogue —using mechanisms like ritualization, symbolization and routinization— and the literate one elaborates many of these devices into a more experimental and elaborative process. One may begin by asking if Amos Tutuola appears into scenery incidentally (as probably some of the critics thought at the time), but a deeper knowledge of Nigerian literature helps us to know that his presence was not accidental and the Onitsha Market validates it.

Why Onitsha? Within the same years Tutuola became famous in Britain, at the Onitsha Market —600 kilometers far from Abeokuta, his birthplace— emerged a socio-literary phenomenon marked by an important number of publishing companies whose influence extended in Southern Nigeria. The intense editorial activity developed around the Main Market in Onitsha has become the most genuine witness of a popular creative literature. Thus, it certainly deserves to be regarded as an exceptionally relevant socio-literary phenomenon. In a way, it was an experiment in order to build an indigenous cultural industry in urban areas. The first literary texts representative of this movement can be dated to 1947 (Obiechina 1975: 3) and were written by Cyprian Ekwensi (1921-2007), who published *Ikolo the Westler and Other Igbo Tales* and *When Love Whispers*. These pamphlets aspired to be read by a large number of readers and based its success on its low cost and in the brevity and simplicity in its presentation and stylistic resources. Chinua Achebe (1988: 69) remarks that, in the particular example of Tutuola, “his superiority over those pamphlet

<sup>1</sup> Lindfors (1986: 12) pinpoints that the review was responsible for the popularity of the novel because it was a sale success as Thomas exercised an intellectual leadership among readers at that time.

writers (...) arises out of a richer imagination and a more soundly based moralism".

## The writer

**"He died as he had lived, amid uncertainties, contradictions, and controversy" (Owomoyela 1999: 146).**

Born in Abeokuta, Nigeria, in 1920, Amos Tutuola left his family when he was seven to work as a houseboy. His master paid for his primary schooling as well as for his secondary tuition though he left in the middle of his secondary school to return to Abeokuta. His father went on paying for his fees until he died in 1939. Then, scarcely six years of formal education allowed him to write the first English novel in Nigeria. To some extent, he was self-educated and combined working with schooling, so that many of the scholars speak about him as a self-made writer. Once the war ended (he served as a blacksmith in the Royal Air Force, Lagos, from 1943 to 1946), he became a messenger/clerk in the Department of Labour in Lagos and then he wrote *The Palm Wine Drinkard* in 1948, though the text would not be published until 1952. He worked for the Nigerian Broadcasting Company and was transferred to Ibadan in 1957. Founder of the Mbari Club of Nigerian writers, he was visiting research fellow at the University of Ife in 1979. Meanwhile, he wrote *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts* (1954), where he writes about the same motif, a child traveler in search of his family. Later on, *Simbi and the Satyr of the Dark Jungle* (1955), *The Brave African Huntress* (1958), *The Feather Woman of the Jungle* (1962), *Ajaiyi and His Inherited Poverty* (1967), and *The Witch-Herbalist of the Remote Town* (1981). In 1983, he was Visiting Fellow of the Iowa Writing Workshop and was made honorary citizen in New Orleans. His literary contribution to African Literature will end with a collection of *Yoruba Folktales* (1986), *Pauper, Brawler, and Slanderer* (1987), and *The Village Witch Doctor and Other Stories* (1990). Tutuola was named an honorary fellow for the Modern Language Association (1989) and in 1992 he was awarded the Pan African Writers Association Diploma of Native Patrons. Summing up, he published nine novels, two collections of short stories, and a volume of Yoruba folktales. He maintained his residence in Ibadan until he died in 1997<sup>2</sup>:

**The Association of Nigerian Authors (ANA) did not think him worthy of an award in his lifetime, but many of its luminaries decried the failure of his country to recognize and honor him adequately while he lived (Owomoyela 2008: 177)<sup>3</sup>.**

## Linkage & tradition

**"For those of us with one foot on the other side" (Emezi 2018).**

I have previously mentioned the importance of the Onitsha Market Pamphlets in the development of Nigerian writers. Nonetheless, it is necessary to add the relevance of literature written in Yoruba in Amos Tutuola's literary production. Although the origins of Yoruba literature are found at the Ilorin Islamic Centre in the first part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the outburst of cultural nationalism in 1880 brought its development (Falola 1988: 23). The Yoruba people started teaching Yoruba culture at school and developed an interest in preserving a language already menaced by the presence of English in the colony. The most well-known among the Yoruba writers is Daniel Olorunfemi Fagunwa<sup>4</sup> (1903-1963), who has maintained the magic and fantasy as an essential part of his literature like Amos Tutuola (Obiechina 1975: 39). This prevalence encompasses the world of the traditional African village life and regulates the relationships with the spirits. *The Palm Wine Drinkard* recreates the Yoruba oral tradition and it challenges the critics and readers in an unconscious literary use of the English language. Taking the syntax and the vocabulary of Yoruba language, he deepens into a customized use of the colonial language. Thus, Amos Tutuola has been dismissed by many of his critics as a non-educated primitive writer; however, his contribution to the cultural decolonization of Africa has been widely acclaimed among the young readers because his stories reflect the precolonial African complexity and the unlimited borders of many of these traditional beliefs. He africanizes the colonial language to the Yoruba metaphysical world and forces English language to accommodate to Yoruba syntax. It is said that our writer invents his own tongue (Soyinka 2014), because, as I have previously mentioned in the case of Onitsha, he is

<sup>2</sup> Some of the details of this biography were taken from *The Palm Wine Drinkard's* afterword, written by Tutuola's himself. The narration of his life and sufferings, as well as his achievements, showed me to what extent Amos Tutuola loved knowledge, culture, and literature. I have also added information from Owomoyela, 1988 and 2008; Achebe, 1988, and Soyinka, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Bernth Lindfors has compiled many documents on Amos Tutuola at the University of Texas, where he is Professor Emeritus of English. The whole collection is available for researchers and scholars in the following link: <https://legacy.lib.utexas.edu/taro/uthrc/00337/hrc-00337.html> (25/04/2020)

<sup>4</sup> The first Yoruba novel was published in 1938 by D.O Fagunwa: *Ogbójú ode nínú igbó irúnmale*. It was translated into English by Wole Soyinka in 1968 as *The Forest of a Thousand Daemons*. Later on, it would be dramatized by Wale Ogunyemi under the title *Langbodo* (García Ramirez 1999: 76).(25/04/2020)

writing for a wide range of readers, mainly for “a polyglot proletariat –market traders, motor-park tout, farmers, office clerks and factory workers, Pentecostal Christians and proselytizing Muslims, traditional orisa worshippers, and all” (Soyinka 2014: iii).

The narration tells us the story of a child whose experiences are used to recreate the oral tradition of the Yorubas. A journey carries him to kingdoms of imagination and subconsciousness (spiced with his addiction to wine). The beginning of the story set the situation clear: “I was a palm-wine drinkard since I was a boy of ten years of age. I had no other work more than to drink palm-wine in my life” (Tutuola 1952: 7). The presence of a drunkard—a *drinkard*—as the narrator of the story prepares the reader for an unreliable narrative. The journey into the world of the Dead, a kind of journey into the self- to look for the Tapster, connects the story with Yoruba folktale traditions. At the same time, some universal motifs are revealed: Ulysses (the classical motif and the modern one), some references to Arabic literature, the motif of the journey, and, overall, the richness of his own culture. Tutuola retained most of the Yoruba mythical tradition and incorporated some of the worries of his people in the narration: death, disease, hunger, and excess of food are continuously materialized in the story and experienced by the protagonist:

**He took me around his house and his yam garden too, he showed me the skeleton bones of human beings which he had killed since a century ago and showed me many other things also, but there I saw that he was using skeleton bones of human-beings as fuel woods and skull heads of human-beings as his basins. Plates and tumblers (Tutuola 1952: 13).**

The wonderful experience he lives in the underworld reveals the rich imagery of Yoruba storytelling and how boundaries may be pushed in a narrative when the narrator tells his/her reader to look further, to look at what s/he cannot see, especially if frontiers between the world and the underworld are blurred, as it happens in this story. Transgression, border crossing and false primitivism are the elements which preserve the bridge between the local and the global, the spiritual and the earthly. In order to recreate this, a fragmented prose as well as a particular narrative structure in numberless episodes is chosen. *The Palm Wine Drinkard* is confronted with a world of magic and fantasy. Being a storyteller as he is, he represents the transition from the oral to the written culture, from the Yoruba language to the English one. Especially interested in the local culture, his literary production shows us that he had the privilege to tell the stories of Nigeria, of his Yoruba land. Thus, many critics, particularly Yoruba ones, dismiss Tutuola as a poor raconteur of Yoruba fantasies which are

not proper novels (Griswold 2000: 14). However, Wole Soyinka emphasizes that:

**If we must establish Tutuola’s place in the literary forum, it is pertinent to observe that he was forerunner of Gabriel García Márquez, Ben Okri, Sharmush Parsipur and others in the narrative style conveniently known as magical realism (2014: iv).**

Thus, he understands that Tutuola’s fiction involves analyzing different levels of interaction: the real world, the underworld, and the relationship between the local and the universal. For this reason, when Amos Tutuola chooses English instead of Yoruba, he transfers his local culture into a transnational one and he adapts his prose to tell the stories of the Yoruba to the Nigerians and to the rest of the world. When he focused *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts* (1954) on a seven-year-old child lost into the forest of the Ghosts for twenty-four years, he developed some of the elements he had used in his previous story. Again, it is a journey into the underworld, in this case throughout the forest. Deities, spirits, and ghosts live in this world and the child finds his own life there: he gets married with a woman spirit, describes the mythical world of the Yorubas, and participates in it. At the end, he is able to return home after many adventures, including his being sold as a slave. The Ghosts he confronts in the story have human characteristics; they are capable of speaking and interacting with the child and both worlds intermingle in a story without boundaries.

After these two extraordinary successes, he went on publishing, though his new novels were not so popular; despite the fact that some of them, as Lindfors (1986: 16) remarks, are structurally more solid than the first ones. According to Owomoyela (2008: 1176), “an adaptation of *Drinkard* for the stage by the Yoruba opera artist Kola Ogunmola enjoyed tremendous success in 1962”. In spite of this, he was attacked for his poor command of English and the repetition of some of the plots of his stories. Quite often the hero succeeds in his aims and encounters of unearthly creatures while he gets valuable rewards in his journeys and he is restored from his punishment, as is the case in *The Palm Wine Drinkard* (Achebe 1988: 69).

## *The legacy*

“He being dead, yet speaketh.” — Heb ix. 4<sup>5</sup>

Condemned to oblivion during the last part of his life, Amos Tutuola would have deserved recognition among Nigerian writers. Arguing that he used grammatically

<sup>5</sup> I take this quotation from Ajani 2012



incorrect English, he was “dismissed by elite African intellectuals as an embarrassment and an expensive distraction” (Nyamnjoh 2017: 18). The justification was that many scholars pushed away their own conceptions of reality. They denied the creative space of traditional mythical worldviews and thought of the writers who maintained them as superstitious guardians. (Re) familiarizing with Amos Tutuola’s codes may help the scholar/reader to interconnect his prose with the new Nigerian voices. Among the multiple examples, I would like to mention Ben Okri (1959), who wrote a trilogy on the myth of spirit children in Nigeria (*The Famished Road*, 1991; *Songs of Enchantment*, 1993, and *Infinite Riches*, 1998). Azaro, the main protagonist, is a spirit child (abiku in the writer’s area):

**In the beginning there was a river. The river became a road and the road branched out to the whole world. And because the road was once a river it was always hungry. In that land of beginnings spirits mingled with the unborn. We could assume numerous forms. Many of us were birds. We knew no boundaries. There was much feasting, playing, and sorrowing. We feasted much because of the beautiful terrors of eternity. We played much because we were free. And we sorrowed much because there were always those amongst us who had just returned from the world of the Living (Okri 1991: 3).**

Undoubtedly, the world recreated by Ben Okri resembles Amos Tutuola’s, as Okri manages to explain, throughout a child and a succession of different episodes, the mythical system of beliefs of many animist Nigerian communities: a cyclical concept of time, the interconnections with the world of the spirits, the absence of borders between both worlds, decode Tutuola’s scenery. As Owomoyela (2008: 110) remarks, “Okri’s novel harks back to Tutuola’s works, with which it shares several features, including the nature of the characters, the dissolution of the boundary between the worlds of humans and the spirits, and recourse to materials from traditional folktales.

Another example of this valuable link is presented by Ken Saro-Wiwa’s *Sozaboy: A Novel in Rotten English* (1985). It is an account of an African War written in a number of registers of pidgin, broken, and semi-literate English. Choosing an illiterate character like Mene, the protagonist, who confronts the cruelties of an unknown war, Saro-Wiwa describes an anti-hero. He serves as a soldier in a conflict he cannot understand. Isolated and far away from his people, he becomes a soldier because he assumes fighting is a rite of passage. When he deserts the army and returns to his village, nobody waits for him. All are dead. Deliberately, Ken Saro-Wiwa has chosen an almost child and a language to be understood by the clerks, the shopkeepers or the houseboy, exactly as Amos Tutuola does. Precisely, he incorporates rotten English, which is a substandard variety of English, somehow encouraged by the success of Tutuola’s narrative (Odozor 2004: 197; cited in González García-Mamely 2015: 189).

The new generation of Nigerian writers looks back to Amos Tutuola too, in spite of the fact that he does not belong to the intellectual elite. When Chris Abani wrote *Song for Night* (2007) he chose as his protagonist a child, named My Luck, who is obliged to take part in a war (the Nigerian Civil War, if we take into consideration the amount of references we find in the text). The child went into the forest in search of his platoon. This quest brings to the reader’s mind The Palm-Wine Drinkard’s exploration of the Dead’s Forest, as My Luck narrates the limits of life and death into a forest (cf. Goyal, 2014). The opening paragraph of the novel also reaffirms the haunting atmosphere the reader is immersed in and the connections with the oral tradition of Amos Tutuola’s narrative:

**What you hear is not my voice. I have not spoken in three years: not since I left boot camp. It has been three years of a senseless war, and though the reasons for it are clear, and though we will continue to fight until we are ordered to stop - and probably for a while after that - none of us can remember the hate that led us here. We are simply fighting to survive the war (Abani 2007: 9).**

A fragmented protagonist is chosen by Awaeké Emezi to describe the interconnections between the two entities of a human being from an Igbo ontology’s viewpoint in *Freshwater* (2018). Born with one foot on the other side, Ada, the protagonist, arises to develop separate selves. Ada fights against the different spirits who live inside her. Being a spirit child (*ogbanje* in Igboland) connects her to the different territories in which these children live. Again a journey into the world of the dead ones reminds the reader Tutuola’s enchanting Palm Wine Drinkard.

Common elements are repeated in four stories whose authors select children as protagonists to narrate events escaping from the rigid borders of realism. The world of the living transcends in the underworld in these four narratives, as it does in Tutuola’s novels, and the metaphysical motifs and myths are revitalized. Despite their belonging to different Nigerian communities (Urhobos, Ogonis, Igbos), these four writers articulate the prevalence of their common mythical and folkloric past. A closer look at their narratives suggests the revival of Tutuola’s mythical world, whereas cultural references resist a rigid compartmentalization. In Dan S. Izevbaye’s words (2004: 479): “Tutuola’s significance lies in his drawing attention to literary forms of the colonial period, and revealing an African alternative to the realist conventions of the rationalist tradition”.

What all this means is that Amos Tutuola recreated a particular mysterious world connected with the Yoruba ontological system of beliefs. There is no strict limit of boundaries in his recreation and he explores the duality in which many traditional animist cultures coexist. His bequest conveys a rich imagination which has not been distorted by any constraints and has been transmitted to the young generations. They are the authentic legacy of Amos Tutuola.



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***Making History,  
Transforming  
Language:  
Eavan Boland's  
Legacy in  
Ireland and  
Beyond***



n April 27, 2020, news from abroad came as a shock to me: Eavan Boland, one of Ireland's leading poets, died of a stroke at her home in Dublin. A month earlier I had lost my mother because of the COVID.

When referring to the stories of her foremothers, the importance of preserving female collective memory and the fragility of the oral tradition, Boland writes in "What We Lost": "The frail connections have been made and are broken" (*New Collected*, 187). The lines of this poem resonated powerfully in my mind at the precise moment of hearing of Boland's death, but in a different way: the *frail connections* were suddenly re-established brightly and clearly in front of me, in front of my own very eyes. My mum, Pilar, the most important woman in my life; my nurturer, my sustainer, my best friend. Eavan Boland, my most significant female referent in literature; not only the subject of my PhD, but the origin of my career, the starting point of my professional life. It is ironic how both important aspects of a person's life can tragically coincide in such a way; my personal identity, and the grounds of my professional life, both suddenly shattered within the space of a month of what seems to be a dreadful year for all, 2020. I have taken the liberty of starting this brief tribute to Eavan Boland in such a personal way because these are the kind of creative connections and associations that Boland was prone to establish in her critical essays, as evidenced in *Object Lessons* (1995) and *A Journey with Two Maps* (2011).

Many leading figures of the arts and politics have spoken publicly after Boland's death, and in all cases she is credited for being a pioneer, transforming the literary scene in Ireland in numerous ways. On the evening of her death, RTÉ delivered a special radio programme on her commemoration (*Eavan Boland Remembered* 2020), in which journalist Fintan O'Toole reminded us that Boland was very much part of the social change in Ireland in the last decades of the twentieth century. Although she belonged to a privileged, educational elite (as a daughter of an Irish diplomat), as a woman she had still to make a place for her own in literature. Like her great friend Mary Robinson (a human rights lawyer and the first woman president of Ireland), she used this advantage to open new doors for women.<sup>1</sup> Her achievement was that she managed to occupy such a socio-cultural space, becoming a great public figure in the country, as she got involved in the Irish Women's Liberation movement and actively struggled with the male dominated poetry scene in the Ireland of the 1970s and 80s.

Her first collection was *Twenty-Three Poems* (1962); this out-of-print "chapbook," in words of Boland, was published at the age of 18 (Villar-Argáiz 2007: 397). This was followed by an incessant career. *New Territory* (1967; considered by many as her first 'real' collection) came out five years later, and it is written under the strong influence of W. B. Yeats's project of cultural nationalism; Boland seems to internalize here, both formally and ideologically, the poetic conventions of the (Irish) past, and this implies, among other things, a strong defence of a sense of cultural coherence, unity and organicity, and a general concealment of her gendered identity as a poet. In her next collection, *The War Horse* (1975), Boland starts to break new ground, as women's voices and non-heroic figures are more clearly heard and the suburban landscape enters the terrain of lyrical poetry. This collection is marked by the eruption of the Troubles, as reflected in "Child of Our Time," a poem inspired by a photograph Boland saw in the *Irish Times* of a toddler being lifted from the debris of the Dublin and Monaghan bombings on May 17, 1974 (Allen-Randolph 2014: 50). This poem becomes a turning point in Boland's career. A week after publishing this poem, Boland writes a column for the *Irish Times* in which she expresses her disagreement with all dreams of cultural coherence, and the need to find peace and reconciliation in disunity and fragmentation. From then onwards, nationhood and femininity – two essential aspects of her identity – tend to be portrayed in her work in terms of dissent and dissolution. Her poetry begins to be dominated by an important concern: the need to challenge the traditional political poem written in Ireland, which was prevalent when she began writing poetry in the 1960s.

1980 saw the publication of two groundbreaking collections which would radically alter the panorama of Irish writing, opening new venues for women: *In Her Own Image* and *Night Feed*, both published in the now-extinguished feminist press Arlen House. In the former collection, Boland explores taboo topics at the time, bringing the woman's body to the foreground and challenging – at times with anger in diatribes – the patriarchal oppression of her cultural heritage. *Night Feed* offers a softer counterpart in her portrayal of femininity, with poems praising the Dublin suburb of Dundrum, the domestic interior landscape, and her ordinary life as a mother-writer raising her two daughters. In both collections, and in radical different ways, there is a powerful renegotiation of public and private spaces in poetry, as the communal voice which she assumed in earlier collections yields to a more private voice.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Irish poet Moya Cannon has also compared Boland's confrontation with the literary canon with Mary Robinson's challenges of the orthodoxy of Irish political life (2020).

<sup>2</sup> A distinctive characteristic of Boland is that she has always resisted the concept of "the public role" of the Irish poet, the "communal poet," in contrast to other fellow poets such as Paula Meehan, who claims to experience poetry as "communal art" (Boland and Meehan 2014: 107).

Her subsequent collections of poetry –*The Journey and Other Poems* (1986), *Outside History* (1990), *In a Time of Violence* (1994), *The Lost Land* (1998), *Code* (2001), *Domestic Violence* (2007) and *A Woman without a Country* (2014)<sup>3</sup>– testify what is Boland’s prevalent aesthetics until her very last work to date. Boland is rightly praised for breaking new ground in poetry and innovating the literary scene in ways no one had ever done before. As extensively analysed in criticism (see, for instance, Allen-Randolph 1993; 2014; Clutterbuck 1999; Collins 2015; Fogarty 1999; Fulford 2002; Frawley 2005; Hagen and Zelman 2004; Potts 2011; Villar-Argáiz 2007; 2008), her pioneering contribution to the artistic world includes the following: the rewriting of the traditional pastoral poem; the redefinition of the boundaries of the domestic in poetry; the reworking of the political poem outside “the centres of literary power” (Gilbert 2014: 81); and, above all, the legitimization as literary of the ordinary world of women, thus subverting traditional conceptions of femininity. Partly because of her sense of displacement as a child (she was brought up in London and later in New York, until she came back to Dublin in her adolescence), dislocation is a constant theme in her work, but so is the need to belong and to reclaim a place she could call her ‘own’. As Boland nostalgically writes in “The Lost Land”:

**I have two daughters.**

**They are all I ever wanted from the earth.**

**Or almost all.**

**I also wanted one piece of ground:**

**Once city trapped by hills. One urban river.  
An island in its element.**

**So I could say mine. My own.  
And mean it (*New Collected*, 260).**

Boland’s need to belong is also, simultaneously, accompanied by a powerful sense of fluidity. As her friend, the fellow poet Paula Meehan (2020), reminds us on a tribute available online, Boland loved water, and thus, she constantly refers to the fluidity of this element in her poetry. This is observed, for instance, in one of her most iconic poems, “Anna Livia”, where the changing face of Dublin’s river is praised:

**In the end  
Everything that burdened and distinguished me  
Will be lost in this:  
I was a voice (*New Collected*, 236).**

Boland began writing in a country which she defines as “intensively conservative and Catholic country, with its oppressive doctrines and its narrow outlook –especially on women’s lives” (Boland 2015: 303). On top of that, the literary culture she inherited was full of “fictive queens and national sibyls” (1995: 135). Her poetry insistently challenges this oppression of women in art and myth, and grants dignity to marginal figures existing on the edge of nationhood and history. One of her most quoted comments in this respect is when she mentions her struggle to unify the word ‘woman’ and the word ‘poet’, as these two words were “magnetically opposed”. “One word”, Boland continues, “was used to invoke collective nurture, the other to sketch out self-reflective individualism. Both states were necessary –that much the culture conceded– but they were oil and water and could not be mixed” (1995: xi). In the aforementioned poem “Anna Livia,” Boland disrupts such dichotomy, defending her right to occupy a common space in her poem, as both writer and object: “It has taken me/ All my strength to do this./// Becoming a figure in a poem./// Usurping a name and a theme” (*New Collected*, 232). Another famous quote from her, which is characteristic of her literary project, is the difference she establishes between official history and the silent past of actual women (“The rift between the past and history”; Boland 2011: 12), a past which she tries to rearticulate and revalue in her work. The intensity of private experience is, for Boland, the point of entry to enter a visionary space where the Other radically exposes itself, in all its powerlessness and finitude.

At this moment of uncertainty, in the midst of the current COVID-19 crisis which is affecting the whole planet and the pervasive threat of death and disease assailing us, Boland’s work is much more pressing than ever. Hers is a poetry which opens the possibility of genuine communication, of salvation and redemption, in moments of great exposure to death, finitude and vulnerability. Images of the Great Famine populate her work, as in her poem “The Making of an Irish Goddess”, where the scars of the speaker’s body are claimed to be “an accurate inscription/ of that agony:// the failed harvests, the fields rotting to the horizon” (*New Collected*, 179). It is through the fragility of the female body that an embodied, affective, and emotional relationship with the Other’s suffering can be established. “Outside History” (*New Collected*, 188)

<sup>3</sup> All these collections are published by Carcanet in Europe and by Norton in the United States.



illustrates Boland's typical ethical contemplation of silent ghosts from the past, as the poetic voice shares, identifies and sympathizes with their suffering:

**out of myth into history  
I move to be part of that ordeal  
whose darkness is**

**only now reaching me from those fields,  
those rivers, those roads clotted as  
firmaments with the dead.**

**How slowly they die  
as we kneel beside them, whisper in their ear.  
And we are too late. We are always too late.**

This poem is representative of Boland's movement from "an individual consciousness to a collective one" (Allen-Randolph 2014: 105), as the lyric, personal I in the initial lines gradually gets dissolved into a communal 'we'.<sup>4</sup> But this communal pronoun is associated in her work with a suffering past, a past which is (paradoxically) resilient and persistent because of –and not in spite of– its powerlessness and fragility. Such radical exposure to the Other's suffering is an ethical act for Boland. In the process, her poetic voices are not authoritarian, but powerless. Boland is not willing to speak on behalf. In her much quoted poem "The Journey," for instance, the speaker descends into the Underworld; after witnessing the death of children in the past because of all sorts of diseases and after sympathizing with their mothers' anguish, she pleads Sappho "let me be/ let me be at least their witness" (*New Collected*, 149), but she is immediately told that "what you have seen is beyond speech,/ beyond song, only not beyond love" (*ibid.*). *Love*. The word resounds now more powerfully than ever. *Love*. This is truly the only thing that is verified, that survives in the end, that grants redemption and salvation. Boland's encounters with the suffering Others are encounters of *love*, a *love beyond language*, *beyond song*. Dismantling the ego's authority, Boland experiences the speechlessness of victims in the past; by sharing their silence, she empathizes more truly with their pain. How much of this resonates today, with the current situation of confinement, death, and solitude we are all experiencing. But love, Boland powerfully postulates, survives in such moments of tragedy, and this is the resilience that she celebrates in her work. In one of her most beautiful poems, "Quarantine," Boland recalls the death of a couple in 1847, because "of cold. Of hunger. Of the toxins of a whole century". As they

were found dead in the morning, "her feet were held against his breastbone./ The last heat of his flesh was his last gift to her" (*New Collected*, 282). Love outlives death, Boland implies, as she recalls the affective bonds of Famine victims and how they supported each other in such moments of distress.

Boland's ethical commitment to the past is a constant in her work and is also accompanied by one aspect of her personality in real life, which is singled out by fellow poet Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin: her tenacity and "willingness to insist to say something again in case we did not know how important it was" (*Eavan Boland Remembered* 2020). Other attributes that people who met her tend to use when talking about Boland are "dignified," "respectful", and "persistent in the craft." She never stopped being a teacher. Ever since the 1990s, she was Professor of Creative Writing at Stanford University, California, and thus she commuted between the States and Ireland. As a teacher, she was well known for her vigour and rigour (John O'Donnell in *Eavan Boland Remembered* 2020; Dorgan 2020). As a poet, she was aware of being a senior voice, and she exercised this authority rightfully but also generously. For the last three years, Boland has been Editor of *Poetry Ireland Review* and she left a huge impact in the people she worked with. Maureen Kennelly, newly appointed director of the Arts Council and former director of Poetry Ireland, has praised her modesty and generosity (*Eavan Boland Remembered* 2020). As she claims in the RTÉ radio programme on the evening of her death, Boland elevated Poetry Ireland to new heights; and encouraged the next generation of new voices; welcoming new ideas forward and opening up the gates for new writers. Indeed, in the 2018 Editorial Introduction to the 126 issue of *Poetry Ireland Review*, she enthusiastically welcomed new poetic trends in Ireland, claiming that "New energies have come to the threshold of an old art", enriching the artistic scene with "The democratic sparkle of spoken word platforms, the intensity of interdisciplinary collaborations where music and language meet", and "the power of performance". Boland refuted the view of poetry as an elite form. She also defended poetry as important in life, by making the powerful intellectual case that this genre will always have a "vertical audience" which goes back in centuries, as opposed to the "horizontal audience" of popular literature (Olivia O'Leary in *Eavan Boland Remembered* 2020).

As I write this, Eavan Boland's legacy is well secure and will be further consolidated by the posthumous publication in autumn 2020 of her collection *The Historians* (Norton in USA and Carcanet in Europe). As Sinéad Gleeson recently claimed, Boland's achievement as a poet, and the wide audience she

<sup>4</sup> For a recent exploration of Boland's renegotiation of private and public spaces, envisioning new forms of community in Irish poetry, see Villar-Argáiz (2020).

has acquired over the years, stems from the fact that readers easily find “moments of recognition” in her work (*Eavan Boland Remembered*, 2020) and it is on account of the importance of this personal encounter with the poetry itself –as active, engaging readers– that I would like to finish this brief essay in memory of Boland. Hers was the first poetry by a woman writer I ever read with some sense of enthusiasm. This happened on my third year of the degree of English, in 1998, as an Erasmus student in NUI, Galway. With shock and excitement, I read poems about masturbation, menstruation, anorexia, and mastectomy. These were poems of great physicality, which broke the silencing around sexuality and the female body; I had never read anything so powerful before. Once back at the University of Granada, I was determined to do my PhD on her work. But I had three years ahead of me; I still needed to finish my degree and of course, do the Masters. During this time, however, I initiated my contact with Boland herself. Her birthday coincided with mine; September 24; and thus, this was the perfect excuse to send her birthday greetings through email, year after year, on four consecutive occasions (with no response on her behalf, of course). It was not until I seriously began working on her poetry, and I reached the ‘Ecuador’ of my PhD, that I sent her an email to formally arrange a meeting. To my surprise, she accepted, and we arranged to meet in the afternoon of June 18, 2004, at a hotel in Dublin’s financial district. What I initially conceived as a half-an-hour interview turned out to be a two hour conversation, and one of my most memorable moments in academic life.

My personal experience in this initial encounter could be summarized in these words by poet Gabrielle Calvocoressi (2020), who describes Boland as follows, in her personal tribute after her death:

**She was beautiful and complicated and fierce and brilliant and loyal and harsh and could see through people in a minute. Could see people for their ambition and could see talent from a long way away. And she liked a combination of ambition and talent. She was a worker. She was not a magician.**

She was *beautiful* indeed; a beauty sustained by her internal dignity, by her brilliance (she knew how *brilliant* she was) and by her self-assurance, which could be rather intimidating (it was highly intimidating for me, at least). *Complicated* and *fierce*, as well. My long questions (also complicated, far-fetched, carefully thought) were sometimes followed by paused moments of silence and by that “cold stare” which some interviewers of Boland

have commented upon.<sup>5</sup> I brought some gifts from Spain (mostly cultural, literary rarities that took me some time to find; among them an old, rare illustrated edition of Edgar Degas’ work, whom she deeply admired), but she did not open them; she wanted instead to get straight to the point, and so we ordered a tea and started the interview. Calvocoressi’s description of Boland as *loyal* also applies to my experience of her. She was *loyal* to me ... She knew how to read through my insecurity and she knew how to appreciate my talent, even before I appreciated –or valued– it myself. She could see my ambition as well, and she knew I had a career in mind. During the interview, she was patient with me, as my anxiety was increasing with the thought that my old tape recorder was not close enough, recording her words properly. And this *loyalty* was maintained throughout the years as I sent her occasional emails, which she duly and promptly responded. She believed in me, in my research, and if she disagreed, she said that openly, and sometimes abruptly and without anaesthesia. This was at least my experience, when she granted me a second interview in 2011 (this time through email exchanges), on occasion of her 50<sup>th</sup> year literary anniversary. This honesty is a quality praised by fellow poets Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin and Paul Muldoon. As the latter claims, “She said exactly what she thought”; as Ní Chuilleanáin adds, she always waited for the right moment to speak, and it was that “firmness” which “stood her in good stead” (*Eavan Boland Remembered* 2020).

After meeting Eavan Boland for the first time in 2004, Ireland, and particularly Dublin, unequivocally changed for me. I could see traces of her poetry everywhere: in the waters of the River Liffey, as I crossed its bridges, in every twilight setting, in every sunset, in the Dublin mountains, as I passed through Dundrum or saw traffic signs with those directions. Boland has always been a writer with great attachment to Ireland. My journeys on the train to Cork, Galway or Limerick, where I spent summers of intensive research, were spent by reading and underlining the essays of *Object Lessons*, her iconic *Biographia Literaria*, and one of the cornerstones in Irish women’s writing. I could meet her a few times afterwards, in coffee shops or literary readings; but mostly, and above all, her presence was vivid for me through the conversations I had with other poets in Ireland: Paula Meehan, Theo Dorgan (both great friends of Boland), Gerry Murphy, Mary O’Donnell, Pat Boran, Colette Bryce, and a long list of writers ... She certainly left no one indifferent in Ireland, and every poetic conversation sooner or later touched on her name.

In June 2007, Boland was invited to introduce Adrienne Rich at the Lesbian Lives XIV Internal Symposium in University College Dublin, which I was attending. My

<sup>4</sup> As the presenter of the RTÉ radio programme which was held on occasion of her death, on the evening of April 27, claims: “I remember interviewing her. You needed to know what you were going to ask and you needed to know why you were asking it”. Boland’s “interviewee stare”, “that cold stare”, is also commented by journalist Olivia O’Leary (*Eavan Boland Remembered* 2020).

first book on Eavan Boland had just been published and was being informally launched at that conference. Because of health issues, Rich cancelled at the last minute; the organizers only knew that two days in advance, and Boland generously offered to take her place and deliver the keynote instead. The organizers asked me, at the very last minute, to introduce Boland's plenary. On that occasion, I remembered saying, among other platitudes, that "Irish poetry would be incomplete without her presence", inspired as I was by reading an essay from Professor Anne Fogarty. These lines resonate even more powerfully now, and they go beyond the mere clichéd. Any course on Irish poetry (not necessarily 'contemporary') has to necessarily include the name of Eavan Boland or, otherwise, it would be utterly inaccurate.

When later in life I became a mother, my personal encounters with Boland became less frequent, although we never lost touch. And in personal, most intimate ways, she began to have a real, genuine presence in my life. My literary empathy with her work increased as I returned to her poems in *Night Feed*, finding versions of my new self in her images of tender, confused maternity, suburban windows and night feeds. This connection with her work has never left me in years, and was

dramatically exposed with this particular tragic moment in my life with which I opened this essay: the death of my mother on March 19, 2020. On the previous day, I received the dreadful phone call I was expecting. As I took my car –blinded by tears, passing through empty, ghostly roads, in a city already besieged by confinement and quarantine– lines of a poem by Boland, this time "And Soul", resonated again in my mind so powerfully that I almost heard it as a murmuring prayer. This poem originated from a similar human experience, as Boland took her car to visit her dying mother. My mind was also "unreliable in grief", driving on "through lilacs dripping blackly", on my way "to pay / the tribute of a daughter", a necessary "journey" for all daughters, for all mothers (Boland 2007: 35-36). These are the kind of emotional connections that Boland's work wonderfully enables, and the ones that will allow her poetry to survive, generation after generation. April 27, 2020, was a sad day for Ireland, for literature in general, for all the admirers of her work. As Boland claims in one of her poems from her latest collection to date, *A Woman without a Country* (2014: 66), "The first loss is through history./ The final one is through language". Dear Ms Boland (as I used to call her in my twenties): Your presence will never be lost; you have made history; you have transformed language ... May you rest in peace.



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UNED

***The  
EMO-FUNDETT  
International  
Project on  
Language  
and Emotion***



## ***FFI2013-47792-C2-I-P - EMotion and language 'at work': The discursive emotive/evaluative FUNCTION in Different Texts and contexts within corporaTe and institutional work***

**M**y good friend Antonio Ballesteros, Secretary of AEDEAN, has asked me to write about the EMO-FUNDETT project in this issue of *Nexus*, an invitation that I have accepted with pleasure, not only because I am always happy to collaborate with him and with *Nexus*, but also because this has been one of the most fecund and successful projects I have conducted so far.

EMO-FUNDETT was a coordinated project which included the work and joint efforts of 32 experts from 14 universities all over the world: UNED, Universidad de Alcalá, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Universidad Politécnica de Madrid, Universidad de Alicante, Universidad de Málaga, Universidad de Valencia, Universidad CEU San Pablo, King's College London (U.K.), University of Liverpool (U.K.), Texas A&M University (U.S.A.), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Netherlands), and RMIT University (Melbourne, Australia). Even though the official termination date of the project was June 30<sup>th</sup> 2018, many of us continue working on and exploring the intricacies of human emotion in language and discourse, an area which is found within the field of linguistic discourse-pragmatic studies.

In our research we mainly took a functional perspective and, in particular, we focused on the study of the emotive function of language and its relationship with the evaluative function. The project was conceived as a sequel to the FUNDETT project (**FUN**ctions of Language. **E**valuation in **D**ifferent **T**ext **T**ypes - FFI2009-7308), which I had also conducted, and during which we had observed that the Affect/Emotion part of evaluation systems in language had not been sufficiently developed or studied by researchers in general. We thus thought it was necessary to look into this aspect in more depth, so that we would be able to scrutinize the different components and manifestations of emotion in discourse, and in corporate/institutional discourse in particular. Consequently, we applied for a new project, this time focused on emotion more than on evaluation, and we were fortunate to receive a new grant from the Spanish *Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad* (MINECO), which officially started on 1 January 2014. This new project was now a coordinated endeavor which included two subprojects: EMO-FUNDETT EMOTION and EMO-FUNDETT PERSUASION.

Among other things, our research attempted to show that, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, interest in human emotion no longer equates to unscientific speculation. On the contrary, we joined the ranks of the many scholars who are now

paying serious attention to the human capacity to express emotions and thus giving rigorous explanations of its various manifestations, including the linguistic-discursive one. We proudly became part of what has been called the 'emotional turn' in present-day humanistic studies. And even though our focus was on language and discourse, we took an interdisciplinary approach, for emotion is a multifarious phenomenon whose functions in language are undoubtedly enlightened by such other disciplines as psychology, neurology, or communication studies. We thus were able to explore not only how emotion manifests at different linguistic levels, but also how it relates to aspects such as linguistic appraisal, emotional intelligence, social practices, swearing or humor, as well as covering its occurrence in various genres, such as journalistic or scientific discourse. We aimed at contributing to an emerging interdisciplinary field which could be labeled "emotionology", transcending previous linguistic work and providing an updated characterization of how emotion functions in human discourse.

Our main initial concern was to look into the emotive function as realized and managed by individuals and groups in (both institutional and corporate) work environments, but we also focused on further types of discursive environments as we progressed in our research work. In a tight relation with the coordinating project, the EMO-FUNDETT PERSUASION subproject explored mainly the persuasive function of language and its connection with the emotive function, also within work environments. Our investigations aimed to clarify the different discursive expressions of both the emotive and persuasive functions of language as reflections of a given stance, as well as to shed light on the relationship between these functions and some important linguistic and cognitive variables affecting human communication and cognition (e.g. *expectations* and their relation to marked and unmarked categories of language).

We thus explored the expression of emotion at the different levels of linguistic description (phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical, semantic, pragmatic), and made some incursions into interdisciplinary work, such as the study of the relationship between the expression of emotion and the so-called 'emotional intelligence'. Our general hypothesis in this respect emerged from the premise that the expression of emotion is somehow related to the emotional intelligence of the speaker, which is in turn directly related to her performance at the workplace. The results showed that indeed the discourse strategies used for the expression of emotion (e.g. the use of humor and irony, or the use of (im)politeness strategies, among

many others) can influence the more or less productive performance of speakers within their work environment.

In order to spread our findings and share scholarship with other researchers on the topic, the EMO-FUNDETT research group organized the *International Conference on Language and Emotion* in November 2016, where seven plenary speakers and more than 120 other scholars presented their work and findings on different aspects of the expression of emotion in discourse. Two other valuable spin-offs of the project were:

**1.** The design and creation of two MOOCs (Massive On-line Open Courses) on language and emotion which could serve as a guide for linguists and researchers, but also for people interested in improving their communication skills (at their workplace or in life in general) by managing the use of emotive-evaluative-persuasive discourse strategies. The 50 videos included in these MOOCs (*Language and Emotion 'at work' I* and *Language and Emotion 'at work' II*) can be seen at: <https://canal.uned.es/video/5a6f39f6b111f39448b456a>

**2.** The publication of many scientific articles in impact journals showing the results of research, and especially, the publication of the volume entitled *Emotion in Discourse* (Mackenzie & Alba-Juez 2019). The volume is interdisciplinary in nature and uses input not only from linguistics and discourse studies, but also from psychology, neurology, and communication studies. It includes 4 thematic sections, providing a cohesive approach to the various workings of the expression of emotion in discourse. Section 1 examines how emotion is intertwined with linguistic structures, especially those of syntax and the lexicon, forming an integral part of the use of language in interaction. Section 2 is devoted to pragmatics and emotion, scrutinizing the impact of emotions in various real-life situations, such as phatic communication on the Internet, the workings of humor and conviviality in conversation, or the expression of anger in certain situations. Section 3 focuses on interdisciplinary relations of linguistics, pragmatics and psychology, presenting results of research concerning the relationship between emotional intelligence and pragmatic competence, or that between linguistic ability and the capacity to recognize emotions. It also presents a proposal for refinement of the Appraisal model by drawing on insights from psychological emotion

theories. Finally, Section 4 is concerned with the study of emotion in different discourse types—in particular scientific and journalistic discourse—as well as its social effects.

Indeed, one of the main concerns of our research group was to work on the application of the theoretical findings to concrete social issues, so as to gain knowledge about the way in which the uses and strategies of the discourse of emotion influence aspects such as business or institutional leadership. Therefore, the description of the phenomenon under study was carried out by means of the multimodal analysis of real texts and discursive situations related to working environments in which mainly English and/or Spanish was spoken (web pages, dialogues, e-mail, videos, etc.), with a special emphasis on so-called *e-communication*, given the great impact of the new technologies on today's global society.

Even though the government funding for this Project has come to an end, as I mentioned at the beginning of this article some of us keep on doing research on this captivating topic, exploring aspects such as the exploitation of human emotion in so-called 'fake news' (Alba-Juez & Mackenzie, 2019), the *sociopragmatics* (in the sense given to the word by Leech 1983, 2014) of emotion (Alba-Juez, forthcoming) or the way in which emotion is expressed and managed in intercultural exchanges. We are also considering further investigation with multimodal corpora, as well as an examination of some of the new discourse types emerging in the social networks or digital media, including so-called *hate speech*, embracing affective practices related to phenomena such as racism, sexism, gender identity or any other kind of discriminatory social behavior.

The topic of language and emotion is as fascinating as it is boundless, and for that reason there is still much work to be done before reaching a profound comprehension of the phenomenon. Our new aims include, among other things, to engage in more experimental and/or interdisciplinary studies in which disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, sociology, computer science or philosophy could blend their findings, and in this way be able to paint a more complete picture of the workings of emotion in discourse. Emotion is a dynamic intersubjective phenomenon which affects human behavior in all its manifestations, and as such, I firmly believe that it should be given well-deserved attention and value. I hope the findings of the EMO-FUNDETT project have inspired and will continue to inspire other researchers to get involved in such an endeavor.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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# ***Ecocriticism and Asian American Literature. Gold Mountains, Weedflowers and Murky Globes***

**Begoña Simal-González**

London: Palgrave Macmillan. 2020. 292 pp. ISBN: 978-3-030.35617-0

## ***Introducción***

**L**a relación entre el ser humano y la naturaleza está atravesando un proceso de cambio que empezó hace décadas, continuando hasta nuestros días. Dicha relación siempre ha sido complicada de entender, así como de explicar, y puede que esas palabras tengan más sentido ahora que nunca. Quizá hace un año nadie hubiera entendido la necesidad de plasmar en el campo literario cómo la humanidad alteró paisajes, superficies, y cómo usó dichos recursos para su propio beneficio sin pararse a pensar demasiado en las consecuencias de sus actos. Dichos actos pueden verse hoy en día debido a la tristemente conocida pandemia mundial que atravesamos y que nos ha obligado a confinarnos en nuestros hogares. No obstante, estamos siendo testigos al mismo tiempo de un proceso de sanación por parte del planeta debido a que la ausencia de vida humana le ha dado cierto respiro para recuperarse. Y esto es por

lo que un (cada vez más) extenso número de autores concienciados con la problemática relación humano-naturaleza decidieron reflejar en sus obras las causas y consecuencias de dicha interacción. Consecuencias que tuvieron lugar no solo a nivel de la superficie terrestre, sino a nivel social e histórico.

La (relativamente nueva) palabra “ecocrítica” ha sido definida por el autor Lawrence Buell en su libro *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* (2005) como “the relationship between literature and the environment conducted in a spirit of commitment to environmentalist praxis” (2005: 430), así como conjunto de estudios ecológicos que, según Laurence Coupe, examina “the relationship between human and non-human life as represented in literary texts and which theorizes about the place of literature in the struggle against environmental

destruction” (Coupe 2000: 302). La ecocrítica milita en la literatura del ecologismo, teniendo como fin no solo evitar el deterioro de nuestro ecosistema, sino entender dicho ecosistema y cómo la interacción del ser humano ha provocado que la sociedad evolucione paralelamente a la naturaleza, estableciéndose una suerte de sinergia entre ambas.

Esto es lo que nos refleja Begoña Simal-González en su libro *Ecocriticism and Asian American Literature. Gold Mountains, Weedflowers and Murky Globes* (2020), donde, mediante el análisis de un muy diverso número de obras (aunque por motivos de espacio resultaría imposible analizar todas) de autores de origen asiático, realizando una conexión entre el argumento de dichas obras y las desafortunadas circunstancias a las que en ocasiones se vieron sometidos inmigrantes de origen asiático que, o bien llegaron a los Estados Unidos con el fin de buscar una vida diferente, o fueron enviados como prisioneros tras numerosos eventos acaecidos durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial. El libro está dividido con acierto en varias secciones que analizan con detalle diferentes aspectos de la interacción entre el ser humano y la naturaleza, ofreciendo un profundo y detallado análisis del contexto sociocultural de las diferentes etapas que abarcan las obras en cuestión, culminando cada capítulo con un apéndice de notas aclaratorias que resultan de una inestimable ayuda para poder entender completamente el análisis de dichas obras. Las secciones están perfectamente cohesionadas, siguiendo un orden lógico de los acontecimientos sociales, así como de las obras que se analizan. La introducción comienza de manera directa, recordando el trágico suceso del barco *Prestige* en las costas gallegas. Un inicio tan directo ayuda al lector a meterse de lleno en el libro, prometiéndole un viaje en el mundo de la ecocrítica asiático-norteamericana. Un viaje que permite entender mucho mejor nuestra relación con la naturaleza y que no deja indiferente a nadie.

## **Diferentes prismas de una misma realidad**

La primera parte del libro nos habla de la similitud que la propaganda estadounidense estableció entre los inmigrantes de origen chino y los animales, con fines racistas, para que la población sintiera cierto miedo y repulsa hacia ellos, al igual que en otras épocas de la historia se hizo con la raza afroamericana, comparándola con las bestias. Para esta parte, la autora hace uso de la figura y obras de Edith Eaton, una escritora nacionalizada británica, pero cuya madre procedía de Shanghái. Aunque puede no resultar curioso que el pseudónimo de Edith Eaton fuera Sui Sin Far, ya que muchos escritores a lo largo de los años han optado por utilizar un nombre diferente a la hora de firmar sus obras, como bien afirma la autora, ella lo hizo “in order to highlight the maternal Chinese heritage” (Simal 2020: 56). Tal y como la autora señala, las obras de

Eaton nos muestran una comunidad china que es vista como una ramificación sub-humana de la evolución, careciendo de derechos y a menudo comparada con animales de granja o incluso con ratas. Este proceso de “naturalización” acerca al ser humano con la naturaleza, pero totalmente apartado de cualquier elemento onírico o majestuoso que pudiera tener *per se*, sino que lo rebaja a un aspecto más denigrante mediante una estrategia de racialización y animalización. Sin embargo, Simal nos cuenta cómo Eaton, muy sabiamente, supo jugar a su favor, incluyendo en sus obras un elemento natural siempre identificado con el buen gusto y la pureza: las flores, adaptando ciertas costumbres japonesas que, por otra parte, eran bien recibidas por la comunidad estadounidense. En esta parte del libro, la autora no solo encuentra la manera perfecta de relacionar las lamentables condiciones que inmigrantes procedentes de lo que ahora conocemos como el gigante asiático encontraron en la otra punta del mundo, sino que su extenso estudio y los múltiples detalles aportados para tal fin convierten esta sección en una ventana a una realidad que en ocasiones aún sigue vigente.

En lo que puede entenderse como la segunda parte del libro, la autora analiza la relación entre estos inmigrantes con el terreno mismo. En esta parte he escogido dos de las obras que he considerado más relevantes: *China Men* (1980), de Maxine Hong Kingston, y *Farewell to Manzanar* (1973), de Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston. Simal analiza ambas narraciones desde un punto de vista siempre en contacto con la naturaleza. La autora no se aleja de ese discurso ecológico que mantiene a los personajes de las novelas en constante contacto con la naturaleza y el ambiente que les rodea, llegando a ejercer una influencia que resulta bilateral. El detalle con el que Begoña Simal analiza dichas obras nos hace ser capaces de entender perfectamente esta interacción entre lo humano y lo no humano. Simal nos presenta un detallado estudio, comparando diversas obras en las que los personajes, al igual que sus homólogos reales en la sociedad occidental, aprenden a conversar con la naturaleza que les rodea, creando una suerte de diálogo silencioso que les conecta con lo más profundo de las entrañas de la tierra. No solo aprenden a cuidar plantas, jardines o flores, sino que aprenden a *sentir* dichos elementos, elevándolos a un plano humano en el que pueden apreciar su pulso, su respiración o incluso su dolor, creando una empatía y una ética para con el entorno natural que les rodea. Asimismo, Simal realiza un nuevo análisis, explicando esta interacción desde una perspectiva diferente, examinando cómo ciertos prisioneros que fueron confinados en el campo de concentración Manzanar intentaron cambiar la percepción de desolación que puede suponer vivir rodeado de desierto, intentando adaptarse a ese paisaje, transformándolo en lo más parecido a un vergel. La autora lleva a cabo un análisis exhaustivo, minucioso, de un sentimiento de empatía para con el paisaje mediante el uso de fuentes primarias y secundarias muy bien escogidas que saben reflejar a la perfección la necesidad de establecer un diálogo con la naturaleza para protegerla tanto a ella como a nosotros mismos.



## Conclusión

Si bien el campo de la ecocrítica nos era desconocido hace aproximadamente dos décadas, ahora podemos aseverar que muchos autores han aportado su grano de arena para crear un sentimiento de protección y comprensión de la vida que nos rodea, bajándonos de nuestro pedestal antropocentrista para crear un escenario en el que humanos y naturaleza interactúan por un bien común. Sin embargo, el trabajo de Begoña Simal no solo analiza, sino que hace al lector participe de los trabajos analizados. Simal invita al investigador a continuar esta línea de estudio. No solo arroja una nueva perspectiva a un campo de estudio aún por crecer, sino que abre la puerta a un sinfín de posibles futuros trabajos de investigación que acerquen un poco más tanto al lector avanzado como al investigador amateur al campo de los “estudios verdes”. Considero que la estructura del libro resulta de gran ayuda para entender esta relación, ya que

la autora ha sabido clasificar y organizar cada una de las perspectivas que ha estudiado y que, nuevamente, resulta imposible de analizar detenidamente debido al espacio disponible. Teniendo todos estos factores en cuenta, podemos afirmar con toda confianza que este trabajo ejerce la doble función de un muy logrado trabajo académico y una herramienta para entender mejor, tanto a nivel literario como social, la naturaleza que nos circunda, invitando a investigadores a ampliar este campo académico y arrojando nuevos enfoques y perspectivas. *The Future of Environmental Criticism: Environmental Crisis and Literary Imagination* no solo es el resultado de una ardua y extensa investigación; es una guía, una ventana a la realidad. Siempre con las fuentes primarias y secundarias como elemento principal, Begoña Simal nos abre los ojos a una realidad que nos ayuda a entender nuestra relación con el medio ambiente. Es, por tanto, un excelente trabajo en que naturaleza y resiliencia se fusionan para no dejar indiferente al lector.



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BOOK REVIEWS

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ANTONIO BALLESTEROS GONZÁLEZ  
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***Violencias simbólicas  
y otras agresiones  
corporales en  
la fotografía  
contemporánea  
realizada por mujeres:  
De la mirada masculina  
a la acción crítica***

**Máximo Aláez Corral**

2018. Palma de Mallorca: Edicions de la Universitat de les Illes-Balears (Col·lecció Estudis de Violència de Gènere). 166 pp. ISBN: 978-84.8384-387-1

La colección Estudios de Violència de Gènere de la Universitat de les Illes-Balears viene desarrollando desde su fundación una excelente labor mediante la publicación de valiosos ensayos de índole académica acerca de la lamentable lacra de la violencia de género desde diferentes ángulos y puntos de vista sociales y artísticos, bajo la eficaz supervisión de su directora, la Dra. Marta Fernández Morales. La mayoría de dichas aportaciones sobrepasa el ámbito de mis conocimientos especializados y mis intereses académicos, encauzados hacia el análisis de la violencia de género en el ámbito literario y cultural, como prueba mi participación como docente en asignaturas impartidas junto a dos colegas en sendos másteres de la UNED: “Literatura y Violencia de Género”, dentro del “Máster en Estudios Literarios y Culturales Ingleses y su Proyección Social”, y “Cultura y Violencia de Género”, encuadrada en el “Máster en Estudios de Género”, de carácter interdisciplinar. Si bien la representación artística de la violencia de género había sido tratada en nuestro ámbito académico, entre otros exponentes, en la obra colectiva *El sustrato cultural de la violencia de género. Literatura, arte, cine y videojuegos*, editada por Ángeles de la Concha (2010), el libro de Máximo Aláez que reseño —al igual que la excelente monografía que publicó con anterioridad sobre *Cuerpos reales/cuerpos figurados: algunas reflexiones en torno a la representación artística feminista y angloamericana del cuerpo femenino* (2011)— ha venido a llenar una laguna dentro de los estudios culturales de violencia de género en nuestro país, centrándose en cuestiones de índole artística y, muy especialmente, en el campo de la fotografía, relativamente poco estudiado hasta la fecha desde la citada perspectiva.

En la introducción general a la obra, Aláez se refiere a “Convertir la violencia en expresión artística, o bien utilizar el arte como instrumento para denunciar la violencia”, como “los dos parámetros principales de actuación entre los que oscilan buena parte de las prácticas artísticas realizadas desde la segunda mitad del siglo veinte, a lo largo y ancho del arte occidental” (8). Indudablemente, la primera tendencia es tan antigua como la propia historia de las representaciones artísticas; la segunda, sin embargo, ha venido alcanzando una creciente relevancia a partir sobre todo del instante que señala el autor. Por otro lado, Aláez defiende —y demuestra a través de su estudio— que existe una diferencia destacable entre la representación de la violencia sobre el cuerpo llevada a cabo por artistas varones y la efectuada por artistas mujeres, una cuestión de gran calado. Partiendo de la noción de “performatividad” tomada de Judith Butler, así como de las categorías de “actos performativos” de John L. Austin, el autor señala que “Si admitimos la construcción cultural y social del género, así como del sujeto, podemos entender la violencia de género como una derivación (o concreción) de determinados actos performativos encaminados a marcar los papeles y los espacios de cada género, allí donde uno de ellos se escapa o se desvía de la norma” (9). El sustento teórico de la investigación de Aláez se fundamenta también en Pierre Bourdieu y su análisis de la violencia simbólica, así como en las teorías de Ervin Goffman sobre las discriminaciones de género en la publicidad, las de Laura Mulvey y John

Berger sobre la representación del cuerpo femenino en el arte occidental, las de Susan Sontag y Roland Barthes específicamente sobre la fotografía, y las de Julia Kristeva y Hal Foster acerca de lo abyecto, vinculando este término a la violencia que ejerce la mirada del objeto por parte del sujeto, que aquí aparece vinculado al patriarcado dominante.

Con todo, y aunque sustenta su argumentación en él, Aláez trasciende este entramado teórico para adentrarse con su propia mirada, de manera profundamente innovadora y original, además de eminentemente práctica, en las estrategias de las que se sirven o se han servido algunas artistas de la cámara como Ana Mendieta, Cindy Sherman y Nan Goldin para representar la violencia contra las mujeres. La elección no es azarosa: las tres artistas citadas son exponentes señeros de la estética de la *performance* y/o de la esfera de la fotografía norteamericana contemporánea, y comparten su deseo de plasmar el cuerpo femenino sometido a agresiones y violencias de variada especie. En este sentido, Aláez se embarca en un fascinante —a la par que sobrecogedor e impactante— peregrinaje a través de las obras de las artistas objeto de estudio.

De Ana Mendieta, artífice de origen cubano fallecida en Nueva York en 1985, se ocupa la primera parte del libro, centrándose fundamentalmente en la *performance* fotográfica titulada *Rape Scene* (1973), en la que, como indica su título, se representa de manera descarnada la violación, a la que siguió el posterior asesinato, de una joven estudiante en el campus de la Universidad de Iowa. Dejando en un segundo plano la preocupación de Mendieta por reflejar las analogías que se producen entre el cuerpo femenino y el entorno natural, Aláez aborda, entre otros aspectos, la conmoción producida por *Rape Scene*, uno de cuyos objetivos es el de sacudir la conciencia del/a espectador/a mediante la imagen violenta de la agresión contra un cuerpo femenino que se muestra desnudo a la par que desprovisto de las habituales connotaciones eróticas con las que se lo suele asociar. El autor quintaesencia oportunamente las características esenciales de las *performances* y fotografías de la artista cubanoamericana:

**La obra de Mendieta atiende estas cuestiones —la violencia de la mirada, la pasividad/permisividad social respecto de la agresión de género, el sexismo y la discriminación en la cultura visual contemporánea— desde el compromiso personal con la crítica de la violencia, pero sin hacer de la obra una plataforma para la reivindicación activista (33).**

La artista, como describe Aláez con agudeza, “acerca tanto el cuerpo como la sangre —y ambos pertenecen a una mujer de carne y hueso, no a una fantasía masculina convertida en imagen— a los ojos y la sensibilidad del/de la espectador/a” (33).

En el segundo capítulo de su ensayo, Aláez aborda el análisis de la obra fotográfica de Cindy Sherman, nacida en New Jersey en 1954, una de las artistas más reconocidas de la

contemporaneidad merced a su trabajo como fotógrafa y directora cinematográfica; baste decir que su obra se exhibió durante más de tres décadas en el prestigioso MoMA de Nueva York. El autor lleva a cabo un análisis diacrónico de la trayectoria de Sherman, partiendo de las imágenes de mujeres violentadas, coaccionadas y amedrentadas que derriban y desconstruyen los paradigmas asociados al cine clásico de Hollywood, para prestar atención después a las obras de la década de 1980, donde, como acertadamente subraya Aláez, se produce un mayor énfasis sobre lo grotesco y lo abyecto. En la obra de Sherman el foco se va tornando gradualmente hacia la mirada del espectador, convirtiéndolo de alguna manera en cómplice de la representación fotográfica. Al mismo tiempo, incluso la imagen de la artista, en un proceso paulatino de abstracción, va haciéndose menos nítida hasta llegar a difuminarse y desaparecer por completo, en consonancia con las teorías de destacados pensadores de la posmodernidad como Roland Barthes o Michel Foucault, entre otros. Aláez examina con detenimiento y seducción la función del cuerpo, la violencia y el simulacro en la obra de Sherman, centrándose en las vertientes estética y política de la mirada en *Rear Screen Projections* y *Centerfolds*, para pasar después a analizar lo que él denomina “la máscara abyecta” en obras como *Disasters*, *Sex Pictures* y otras agresiones corporales.

Por último, el autor de este revelador ensayo enfoca su objetivo sobre otra gran artista en un capítulo titulado “El acto fotográfico como acto corporal. Gramáticas de la violencia y la sexualidad en la fotografía de Nan Goldin”, de quien analiza lo que denomina “El difícil diálogo entre el cuerpo agredido y la mirada afectiva” y “La huella del cuerpo en el espejo y la estética del sexo”. Goldin (nacida en Washington 1953) es uno de los grandes nombres del panorama contracultural estadounidense, especialmente en lo que respecta a la Nueva York de los años 70 y 80 del siglo XX. En su obra observa Aláez el fundamento “en una interpretación de las representaciones corporales determinada por su significado emocional, de tal manera que lo artístico y lo vital, a diferencia de las fotografías de Cindy Sherman, tienden a unirse e identificarse de manera indisoluble” (14). La fusión de ambas facetas se percibe en las imágenes de Goldin que reflejan la violencia, en las que domina la emoción sin la intermediación de simulaciones ni escenificaciones de carácter más artificioso o velado, si bien Aláez demuestra con sagacidad que dicho recurso es, paradójicamente, más aparente que real. El autor traza con maestría la trayectoria de la artista, incidiendo en las diferentes etapas de su producción, enlazada por la asociación que establece entre la violencia, el sexo y la vida marginal, concediendo mayor relevancia a los factores estéticos que proyectan las imágenes en la fase más reciente de su obra. Al contrario que Sherman, Goldin exhibe en sus fotografías elementos autobiográficos y personales, siendo su figura el foco sobre el que pivota el mundo que refleja, como puede observarse en *The Devil's Playground* o *The Ballad of Sexual Dependency*.

La disparidad de la obra de las tres artistas analizadas — bajo el común denominador de la preocupación mostrada

por la representación del cuerpo femenino maltratado, dañado, o sujeto a diferentes formas de opresión— contribuye a la riqueza referencial del libro de Aláez, quien culmina su perspicaz e iluminadora exposición con unas conclusiones coherentes y significativas y con una valiosa bibliografía de obras citadas tras cumplir escrupulosamente con el principal objetivo propuesto, que no es otro que “establecer un corpus de rasgos que pueden rastrearse en las obras de las artistas seleccionadas, siguiendo el hilo conector de la representación tanto de la violencia como del cuerpo (especialmente el cuerpo femenino) en conexión con elementos formales de carácter abyecto y/o grotesco” (14-15). Dicho modelo hilvana una visión de la violencia simbólica que contraviene la normatividad canónica imperante en lo que concierne a la exégesis del cuerpo femenino como objeto pasivo, incapaz de defenderse frente a la agresión propiciada por la mirada violenta del otro.

Para finalizar, cabe señalar que tan solo observo una carencia en esta brillante investigación —no imputable en absoluto a su autor—, que no es otra que la de las ilustraciones de las obras de Mendieta, Sherman y Goldin. Pese a la inmensa capacidad descriptiva de Aláez, que propicia que el/a lector/a “vea” a través de su mirada analítica, haciéndonos pasar de la exégesis a la imaginación, provocando una reacción y un sentimiento, hubiera sido deseable “contemplar” las imágenes en cuestión a la vez que la explicación, si bien entiendo que la ausencia de imágenes se deriva de una cuestión de derechos de autor a los que sin duda están sometidas las obras visuales de las artistas. En todo caso, quien tenga interés (y les aseguro que lo tendrán al mismo tiempo que leen el magnífico libro de Aláez) puede acceder a los montajes fotográficos analizados a través de los pertinentes enlaces de internet, algunos de los cuales recoge puntualmente el autor a lo largo de la obra. Sea como fuere, es destacable su capacidad para lograr que el lector (al menos en lo que a mí respecta) prescindiera de la imagen para sumergirse en el escrupuloso tejido verbal que crea, logrando convertir la experiencia de la lectura en un acto visual puramente imaginativo de extremada y pavorosa belleza, una suerte de “terrible beauty”, apropiándonos del célebre oxímoron de W. B. Yeats en “Easter 1916”.

A través de una indagación intensamente humanística a la par que técnica (el autor hace gala de un conocimiento exhaustivo de los mecanismos del arte de la fotografía y de la *performance*), Máximo Aláez examina con rigor, lucidez y una exquisita sensibilidad las obras de Ana Mendieta, Cindy Sherman y Nan Goldin, exhibiendo al mismo tiempo un conocimiento profundo de la cuestión de la representación de la violencia simbólica y las agresiones corporales en la fotografía contemporánea realizada por mujeres, adentrándose no solo en las obras de las artistas estudiadas, sino también en las de otras artífices de la imagen. Sin duda, este ensayo merece convertirse en una referencia ineludible y una aportación necesaria para el análisis de la imagen fotográfica que toma como referente fundamental la violencia de género en sus proteicas y funestas formas.



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## BOOK REVIEWS

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# ***The Voice of Nature in Ted Hughes's Writing for Children. Correcting Culture's Error***

Lorraine Kerslake

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**L**orraine Kerslake, profesora de la Universidad de Alicante, doctora en ecocrítica y literatura infantil y juvenil, nos presenta en *The Voice of Nature in Ted Hughes's Writing for Children. Correcting Culture's Error* un riguroso y no menos interesante análisis crítico de la obra infantil y juvenil del poeta británico laureado Ted Hughes; una aportación necesaria debido a que hay una laguna de investigación de los textos de este afamado escritor británico, conocido también por haber sido el marido de la poeta Sylvia Plath, cuya muerte por suicidio, tras la separación de ambos, ha sido desde entonces objeto de numerosas polémicas en cuanto a la relación que tenía la pareja.

Kerslake nos presenta un análisis ecocrítico detallado de cada una de las obras dramáticas, poéticas y de prosa de Hughes, textos literarios en los que la voz de la naturaleza se hace oír de diferentes modos, y que dejan entrever el compromiso ecologista de Hughes en defensa de la

preservación del mundo natural que nos rodea, así como su crítica acerca del divorcio existente entre humanidad y naturaleza en las “modernas” civilizaciones occidentales, con el objetivo de corregir el error de nuestra sociedad al respecto, tal y como reza el subtítulo de la obra de Kerslake, mediante una propuesta literaria que pretende educar en valores medioambientales, mostrando cómo el ser humano ha maltratado y maltrata los ecosistemas; una obra, la de Hughes, con un marcado componente pedagógico y que, además, no va en detrimento de su calidad literaria.

Por todo ello, la lectura de *The Voice of Nature in Ted Hughes's Writing for Children. Correcting Culture's Error* nos dará a conocer las motivaciones de Ted Hughes al escribir su obra literaria infantil en relación a la defensa del medio natural y a la búsqueda de una reconexión del ser humano con la naturaleza, cuya escritura, además, cumplió una función emocional catártica y curativa para él en relación al profundo trauma que le dejó el suicidio

de Sylvia Plath, al que se le sumó también el horror del suicidio de su segunda pareja, Assia Wevil, cometiendo al mismo tiempo el filicidio de Shura, la hija de ambos. Según apunta Kerslake, las representaciones de la naturaleza y de los animales de sus historias se relacionan con un concepto de literatura en el que Hughes profundizó, inspirado por las teorías de Carl Gustav Jung, Mircea Eliade, Joseph Campbell o Robert Graves, entre otros, buscando convertir sus creaciones en un tótem literario con narraciones que en muchos casos funcionan como fábulas donde los animales toman la palabra, similares a las historias que las civilizaciones ancestrales transmiten de generación en generación, con el fin de compartir la sabiduría de su grupo tribal; o siguiendo en otras ocasiones la tradición de la mitología greco-romana, cuyos mitos contienen para Hughes arquetipos que proporcionan respuestas para los males psicológicos de las personas en las sociedades actuales.

*The Voice of Nature in Ted Hughes's Writing for Children. Correcting Culture's Error* está organizada en dos partes principales que se distribuyen, a su vez, en otros tantos subcapítulos. La primera parte, titulada "Speaking through the Voice of Nature", presenta los capítulos "A Life Close to Nature" y "Reconnecting with Nature"; y la segunda parte, titulada "Correcting Culture's Error: An Ecocritical Analysis of Hughes's Writing for Children", incluye los capítulos "The Seeds of Hughes's Children's Writing", "Hughes's Children's Plays", "Hughes's Children Poetry", "Hughes's Children Prose".

En la primera parte, "Speaking Through the Voice of Nature", el apartado "A Life Close to Nature" nos cuenta la vida de Ted Hughes desde su infancia y la influencia que tuvo en él haber pasado sus primeros años en la zona rural de Yorkshire, donde disfrutaba junto a su hermano de la caza y la pesca en Calder Valley, y el trauma que le causó el traslado familiar al núcleo urbano de Mexborough en South Yorkshire. Posteriormente, durante su formación universitaria en Cambridge, Kerslake nos muestra a un Ted Hughes que rechaza los estudios de literatura en los que se había matriculado en un primer momento después de dos años de estudio por no cumplir sus expectativas, para matricularse posteriormente en asignaturas más relacionadas con sus intereses, como eran la antropología y la arqueología. Debido a este giro en sus estudios, Hughes se acercó a obras y a autores que fueron clave para su desarrollo creativo y literario, tales como *Shamanism* de Mircea Eliade, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* de Joseph Campbell, o *The White Goddess* de Robert Graves, que, junto con sus autores de cabecera, entre los que se encontraban Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare y Jonathan Swift; los poetas románticos (William Blake, William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge y John Keats); los posteriores John Hopkins y T. S. Eliot; y sus muchas lecturas sobre zen, sufismo, taoísmo, poesía oriental, mitología, cábala y chamanismo, conformaron el caldo de cultivo que alimentó, a nivel creativo y filosófico, sus textos literarios. En "Reconnectig with Nature", el segundo capítulo de la primera parte, Kerslake explica

la evolución de Hughes en cuanto a su concienciación en defensa de la naturaleza, que empezó recién casado, durante su estancia con Sylvia Plath en EEUU, donde observó la existencia de una gran distancia entre la sociedad americana y el mundo natural, como leemos en una carta de Ted a su hermana Olwyn en 1957, y que Kerslake nos transcribe:

**What a place a place America is. Everything is in cellophane. Everything is 10,000 miles from where it was plucked or made. This bread is in cellophane that is covered with such slogans as de-crapularised, re-energised, multicramulated, bleached, double-bleached, rebrowned, unsanforised, guaranteed no blaspheming (30).**

Kerslake nos muestra cómo Ted Hughes se anticipa en sus apreciaciones a lo que unos años después promulgaron autores conocidos por ser pioneros del movimiento ecologista, como Rachel Carson con su obra *Silent Spring* en 1962, Lynn White con su libro *The Historical Roots of Our Ecologis Crisis* en 1967, o Max Nicholson en *The Environmental Revolution* en 1970; y que configuraron el inicio de su proyecto de vida en defensa del medioambiente, que influyó en su literatura infantil por un lado, y en los múltiples proyectos de educación medioambiental en los que se involucró, por el otro, como por ejemplo, *Farms for City Children*; todo ello amparado por el enfoque teórico de Ted Hughes, donde propone la representación de la naturaleza como una divinidad femenina, algo así como la diosa naturaleza, influenciado, como apunta Kerslake, por la obra de Robert Graves *The White Goddess*:

**Bearing in mind that the whole of Hughes's work is largely inspired by the myth of Grave's The White Goddes (1948), and that Hughes's goddess is above all feminine, an ecofeminist reading of Hughes's children's writing can offer insight into the way in which Hughes represents nature as well as the close relation Hughes depicts between his female characters and nature (41).**

De esta manera, se anticipó también a lo que más tarde se conoció como *ecofeminismo*, y en concreto a teorías espirituales como las de Starhawk (1979) que defienden la existencia de una dimensión sagrada en la naturaleza, responsabilizando de la crisis ecológica de las sociedades occidentales a la separación, a modo de extirpación, del componente divino en el concepto que tenemos del mundo natural, tal y como Kerslake explica:

**Most ecofeminists would argue that Western science has projected a material idealized world that is no sacred, but mechanistic... Starhawk (1979) maintains that there is a sacred dimension immanent in nature and argues that the separation of the divine from nature is one of the major causes of the ecological crisis (42).**

En la segunda parte del libro, titulada “Correcting Culture’s Error: An Ecocritical Analysis of Hughes’s Writing for Children, Kerslake, después del capítulo introductorio, “The Seeds of Hughes’s Children’s Writing, realiza un análisis ecocrítico de la obra de Ted Hughes distribuida en capítulos organizados por género: “Hughes’s Children Plays”, “Hughes’s Children Poetry”, “Hughes’s Children Prose”, finalizando con un apartado para las conclusiones que resumen la teoría expuesta durante la obra sobre el viaje literario que Hughes hizo a lo largo de su existencia, donde se reconcilió consigo mismo y la naturaleza, celebró la vida escribiéndola, y se comprometió con la defensa del medioambiente.

En el capítulo de esta segunda parte “The Seeds of Hughes’s Children Writing”, Kerslake detalla y especifica el germen desde el cual han proliferado las obras de Hughes, yendo desde aquellas con marcado carácter didáctico, como *Poetry in the Making*, una obra sobre la lectura y la escritura de poesía en la escuela, hasta otras como *Myth and Education*, un ensayo en el que Hughes recoge su teoría sobre el carácter terapéutico y educativo de los mitos, pues ayudan a la reconciliación de los aspectos contradictorios del ser humano, y a la reunificación del mundo exterior con el mundo interior de las personas, como podemos leer en palabras de Kerslake:

**Myths then, for Hughes, are stories that reconcile contradictions, and in line with the belief that Hughes has in the healing power of stories, great myths are those that reunite the inner and outer world and render them in balance (60).**

A su vez, en este capítulo se reflexiona sobre la importancia que el arte visual tiene para su concepción creativa y literaria, así como acerca del concepto *imaginación medioambiental*, inspirado por pioneros del *nature writing* como Henry David Thoreau, y que en Hughes se debe a su temprano sentido de pertenencia a su lugar de origen, sus estudios de antropología, su afinidad hacia los animales, y su preocupación por las causas ecologistas. Los subsiguientes capítulos están dedicados al análisis ecocrítico completo de la obra infantil de Hughes, utilizando de manera práctica los aspectos destacados en la primera parte del libro.

En concreto, en “Hughes’s Children Plays” se analizan sus obras dramáticas, y se destaca la importancia de su narrativa ritual y simbólica, el poder de la imaginación donde los mitos y la búsqueda de la verdad cobran especial relevancia; en particular, se pone el énfasis en sus obras de teatro: *The Coming of the King*, *The Tiger’s Bones*, *The Beauty and the Beast*, *Sean, the Fook*, *The Devil and the Cats*, y *Orpheus*, obra a la que Kerslake da

especial relevancia, debido a que es la primera historia que Hughes ideó después de la muerte de Sylvia Plath, y en la que Hughes estaría encarnado por Orfeo y Plath por Eurydice, un ejercicio catártico que simboliza además, según Kerslake, la muerte del ego del poeta, y el encuentro con su propia voz, reconectada e integrada con la naturaleza, lo que puede representar el renacer a una nueva vida para el autor, ya que le ayuda a seguir adelante a pesar de lo pasado.

En “Hughes’s Children Poetry” se analiza la poesía infantil del escritor, cuyo universo poético está habitado por animales, imágenes del campo y la naturaleza, pudiéndose enmarcar su producción en lo que se conoce como *ecopoesía* donde la experiencia creativa de la escritura se une a la experiencia de la naturaleza y su observación. Los libros que Kerslake analiza son: *Nessie the Mannerless Monster*, *Meet My Folks*, *Season Songs*, *Under the North Star*, *The Cats and the Cuckoo*, y *The Mermaid’s Purse*, que destaca por ser el último libro de poesía que Hughes escribió para niños y que está relacionado con uno de los cuentos favoritos de Sylvia Plath: *La Sirenita* de Hans Christian Andersen.

El último capítulo del libro de Kerslake está dedicado al análisis de su obra infantil en prosa: “Hughes’s Children Prose”, donde se revisan los siguientes títulos: *Ffangs the Vampire Bat and the Kiss of Truth*, *How the Whale Became*, *Tales of the Early World*, *The Dreamfighter*, y *The Iron Man and The Iron Woman*. Todos ellos demuestran la teoría defendida por Kerslake acerca del sentido sanador que la literatura tiene para Hughes, haciendo referencia al concepto aristotélico de la *catarsis*, entendida como purificación mental gracias a la liberación y la purga de las emociones que nos produce la lectura de las obras literarias, haciéndonos más fuertes emocional y físicamente.

Concluimos remarcando la necesidad de la lectura de este libro para las personas que necesiten profundizar en la obra infantil de Ted Hughes, aunque, al tratarse de una revisión global de toda su producción en este sentido, puede resultar demasiado general para quienes busquen indagar en alguno de sus textos en concreto. Recomendamos especialmente esta revisión analítica de Lorraine Kerslake a las personas que quieran conocer las profundas motivaciones que llevaron a Ted Hughes a escribir su obra infantil, en relación a toda una teoría de reconciliación del ser humano con la diosa naturaleza, como él la consideraba; una teoría sanadora tanto para los escritores como para los lectores, que puso en práctica durante su propio proceso creativo. Por todo ello, *The Voice of Nature in Ted Hughes’s Writing for Children. Correcting Culture’s Error* es una obra esencial y necesaria en el panorama de la literatura infantil y de la ecocrítica literaria.

## BOOK REVIEWS

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# ***Spaces of Longing and Belonging: Territoriality, Ideology and Creative Identity in Literature and Film***

**Brigitte Le Juez and Bill Richardson, eds.**  
2019. Leiden: Brill. ISBN: 978-90-04-40292-8.

**S**erving as an attempt at getting a sense of the global and “the historical, topological, and formal affinities between the literary as it springs up among peoples” (Spivak 2009: 94), *Spaces of Longing and Belonging: Territoriality, Ideology and Creative Identity in Literature and*

*Film* brings together essays from different corners of the planet. The volume is among the several publications that were edited following the 6<sup>th</sup> Biennial Congress of the European Network for Comparative Literature Studies (ENCLS), ‘Longing and Belonging’ in 2015. The diverse range of articles selected by the editors, Brigitte Le Juez and Bill Richardson, reflects the far-reaching application of geocriticism that connects diverse fields of study from the natural sciences to literary criticism, art history and social studies. The collected essays offer a fresh contribution to the field of geocriticism drawing on Bakhtin’s chronotope, Edward Soja’s third space, Augé’s place and non-place, Bachelard’s phenomenological reading of topophilia, Foucault’s heterotopia, and Nora’s sites of memory, among other theories. The collection’s outlook on literature as a “spatial venture” (1) and its premise that

stories we tell ourselves shape “our operational spaces” (14) are reflected in its three parts, “In-between Territories”, “Ideological Sites of Belonging”, and “Space, Affect and Identity”, to negotiate common spaces that have the power to embrace differences and challenge cultural continuity. The two types of space considered here, geographical and textual spaces, allow for the recognition of divisive mechanisms and thus welcome hybridization and an opening to new perceptions of what it is to belong.

Following the editors’ thorough literature review in the introduction, we can read a chapter from Bertrand Westphal’s *La Cage des méridiens. La littérature et l’art contemporain face à la globalisation* (2016). Separate from the rest of the essays in the three parts of the collection, Westphal’s piece serves as a nexus for the ideas and notions in the following chapters. The editors’ choice to translate and include ‘Belonging to the Periphery of the Planet’ is appropriate as it includes Westphal’s analysis of the decentering role of contemporary art. Here, Westphal responds to Amy J. Elias and Christian Moraru’s take on the “planetary turn” (19), with their concern

for geoaesthetics and relationality, and criticizes the fact that thinking still happens in binary terms in the west. His problematizing the archipelago model on account of its fixing hierarchies in place and leaving the peripheries problematic untouched, is the highlight of this chapter.

The five essays that make up Part 1, “In-between Territories”, focus on the notion of heterogeneity of time and space and offer a critical examination of identity and mobility. In the first article, Polo B. Moji reads Nimrod’s 2010 autobiography, *L’Or des Rivières*, as a mimetic art and an inter-subjective narrative of a diasporic subversion of home/land. Moji regards space in terms of territory with no stability, a disorder. She puts forth an examination of Glissant’s notions of rhizome and errantry to conceive relational identities and territories, and depicts how space mobility and diaspora are connected and relational. The relationship between identity and space continues to be analyzed in the following essay. For Sanna Nyqvist, the shipping forecast, with its “strong nationalistic undertones” (57), is imbued with nostalgia and claims on territories, as it draws a line to separate the native land from what lies beyond, us from them. As a site of contestation over territories and evocations of memories and different places such as Gibraltar and Rockall Coast, the shipping forecast is directly connected to the discourse of border and longing and belonging. In the third essay, Ivan Kenny maps textual and fantastic spaces of the short story “La isla a mediodía”, and examines Cortazar’s description of an imaginary island and an aircraft. Reflecting on Westphal’s “multidimensional aspect of space” (67), which highlights the “limitation of our perception of reality” (65), the article emphasizes the interrelationality of spaces as opposed to the temporal nature of history. Achieving the editors’ goal of analyzing planetarity and literature’s role in decentering, the article stresses anti-localization model and that spaces are decentered based on different perceptions. The next article, “Longing and Belonging in Contemporary Finland-Swedish Literature” draws on Prieto’s notion of “sites that fall between the established categories” (85). In their discussion of Finland-Swedish literature, the four authors of the article emphasize the in-between-ness and textual multilingualism of this literature and illustrate how social positions or centers are shaped. For them, the in-between literature challenges literary traditions, transgresses assigned borders and boundaries, depicts spatial and linguistic spaces, and dilutes the notion of us/them. Part 1 ends with a life in-between. Rodger Williamson extends the geocritical approach to Lafcadio Hearn’s ambivalence toward Japan and the west and analyses his search for and negotiations of identity and a home in rural (and exoticized) Japan.

The four articles in Part 2, “Ideological Sites of Belonging”, explore the relationship between space (real or imaginary) and people, and emphasize the centrality of space in social, political and ethical concerns. The essays approach issues of justice and freedom, class and racial difference through their spatial analysis of their selected texts, and pinpoint how communities are imagined. Authored by the volume’s co-editor, the first chapter

applies Natalia Álvarez Méndez’s classification of literary space, and Westphal’s notion of polysensoriality, to analyze Miguel Delibes’s *Los Santos Inocentes*, and connects space and social order with an emphasis on multi-sensorial experience that an environment emits. As Bill Richardson proposes, the spatio-temporal context determines the meaning of the text and crosses the border of Spanish sociopolitical concern to target “ecological issues around modernity, tradition and change” (131). The next essay provides an insightful interpretation of different treatments of the legend of Don Rodrigo, set in a “pseudo-historical time” (134). As Pilar Vega Rodríguez signals, the story and the episode of the Cave of Hercules were taken up throughout centuries to serve different literary, political, moral and even touristic purposes. In the next chapter, Rosa Branca Figueiredo looks at Wole Soyinka’s *A Dance of Forests* in the light of the relationship between myth and history, modernity and tradition, and the role of Nigeria in shaping Africa and its identities and a postcolonial future. She highlights that Soyinka’s intertextual art is skeptical of glorifying the past not just in Africa but everywhere in the world. The nonlinearity of space and time and the dramatic structure of the play help transcend divisions in cultures, nations, self and other and the past, present and future. The thread of intertextuality is followed in the last chapter of Part 2, where Omar Baz Radwan turns the gaze towards the poetry of Suheir Hammad and Andrea Assaf. He analyses the representation of Arab-Americans in post-9/11 US and captures how identity construction got farther away from assimilating into “white, Eurocentric America” (189) and toward an association with other minority groups. Such ventures coincide with Critical Race Theory which also subverts the static idea of the nation. Highlighting the racist practices that historically marginalized and excluded other racial minorities in the US, he pinpoints that these poets challenge mainstream identities assigned to Arab-Americans and reject discrimination.

Cities, represented as places of desire, to which people belong because of their memories, are central to Part 3, “Space, Affect and Identity”. The essays in this part extend the attention the volume pays to the influence of the past on the present, the continuity of memories, individual *vs.* cultural identities, and how places, as palimpsests, shape people’s identities. The notion of home is also deconstructed and the premise that unless “true belonging is inclusive, autonomous, hybrid and transnational” (229), the present is stuck in a dead-end and the future cannot be creatively imagined, is reinforced.

In the first essay of this part, the co-editor Brigitte Le Juez, compares Nobuhiro Suwa’s *H Story* with the film *Hiroshima Mon Amour*. Drawing on Pierre Nora’s ‘sites of memory’, she explores the connection between the place and the artist, and between the destruction and later modernity of Hiroshima in Suwa’s film. Le Juez reads Suwa’s attempt as a challenge to Nora’s ideas, as he tries to capture the identity of Hiroshima today with the continuity of traditional memories and beyond the Nuclear bombing. The thread of the foreign presence, where in-



terrogation happens from inside to view the nation from the Other's perspective, is followed both in Le Juez and the following chapter. Jennifer Wood's reflection on Marc Evans's *Patagonia* (2010) problematizes the Welsh identity in a cosmopolitan space and challenges the idea of cultural purity. The article builds on Raymond Williams's rejection of cultural continuity and analyzes the influence of the past on the present and future and nation building. In the third essay, what establishes the framework of analysis for Andrea Chiurato is desire and mediation à la Girard. Longing and belonging are studied through the representation of London in texts by Poe and Hawthorne. Considering the place of London in America's public imagination, Chiurato reads London in the two American writers' stories as a model for the modern America underway. The anxiety of modernity is emphasized in the characters' disembedding (Giddens) from time and space. Chiurato sees Wakefield as a modern hero who can find the balance between belonging and desire, between the individual and his heritage, whereas Poe's man of the crowd is doomed to the perpetual longing to belong. The final two chapters deal with how memories are represented through the literary representation of cities. Once again, Nora's notion of material, functional and symbolic sites of memories is invoked as the framework for Gabriel F.Y. Tsang's comparison of the representation of Prague in Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* and Chenzhou in Gu Hua's *A Small Town Called Hibis-*

*cus*. Far from an authentic representation of history, these cities are symbolic and functional spaces through which the authors pinpoint the loss of autonomy under the communist regimes. Closing the collection, Aytül Özüm explores the connection between identity and place by looking at Orhan Pamuk's *Istanbul: Memories and the City*, and Peter Ackroyd's *London: The Biography*. Focusing on the affective sides of the cities, the article echoes the authors' distinct views about the history of their cities and nostalgia for their past, and emphasize their sense of belonging evident in the pride their texts exhibit.

*Spaces of Longing and Belonging: Territoriality, Ideology and Creative Identity in Literature and Film* does a fine job of providing a multidisciplinary approach to geocritical understanding of planetarity. The contributions to this volume shake up "violent autonormativity whereby 'the West' kept reinventing itself and all its inferior others" (Dabashi 2012: 15) and look at different ways mobility creates relational subjectivities. The uprooted characters analyzed in many of the chapters and the material and representational space they occupy; the dialectical relationship between self and other; the tug of longing and belonging that, in various essays, hint at the artist's own existential relationship with their homeland, suggest that art and culture are not mere abstractions but tools to "overwrite the globe" (Spivak 2003: 72) and build new, planetary imaginaries.



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## BOOK REVIEWS

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# ***L1 Use in Content-based and CLIL Settings***

**María Martínez-Adrián, M. Juncal Gutiérrez-Mangado & Francisco Gallardo-del-Puerto, eds. 2019**

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**A**fter many years of research, there are still several gaps on how to best accommodate the use of non-target languages in content-based education effectively (Tavares 2015; Lo and Macaro 2015). The special issue “L1 Use in Content-based and CLIL Settings” does not only consider the initial scenario of students exhibiting a low proficiency in the L2; it also leads teachers, researchers and policy-makers to face the striking fact that using learner’s L1 may be beneficial in the L2 classroom (Lai 1996; Tang 2002; Fennema-Bloom 2010). On the one hand, it includes different studies on how L1 use may develop the acquisition of a second language (L2), and how to use the L1 and the L2 for different phases of the curriculum. On the other hand, it addresses key questions like how to best capitalize on the use of non-target languages in content-based education, ranging from content-based instruction (CBI), immersion, English medium instruction (EMI) and content and language integrated learning (CLIL).

The first article, “Theories of trans/languageing and trans-semiotizing: implications for content-based education classrooms” by Angel M. Y. Lin, highlights

the importance of dialogic construction of meaning in content-based education (CBE) classrooms. It supplies updated information to teachers, researchers and policy-makers who are keen on theories of trans-languageing understood as “a systematic shift from one language to another for specific reasons” (Coyle, Hood and Marsh 2010: 16) and trans-semiotizing for CBE classrooms. The central tenet is that “translanguageing is underpinned by a dynamic, dialogic, and distributed view of language” (Lin 2019: 11). In other words, “language is social and dialogic rather than a pre-existing code (grammar)” (Lin 2019: 8). One could however argue that, thanks to the human possibility of assembling meaning and form, the student can get involved in the classroom, regardless of social interaction. On the other hand, the sociocultural turn in education is indeed essential, given students’ use of their multilingual (L1/L2) repertoire. This interconnection will help understand the importance of dialogic construction of meaning in CBI classrooms. Three principles that summarise the main pedagogical implications can be drawn: (i) spontaneous translanguageing and trans-semiotizing; (ii) design curriculum genres, and (iii) a continuous, expanding, hierarchical model of learning.

Next studies investigate whether and how L1 use may facilitate L2 acquisition and how the L1 and L2 can work together to develop student's bilingualism and biliteracy.

Martin-Beltrán, Montoya-Ávila, García, Madigan Peercy and Silverman's research revolves around DiCamilla and Antón's (2012) taxonomy regarding functions of L1 well as responses to L1 usage in L2 learning contexts. The main aim of this study was to analyze how young students (ages 5-6 and 9-10) reacted to the use of Spanish (L1) in the L2 English classroom when reading and talking about informational texts. It mainly focused on peer interactions when using L1 while working on L2 reading activities. The data gathered comes from a three-year research project, by which the research team developed a peer-learning literacy program called *Reading Buddies*, which was carried out in seven elementary schools in a Mid-Atlantic urban area in the USA.

Pavón and Ramos's study analyses the use of the L1 to scaffold content by low proficiency students in a CLIL setting in Andalusia, Spain, in seven Social Science and one Art lessons by Grade 5 students (10-11 year olds), where 50% of the content subjects are taught in English. The results show that the use of the L1 is mainly determined by the teachers' unplanned use of the L1. There is a need to develop systematic protocols for the teachers to effectively use the L1 in class and to provide students language support specific for the academic dimension of the language of content.

Caldas, Palmer, and Schwedhelm's article draws on data from four English-Spanish bilingual teachers in a foundational Spanish-instructed course for Bilingual Education majors at a university in Texas. Language policies were implemented throughout a semester, which fostered a translanguaging space enabling them to integrate content mastery and target language development. Data was collected from discourse analysis, complexity and accuracy analysis, and critical narrative analysis to unfold an appropriate use of the L1 (English) in content-based L2 (Spanish) instruction. This study evinces how bilingual teacher preparation can prepare prospective bilingual teachers linguistically and offer pluralistic language models to implement at bilingual schools in the future.

Pun and Macaro's study explores the relationship between language choice (L1 *vs.* L2) and teacher question types (higher-order *vs.* lower-order) in early EMI and late EMI schools. They report on a study examining Science lessons through English in eight different schools in Hong-Kong implementing early EMI that learners exhibit a higher competence in the target language whereas, in the case of late EMI, learners exhibit lower proficiency levels in English. The context had an impact on language choice: teachers in late EMI relied on L1 Cantonese to a larger extent than in early EMI, and questions addressed by late EMI teachers were cognitively demanding higher-order questions with more dialogic interaction, promoting higher-order thinking (evaluation, analysis, synthesis).

However, we need more research to draw further conclusions.

Lo and Lin's study tackles how teachers can develop a systematic approach to planning and using the L1 in order to maximize the effectiveness of CBI both in content and language learning. They analyse the patterns of teachers' use of the L1 in two groups of L2 English Learners in History and Science. With respect to 'curriculum genre', the L1 is beneficial for construing content knowledge, and its use can be gradually minimised in 'joint-construction genre' with guided reading, note taking, and re-writing. Students are expected to use the L2 by the time they get to the 'independent construction' genre. With respect to "task structure", in lower proficiency groups the L1 can prepare students for the tasks and the L2 can be introduced gradually to bridge understanding. In groups with higher proficiency, teachers can use the L1 to extend the students' learning experiences.

If one wonders which of the articles is worth a deeper reading to know more on translanguaging and trans-semiotizing theories, Lin's first article can introduce the reader into these necessary areas to understand classroom meaning-making dynamics. As regards the Spanish context, Pavón and Ramos's study "Describing the use of the L1 in CLIL: an analysis of L1 communication strategies in classroom interaction" is a case in point. The study focuses on whether and how L1 use may facilitate L2 acquisition and how the L1 and L2 can work together to develop student's bilingualism and biliteracy. The authors seek to analyze the different communication strategies in classroom interaction that students employ in their L1. They start by addressing the traditional idea that the foreign language (FL) should be the only one that is used in the classroom. Such claim has triggered considerable debate in the recent years, especially for bilingual contexts. As the employment of the L1, its benefits as a pedagogical tool will dramatically be reduced if L1 use is determined by the teacher's unplanned, spontaneous spoken use of L1 in the classroom (Lin 2015, Lo 2015 and Nikula et al. 2016). This reinforces the claim that developing organized and systematic protocols on this issue would improve the situation.

The remaining articles approach other protocols about when to use the L1 or the target language so as to have clearer directives in the classrooms for different phases of the curriculum. Crucially, bilingual teacher training can prepare prospective bilingual teachers to take advantage of the benefits of multilingual models at bilingual schools (Lo 2015). Although a socio-cultural context has an impact on language choice, solid methodologies are essential for emerging bilinguals who need to have opportunities for negotiation of meaning and scaffolding.

In Lo & Lin's (2019) study "Curriculum genres and task structure as frameworks to analyse teachers' use of L1 in CBI classrooms", a framework is discussed for students' L1 use in Content Based Instruction (CBI) lessons, both at the macro level and the micro level, depending

on students' L2 proficiency. In particular, the authors analyse patterns of L1 use in CBI lessons in Hong Kong against the background of the concepts of task structure and curriculum genres. As described by Rose (2014), the latter refer to the academic-specific types of texts — either oral or written— that students face in the bilingual classroom through the so-called Teaching/Learning Cycle, divided into three stages: Deconstruction, when the teacher presents the model; Joined-construction, when a new text is created with the mediation of the teacher; and Independent-construction, when the students create their own text. At the micro level, the task structure is also subdivided into a sequence of different stages (Prepare, Focus, Task, Evaluate and Elaborate, Focus, Task and Evaluate).

Lo and Lin conclude that there are different strategies that can be applied depending on the proficiency of the students in the L2: at the macro-level, L1 could be used in the Deconstruction level and L2 can be gradually introduced at the Joined-construction level to end up being the main vehicle of communication at the

Independent-construction level. At the micro level, lower proficient students could be addressed in their L1 at the Prepare stage, while the L2 is gradually introduced in the Focus, Task and Evaluate stages. Nevertheless, more research into the L1 use in CBI lessons should be carried out to create a systematic and principled framework.

To conclude, this issue brings food for thought for bilingual education. There are key aspects that need to be addressed on this issue. The first one is that the role of the teacher is key in shaping the use of the L1 in the classroom, hence the importance of having clear guidelines and training. On the one hand, enough exposure to the L2 should be guaranteed. However, this does not mean that the L1 should not be demonized, as it is shown that it can be employed as an efficient pedagogical tool. In light of this, developing a system seems to be highly beneficial. The second one is the relevance of the topic in our current bilingual/multilingual societies and the need for further research, which should be extended to different populations, contexts and pedagogies in order to have a better insight of how and when the L1 should be employed.



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## BOOK REVIEWS

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# ***La traducción literaria a finales del siglo XX y principios del XXI: hacia la disolución de fronteras***

**Ingrid Cáceres Würsig y María Jesús Fernández-Gil. 2019**

VERTERE, Monográficos de la revista *Herméneus*, nº. 21. Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid.

**E**l libro *La traducción literaria a finales del siglo XX y principios del XXI: hacia la disolución de fronteras* es una monografía de la revista *Herméneus*, de la Facultad de Traducción e Interpretación de Soria, editada por la Universidad de Valladolid. Este trabajo pretende ser una valiosa contribución al debate sobre el aspecto sociológico de la Traductología. Toma como punto de partida cuatro bloques temáticos: estudios con tendencia sociohistórica; las preocupaciones de identidad y el hibridismo típicos de las sociedades transfronterizas actuales; traducción poética; y, finalmente, la práctica de la autotraducción en contextos marcados por diglosia.

Con su sugerente portada, en la que se observa la ruptura de una ola vista desde el aire y en la que predominan los

tonos de azul, el editor invita al lector a “flotar” sobre este lugar donde el mar se encuentra con la tierra, ese momento en que la ola es todavía una ola, pero dejará de serlo en poco tiempo. La idea de ser y no ser al mismo tiempo, la noción de estar entre dos elementos de la Naturaleza y ser ellos simultáneamente, es, en sí misma, una metáfora reveladora de los temas abordados en esta colección, los cuales presentan una reflexión sobre cuestiones intrínsecas a la traducción literaria.

Según se ha apuntado, la obra se divide en cuatro partes, precedidas por un prefacio y una introducción. La primera de ellas presenta a su vez cuatro contribuciones, subordinadas al tema de la traducción literaria como referencia sociohistórica. En la segunda parte de la obra, sus tres autores se centran en el tema de la identidad y la



hibridación de la traducción literaria. La tercera parte, que cuenta con dos colaboraciones, trata el tema de los límites en la traducción de textos poéticos. A su vez, los tres autores de la cuarta parte se centran en el tema de la traducción automática en un mundo cada vez más global.

El primer capítulo de la primera parte presenta cuatro trabajos sobre el tema “Aproximaciones a la traducción literaria desde el marco sociohistórico”, en el que se presenta el marco teórico e histórico de la traducción literaria. Se destacan aspectos como la relación establecida entre la traducción literaria y el contexto espacial, ideológico y cultural de la obra original. La primera contribución es de Jordi Jané-Lligé, que analiza la recepción de obras de autores de habla alemana, incluidos Franz Kafka, Heinrich Böll y Günther Grass, así como la novela negra, traducida al idioma catalán, en los años setenta del siglo veinte. Jané-Lligé argumenta que la traducción literaria es parte de un sistema social determinado y cuestiona las reglas que la rigen. La contribución de Purificación Meseguer, “De la escapada naturalista al escaparate franquista”, siguiendo la misma línea de pensamiento defendida por Jané-Lligé, se centra en la relación evidente entre el sistema literario y el uso de la traducción literaria como medio de transmitir, por ese medio, la ideología del régimen franquista. Meseguer parte de una traducción de un texto de Émile Zola, incluida en el *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, para estudiar el papel de la censura en el campo de la traducción literaria.

El segundo capítulo de la obra comienza con una contribución de Cristina Naupert bajo el título “Entre misioneros y novelistas de habla portuguesa: el portugués como idioma de traducción colonial y postcolonial”. Aquí, se presenta un estudio comparativo entre la mediación cultural llevada a cabo por la Orden de Jesús en tierras de Vera Cruz en el siglo XVI, y la literatura mozambiqueña contemporánea. Naupert defiende el concepto de *traducción translúcida* como un medio para garantizar que la distancia cultural no sea un obstáculo para el trabajo del traductor. El tercer autor de este epígrafe, Juan Miguel Zarandona, nos presenta un hermoso texto titulado “La autobiográfica Nuestra hermana aguafiestas (2014) de Ama Ata Aidoo (1942) o reparación reparadora al español de un clásico de la literatura poscolonial de África”. En él, Zarandona se refiere a la tradición oral africana como un ejemplo de las dificultades que enfrenta el traductor, ya que no es posible encontrar términos y conceptos equivalentes, en español a sus homólogos de origen africano. Esta dificultad, según defiende el autor, debe tomarse como un desafío para proponer que la traducción literaria tenga un nuevo enfoque, que se distancie de la traducción poética del patrimonio europeo. El apoyo científico para defender esta tesis lo encuentra Zarandona en la teoría de la traducción poscolonial de Paul F. Bandia.

A su vez, el concepto de identidad, al mismo tiempo entendido en su sentido más amplio de identidad cultural, minoritaria y de género, en la forma en que los

procesos de traducción transmiten ese mismo concepto e identidad a otros sistemas culturales, constituye el eje axial de la segunda parte de este libro. Titulado “Identidad e hibridación en la traducción literaria”, en él sus autores se centran en el tema de la literatura híbrida, también llamada de *contacto* o *frontera*, en la que se fusionan varios idiomas, culturas y literaturas. Esta parte comienza con un texto de José Santaemilia, sobre *El Diario de Bridget Jones* de Helen Fielding. “Bridget Jones, ¿es un gatito sexual irresistible o chatte en chaleur? Sexualidad y moralidad a través de la traducción”, es una contribución que tiene como objetivo analizar comparativamente el potencial crítico de la traducción de la sexualidad en textos contemporáneos, partiendo de tres idiomas: inglés, francés y español, centrándose en la traducibilidad, posible o no, de términos sexuales, su especificidad cultural, su dimensión ética y el efecto de autocensura del traductor. El segundo capítulo de esta parte es de Carmen Valero. El título “Literatura de minorías, traducción literaria y mercado editorial” lleva al lector a reflexionar sobre la cuestión de la identidad desde la perspectiva de la literatura emergente en España, analizando el papel de la traducción como su vehículo de transmisión. Valero elige la literatura india, árabe y africana para plantear la posibilidad de que estemos presenciando la aparición de nuevos polisistemas literarios en Europa, como resultado del hibridismo, el mestizaje y la fusión de varias culturas, compitiendo por la creación de una imaginación colectiva. El texto de Bárbara Cerrato Rodríguez “(Acerca de) vivir en la intersección: la traducción como mediación intercultural en las obras de Najat El Hachmi”, es un buen ejemplo de análisis de la obra de este escritor marroquí, considerado como un exponente literario de la *Generación Fronteira*. Aquí se articulan y discuten diferentes realidades culturales, como el árabe, el catalán, el español y el amazigh. Cerrato Rodríguez presenta una metareflexión sobre el idioma, la traducción y la identidad en su transición al catalán y al castellano. Finalmente, el capítulo “Aunque el gorrión es pequeño, tiene un conjunto completo de órganos: literatura de contacto y creatividad bilingüe en los cuentos de Ha Jin”, de José Ramón Ibáñez, constituye una mirada interesante de cara a la literatura híbrida y las dificultades para traducir al español la obra de este escritor chino-estadounidense. En sus textos, la creatividad bilingüe es visible en las estrategias discursivas y retóricas que utiliza el autor. Fue Braj B. Kachru el que acuñó este concepto, refiriéndose a él con el fin de registrar el uso del idioma inglés en una perspectiva que casi se asemeja a la noción del idioma de la herencia, para proyectar en él el sustrato de sus lenguas nativas o sus comunidades.

La tercera parte de la obra, titulada “Traducción de poesía o traducción a límites”, aborda el tema de la traducción poética, teniendo en cuenta que la sociedad posmoderna valora la *brevidad* y la *aceleración*. La primera contribución de esta parte, de Jorge Braga Riera, se centra en lo que el autor llama *per versión* para aludir a la traducción poética. En su texto “El poeta adúltero: la versión traductora de Leopoldo María Panero”, Braga Riera argumenta que la fidelidad al texto fuente solo es posible a través

de lo que él llama un “adulterio”, que, según él, sería la única herramienta para producir el mismo efecto que el texto fuente. Nos atreveremos a decir que este tipo de traducción puede, en sí mismo, dar lugar a considerar la traducción de un texto fuente como otra obra literaria en sí misma. Analizando la escritura de Panero, Braga Riera compara ejemplos de traducción de textos de Lewis Carroll y poemas de Edward Lear para reforzar su tesis. Al presentar una opinión contraria a la de Riera, Marta Marfany, en su capítulo “La traducción de poesía según Enrique Badosa”, argumenta que una traducción debe respetar estrictamente el texto fuente, incluso cuando es un texto en verso. Para justificar su argumento, Marfany elogia a Badosa como el escrupuloso traductor de Horacio, Ramón Llull, Dante, Petrarca, Ausiàs March, Ronsard, Mallarmé, Baudelaire y Rilke, por ejemplo.

Finalmente, la cuarta parte de este libro, “La autotraducción en un mundo globalizado”, aborda el tema de la autotraducción en un contexto en el que el bilingüismo es una realidad en muchos países. El heterolingüismo actual, en un mundo global, es el punto de partida para una reflexión sobre cómo los escritores bilingües usan la auto-traducción para aumentar la difusión de sus obras. Este tema es estudiado por Garazi Arrula Ruiz en su texto “Cuando la autotraducción literaria (del euskera) cruza caminos con heterolingüismo”. Arrula Ruiz presenta una serie de tendencias actuales que se pueden encontrar en la literatura vasca de hoy, tomando como material de estudio un amplio *corpus* digital de literatura en euskera y su traducción al castellano y francés. Otro caso en el que un escritor intenta obtener reconocimiento en los

círculos literarios en el país donde vive es el de Marco Micone, un autor de origen italiano que vive en Canadá. Sobre este autor, que traduce y adapta su propio trabajo dramático del inglés o italiano al francés, y sobre el fenómeno de la autotraducción, Cecilia Foglia escribe un sugerente artículo titulado “¿Regresando (qué) a casa?: Un viaje literario bidireccional a Italia y Quebec”. Esta parte del libro termina con una entrevista de la profesora Maya G. Vinuesa al escritor de Benin Agnès Agboton. Con el título “Autotraducción literaria es una orilla a otra del Mediterráneo: Agnès Agboton entrevistada por Maya G. Vinuesa”, la conversación se centra en dos cuestiones principales: la compleja relación entre los idiomas hablados por el escritor (su lengua materna, gun, catalán, castellano y francés), el impacto que la ideología predominante en el norte del Mediterráneo tiene en la selección de historias contadas en vivo o escritas, y cómo estos contenidos podrían adaptarse a los destinatarios europeos.

Los autores de esta monografía tienen la intención de fomentar la reflexión sobre las tendencias actuales en los estudios de traducción en el campo literario. El hilo conductor de todas las contribuciones presentadas se basa en la defensa de la disolución de las fronteras entre lenguas, en el tema de la identidad y los géneros literarios, al tiempo que se analiza la traducción tradicional y los nuevos horizontes que se están abriendo actualmente en esta área. Este compendio de capítulos sin duda reveladores muestra la riqueza de la discusión en el panorama actual de los estudios sobre Traducción e Interpretación.

## BOOK REVIEWS

DÍDAC LLORENS CUBEDO

UNED

# ***Female Beatness. Mujeres, género y poesía en la Generación Beat***

**Isabel Castelao-Gómez y Natalia Carbajosa Palmero. 2019**

València: Publicacions de la Universitat de València (Biblioteca Javier Coy d'Estudis Nordamericans, nº 159). 375 pp. ISBN: 9788491344902.

Cualquiera mínimamente familiarizado con la poesía contemporánea personificará la Generación Beat en las figuras ya canónicas de Allen Ginsberg y Jack Kerouac. Un grado considerablemente mayor de conocimiento permitiría citar otros nombres (William S. Burroughs, Neal Cassady, Gregory Corso, Lawrence Ferlinghetti o Gary Snyder) y quizás identificar la homosociabilidad como vínculo entre algunos representantes masculinos del movimiento. Solo una minoría sería capaz de añadir nombres femeninos a la nómina de los Beat. Sin embargo, a finales de los años cincuenta, en San Francisco y Nueva York, también hubo mujeres que renegaron de los valores de la clase media estadounidense haciendo bandera de su inconformismo, encontraron inspiración en la meditación, los estados alucinógenos y el jazz y, sobre todo, escribieron poesía digna de ser leída y estudiada.

Obras de referencia relativamente recientes siguen aludiendo a estas mujeres como un subgrupo subliminal y anónimo, a pesar de que, desde finales de los noventa, los estudios de Brenda Knight, Ronna Johnson y Nancy Grace permiten situarlas en el contexto más inmediato de su generación y en el panorama de la poesía norteamericana de los siglos XX y XXI. *Female Beatness. Mujeres, género y poesía en la Generación Beat* (2019), de Isabel Castelao-Gómez y Natalia Carbajosa Palmero, persigue un objetivo parecido de revisión de un canon masculinizado. Digo “parecido” porque este volumen (que forma parte de la puntera Biblioteca Javier Coy d'Estudis Nordamericans, coordinada por Carme Manuel y Elena Ortells), además de profundizar en aspectos contextuales y teóricos, pone el foco de manera muy singular en cuatro poetas de biografía y obra fascinantes, pertenecientes a una “primera gene-

ración” *beat*: Elise Cowen, Diane di Prima, ruth weiss y Denise Levertov.

Podría lamentarse que el libro esté escrito en español, limitando su posible impacto, pero después de leerlo opinó, junto al prologuista A. Robert Lee, que su auténtico valor consiste en llenar un vacío académico y crítico en el ámbito hispano. A lo largo del estudio, por ejemplo, se citan un buen número de poemas acompañados de traducciones de las autoras, de manera que *Female Beatness* es también, en cierta manera, una pequeña antología de poesía *beat* femenina (complementando a su antecedente más directo: *Beat Attitude*, que Annalisa Marí Pegrum publicó en 2015). El conseguido equilibrio entre el minucioso comentario estilístico de estas citas poéticas y la estimulante reflexión teórica e histórica sobre lo *beat* y la creatividad femenina es el punto fuerte del libro que nos ocupa.

El estudio de Carbajosa y Castela-Gómez está firmemente asentado (como su título indica) en la teoría de género. Desde este sistema de pensamiento, y sin ideas preconcebidas, se exploran condicionantes que han limitado, hasta décadas recientes, la proyección de las poetisas estudiadas. Entre ellos, la circunstancia desafortunada de que su formación y desarrollo artísticos precediera a la eclosión de la decisiva segunda ola del feminismo, en la que hubieran encontrado referentes y reafirmación. Incluso en el ambiente iconoclasta en el que se movían seguían pesando las inercias patriarcales, dándose la paradoja de que los hombres de la Generación Beat, inicialmente marginados por el establishment, marginaran a su vez a las mujeres con las que compartían lecturas, recitales y actividades editoriales, y con las que en muchos casos mantuvieron relaciones sentimentales.

Como señalan las autoras de *Female Beatness*, los hombres de la Generación Beat, aunque también criticados desde posiciones pequeñoburguesas por su reivindicativa marginalidad, partían con ventaja a la hora de entregarse a una vida bohemia con respecto a sus compañeras. Para una joven de los años cincuenta, incluso en las ciudades más cosmopolitas de Estados Unidos, el estilo de vida *beat* podía tener como consecuencias el repudio familiar o el ostracismo social, como demuestra el trágico final de Cowen. Al tratar esta cuestión, se relaciona el prototipo de mujer *beat* con la *New Woman* del periodo modernista; podríamos retroceder aún más en el tiempo y aludir a la “demencia moral” victoriana, cuyos síntomas eran compatibles con conductas femeninas consideradas antinaturales o impropias.

Las diferencias de potencial realización entre géneros se traducen, en las obras de las poetisas *beat* más representativas, en ciertos enfoques temáticos comunes que Castela-Gómez y Carbajosa analizan y ejemplifican: lo

biográfico, como estímulo de afirmación y en contraposición a un yo poético masculino con aspiraciones de universalidad; lo doméstico, pues algunas de estas mujeres compaginaron, no sin tensiones y dificultades, su faceta poético-artística con las tareas propias de una ama de casa y con la crianza de sus hijos; lo urbano como geografía conquistada, limitada y fascinante a la vez, para mujeres que no podían vivir la movilidad “on the road” de la que sí disfrutaron los hombres de su generación; el cuerpo, como “significante de identidad” (53) y como oportunidad para el descubrimiento poético libre de tabúes.

*Female Beatness* no solo se ocupa de la poesía *beat* escrita por mujeres desde una perspectiva de género que permite apreciarla tanto en sus conexiones como en su variedad, sino que también nos ayuda a entender su relevancia histórica, situándola dentro de “un continuo de tradición de poesía y escritura femenina y feminista estadounidense experimental” (33) y en su contexto más inmediato. Se define a Cowen como “híster Dickinsoniana” (131), acentuando quizás en exceso la identificación con la poeta de Amherst. En cuanto a Di Prima, se indaga en influencias compatibles: la de Keats (el poder de la imaginación, el compromiso vital con la poesía) y la de figuras clave del Modernismo como Pound. Se observa una continuidad entre el “make it new” modernista y la experimentación con la oralidad de weiss, una faceta que, en general, y tal y como señalan las autoras, no suele suscitar el interés de una crítica feminista más interesada en el contenido que en la forma. Finalmente, se presenta a Levertov como la más tradicional (en el sentido eliotiano del término) y versátil de las cuatro poetisas estudiadas. Herederas, en mayor o menor medida, del Romanticismo y del Modernismo, las Beat entraron en contacto con otras corrientes coetáneas (los “Confessional Poets”, el grupo Black Mountain, los L=A=N=G=U=A=G=E Poets), en una encrucijada de “efervescencia creadora común” (104) en Estados Unidos.

Como reconocen Carbajosa y Castela-Gómez en la conclusión de su estudio, podrían haberse centrado en otros nombres (Hettie Jones, Lenore Kandel, Joanne Kyger o Anne Waldmann) o ampliado el espectro, pero el cuarteto de poetisas elegidas permite establecer relaciones de comparación y contraste en base a distintos parámetros: “figuras centrales y figuras marginales, éxito y fracaso, primer canon e incorporaciones recientes” (364). Así, a través de sólidos capítulos introductorios y de los dedicados a Cowen, Di Prima, weiss y Levertov (ilustrados, como decíamos, con citas de poemas representativos, seguidas de traducciones en su mayoría inéditas y detallados *close readings*), se nos ofrece una visión panorámica y rica de la poesía *beat* femenina. Por todo ello, debemos saludar *Female Beatness. Mujeres, género y poesía en la Generación Beat* como una contribución valiosa a los estudios sobre poesía, poesía escrita por mujeres y poesía norteamericana contemporánea.



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## BOOK REVIEWS

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# ***The Wounded Hero in Contemporary Fiction. A Paradoxical Quest***

**Susana Onega and Jean-Michel Ganteau, eds. 2018**

New York and London: Routledge. 288 pp. ISBN: 978-1-138-58412-9 (hbk). ISBN: 978-0-429-50584-3 (ebk).

**T**raditionally in fiction, the hero has been identified with a white man of the superior kind, whose bravery, strength, and self-control leads him towards the glory. As society has evolved, new labels have been added to this term, to the extent of encompassing both sexes as well as sexual, ethnic, religious, or cultural minority groups situated at the margins of patriarchy. Whether it is considered as a mirror or as a refractor of life, popular culture is in constant progression and it makes use of these changes as the basis to build its mythopoeic universe (Browne and Fishwick 1983). That is the reason why, as Ganteau and Onega point out in the Introduction of *The Wounded Hero in Contemporary Fiction*, in the last hundred years, fiction has moved from the tragic mode (where the hero is superior to other men and, most likely, to his natural environment) to the ironic mode (where the hero is *just* as ourselves or even inferior in power or intelligence) (2). In this *journey*, therefore, both the long-established notion of 'hero' and the archetypal hero's quest have been challenged and defeated.

Notwithstanding, the reformulation of the term has taken place far beyond literature. As an example, in *Contempo-*

*rary Hollywood Masculinities*, Susane Kord and Elisabeth Krimmer (2011) refer to a perceived emasculation to describe the tendency in contemporary films to depict heroes who are beaten down, betrayed, overpowered, and outwitted (1). Out of the multiple categories in which contemporary hero(ine)s may fall into, it is noticeable "the emergence of a new type of (physically and/or spiritually) wounded hero(ine) immersed in a paradoxical life quest that involves the embracing, rather than the overcoming, of suffering, alienation, and marginalisation as a form of self-definition" (7-8). In spite of the fact that ethics, vulnerability and trauma in contemporary fiction are issues that have been examined in prior research, the ascendance of the wound on the narrative, particularly with regard to the construction of characters, remains briefly addressed in literary criticism. The essays collected in *The Wounded Hero...*, thus, examine a significant number of case studies of distinct types of wounded hero(ine)s as main characters of a variety of English novels from the 1980s onwards. By doing so, it provides the reader with real, practical examples that give evidence of a new paradigm characterized by the ethical turn and the turn to New Materialism, where self-definition is possible, precisely, through the hero(ine)'s own vulnerability and their exposure to the other.

The volume is divided into four parts, each one dealing with themes closely related to vulnerability: self-quest, self-definition, masochism and loss of affect, and biopolitics. Despite this heterogeneity, a sense of wholeness, coherence and linearity pervades the book, allowing the reader to trace clear connections among the essays and to draw meaningful conclusions.

Discussing about pleasure and pain, Aristotle (2019) considered that “because these feelings extend all one’s life through, giving a bias towards and exerting influence on the side of *aretê* (‘virtue’) and *eudaimonia* (‘happiness’) ... men choose what is pleasant and avoid what is painful” (157). This may be the reason why vulnerability is rarely associated with virtue, even though it is at the core of human beings. Etymologically, this term derives from the Latin *vulnus* or ‘wound’, and signifies the human potential to be hurt or wounded. This includes our ability to suffer psychologically, spiritually, and morally rather than simply a physical capacity for pain. Yet, to be vulnerable is not only “the state of actually being harmed or suffering pain”; far beyond, “the term communicates the possibility of such experience, and self-awareness of its possibility” (Berzins McCoy 2013: vii).

Understanding vulnerability from this double perspective is key to approach the reading of Onega and Ganteau’s *The Wounded Hero...*, for, on the one hand, the hero(ine)s analysed in the different essays defy the traditional notion of *aretê* in openly showing their vulnerability: they are ordinary subjects, “with its specificities and *peripeteia*”, as Ganteau writes in his contribution “Espousing the Wound” (61) with regard to Jon McGregor’s *So Many Ways to Begin*. On the other hand, they define themselves through the exposure to the others and, more specifically, to others’ wounds, which implies indeed the recognition that all humans are vulnerable.

There are several *topoi* and motifs that most of the characters examined share. All of them either experience a crisis of identity or are in search of it, which makes them “to adopt the ethical position of *kenosis*” (Onega, 23) or self-emptying. In Jeanette Winterson’s *The Gap of Time*, Leo and Xenon, both coming from a traumatic family background characterized by loveless parents, “will have to renounce the dominant subject positions where patriarchal culture has situated them” (Onega, 23) to embrace a selfless and unconditional love. Where they seem to fail, the next generation of characters provides a glimpse of hope. The second loop in the two male protagonists’ quest for maturation is closed. Though, as Onega reminds us, the hero(ine)’s quest has the form of the symbol of infinite, “signifying that it is an endless endeavour” (38) where happiness has to be conquered once and again.

George Letissier expresses in similar terms when referring to Allan Hollinghurst’s *The Stranger’s Child*: “folding, unfolding, and refolding is all encompassing, because not only does it imply an ever continuous, intergenerational textual circulation, but also the interpenetration of fictional lives and their written transcription at another diegetic

level” (54). The protagonist of the novel is an invented World War I hero-poet figure, but Hollinghurst places part of the narrative in the post-war era, “[in] the wake of the collapse of totalitarian regimes” where “heroism was indeed viewed suspiciously”. This fact allows him to constantly challenge the reader’s assumptions. In Letissier’s words: “Hollinghurst propounds an anthropology of the fallible man that invites the reader to reconsider the many facts of masculinity from within the perspective of the decline high heroism” (56). This reconsideration of the limitations and incapacities of the contemporary hero(ine) is also central in McGregor’s *So Many Ways to Begin*, in which the protagonist’s life falls to pieces when he discovers, as a young adult, that he has been a foster child.

Somehow, orphanage and lack of parental love and support are very much at the core of most of these narratives, as it happens in many of Anita Brookner’s novels. Eileen Williams-Wanquet examines the extent to which these issues affect Brookner’s protagonists. In her work, the story of the heroine “is one of trauma, of a life marked by deep psychic wounds that make her vulnerable or susceptible to further wounding” (95). Characters inevitably find themselves “in an unhappy state of failure: alone, childless, and powerless to change things” (94). Brookner’s novels suggest the idea that one’s trauma is connected to another, and to other traumas, for “It is the trace of past relations and is perpetuated through present relations” (94). Furthermore, it might be admitted that it can determine future relations as well, since, as it was stated above, “the end of the quest is only where it starts again” (38). This sense of interconnection is also present in Kazuo Ishiguro’s *Never Let Me Go*, whose protagonists, three clones created to provide vital organs for human beings, rely on friendship and “relational ties with the Other in recognition of a common human vulnerability” (Colombino, 218), that of mortality.

Learning to become sensitive to the vulnerability of the other is another way to respond to the Levinasian demand for personal, intimate, and responsible involvement in the life of another (Simon 2009: 134). This means “the turn to the other’s suffering in ethical terms”, writes Rosario Arias in relation to Ian McEwan’s *Saturday*, which “encompass[es] the ability to take into account the demands of the other”. In doing so, “one becomes aware of one’s own vulnerability” (117). Acknowledging this fallibility, renouncing a position of power, and getting an ethically mature perspective is, perhaps, the new heroic quest. This is pressed to extremes in Lisa Genova’s *Still Alice*, whose main character, as indicated by Chiara Battisti, “embod[ies] in a single person the antithetical couple hero-victim”, which she defines as a “post-postmodern hero” (79). Because of Alzheimer’s disease, the heroine experiences a conscious journey from public recognition (she is a reputed Linguistics professor) towards a progressive loss of her rational self (-identity), which shows to what extent human beings are vulnerable and depend from the other. Beyond that, this sense of responsibility for the other may also be applied to “an ethics of care towards other vulnerable forms” (Monaco, 238) such as

the environmental care, animal rights, justice, or social inequality. This is the leading guide of the protagonist of Jhumpa Lahiri's *The Lowland*, whose quest "towards self-realization involves a fascination for the fragility of the natural world" (239).

Another common ingredient is that the emotional wound of the protagonist is often echoed by a physical wound. It can be simply a scar on your belly (*So Many Ways to Begin*), or an almost complete incapacitation (*Remainder*) as a consequence of a traumatic event. In both cases, it is suggested the idea that the damaged body has an impact on the hero(ine)s subjectivity, which makes them to be "weirdly disconnected from his fellow human beings and completely devoid of empathy" (Brosh, 183). But the signing of the body can also emerge from the somatization of the story, which is translated into several forms of masochism. It happens in Hanya Yanagihara's *A Little Life*, where the hero finds an awful pleasure in his self-destructive behaviour. In A. L. Kennedy's fiction, masochism takes the form of a constant rewriting of the traumatic event as a way to make the wound sore again. But as Maria Grazia Nicolosi and Merve Sarıkaya-Şen show, there is an intrinsic masochistic rationale: that of cultivating suffering as a form of self-defi-

nition "with an inherent and paradoxical restorative and constructive potential" (165).

Perhaps, as suggested by Pascale Tollance in discussing J. M. Coetzee's *Life and Times of Michael K*, "it is easy enough to see the many ways in which [these characters] epitomise the antithesis of the hero" (247). We shall, on the contrary, scrutinise further this perception and to rethink the notion of the hero(ine) as someone who manages to survive; who "stands for what remains invisible and unexplained" (255); who constructs the self through the wound. "The wound is fundamental to the [hero(ine)s'] identity. As [they work] from the wound, telling it again and again to try and understand it and come to terms with it, [they are] what [their] wound [have] made [them]" (107).

Onega and Ganteau's *The Wounded Hero...*, then, proves that contemporary hero(ine)s are vulnerable, fallible, fragile, and powerless, but their greatness resides, precisely, in admitting it. To face the wound entails braveness. Furthermore, it is "the condition for the emergence of a dependent subject whose dependence becomes in turn a condition of interdependence" (61).



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## BOOK REVIEWS

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# ***Transmodern Perspectives on Contemporary Literature in English***

**Jessica Aliaga- Lavrijsen and José María Yebra-Pertusa, eds. 2019**

New York and London: Routledge. 254 pp. LCCN 2019009440.

**T**his book is a collection of essays edited by Jessica Aleaga-Lavrijsen and José María Yebra-Pertusa, published in 2019 by Routledge. It consists of a compilation of critical writings by fourteen authors. The main topics are ethics, capitalism, identity, spirituality and femininity. All these ideas are framed by the theoretical paradigm of the transmodern. The term was coined by Rosa María Rodríguez Magda. She defines “trans” first, but not only, as a prefix or the synthesis in between modernity and postmodernity. It is also the description of a globalised society, rhizomatic and technological. The transmodern individual as well as the transmodern narrative are in constant confrontation with its Other. In addition, it is the struggle to transcend this hyperreal, relativistic closure that comes from the postmodern criticism.

The book points out the importance to confront literary criticism and literary studies not in isolation, but each text as part of a globalised world. Each theory applied to the texts is showed as part of a universal dialectics. As is explained in the introduction to the collection, the aim is to show how contemporary texts are responding to this paradigm shift, bearing in mind that this does not imply

a break with the historical tradition: “Transmodernity would be characterized by a critique of the two earlier period entailing a change in human perception and thus in the understanding and representation of reality” (Yebra-Pertusa 2019: 1).

The collection is Transmodern in the sense that its holistic organization under this term gives the reader the possibility to confront the different topics of study from a glocal perspective. This collection is a necessary critical project considering the trend of the academia to still rely on post-modernism. It opens a space for the texts and their analysis that allows to the rethinking of narratives as well as the way we look at them. The book is organised in six parts:

## ***Part I: Transmodernity. A Paradigm Shift***

This section is divided into three chapters. It provides the reader with a profound explanation of the concept of transmodernism. It does so thanks to the brilliant

translation by Jessica Aliaga-Lavrijsen of a plenary lecture given by Rosa María Rodríguez Magda at the University of Zaragoza in April 2017. The key element of this first part is that it sets the tone for all the essays. The transmodern is shown as the space in which subaltern realities can find a voice; it escapes the neo-liberal conception of the world that already shallowed the postmodern theory. It also allows a broader understanding of the coming analysis as well as the society we live in. Transmodernity escapes the western conceptualization of difference which is, in Rosa María Rodríguez Magda's own words, "an exercise of power and control" (Rodríguez Magda 2017: 53; my own translation). This first section guides the reader through other key concepts like, for example, capitalism and globalization, and it is in tune with other philosophical discourses. As explored in David Alderson's chapter, there is a link in between the possibilities that Transmodernism gives to escape the "constant revolution of capitalism and its own existential conditions" (Zizek 1992: 84; my own translation). Transmodernism comprehends the globalised world, it understands all possibilities of this, already defined "trans", and it opens the space of the liminal. This is something that the dialectic of capitalism is unable to do. Neo-liberal discourse destroys or dominates, but it does not leave any space outside itself. The highlight of this section would be the exemplification of what transmodernism can mean for new narratives in the conception of universal and complex voices, as Susana Onega exemplifies with the novel *Ghostwritten* by David Mitchell, where there is an emphasis on the connectedness of individuals while trying to avoid totalisation and universalism.

## ***Part II: Transmodern Ethics***

The focal point of this part is in the tensions in between the narratives of celebration and narratives of the limit, developed in Bárbara Arizti's essay. It can also be expressed with the dichotomy of the transmodern *vs.* the postmodern individual; "the change of the paradigm must come from the reevaluation of relationality" (97). The transmodern individual is the one that embodies the mixture and diversity and is able to adapt past behaviours. S/he allows the mobility that the postmodern individual has lost. Jean-Michel Ganteau's essay is remarkable from a critical point of view in so far as it is based on the understanding of the "eternally updated present" and how it allows a narrative of montage. This constant tension in between the new paradigm and the old one shows the importance of rethinking the narratives of this century and the different voices that we have put the focus on.

## ***Part III: Transnational Identities and Spaces***

In terms of literary criticism, this is one of the most interesting parts in the sense that it proves how the trans-

modern also means the broadening of the individual consciousness, and the narratives opening to a communal narrative that escapes the establishment. As emphasized by Barbara Puschmann-Nalenz, the new paradigm allows the bordered narratives to take the centre of society. The climax of this part is the essay by Dolores Herrero, in which, taking into account this new conception of the world, she studies the differences between the concepts of the cosmopolitan *vs.* the migrant subject, as well as their relation to terrorism in the western world. Herrero points out that the new transmodern subject cannot belong to any place, and that, taking into consideration the binary reality that the establishment still forces on us, this can be a big problem for the construction of identity.

## ***Part IV: Transmodern Poetics of the Spiritual Self***

By applying a transmodern reading to spiritual texts (from Richard Rodriguez's *Darling: A Spiritual Autobiography* to Buddhist related poetry) we can find an alternative form of exploration; a universal spiritual understanding that goes beyond a fixed religion; a dialectic of non-duality that can be found in the western canon without a hierarchy. However, I think the concept of spirituality in Aitor Ibarrola-Armendariz is rather limited to the text he analyses, while in the other essay by Monika Kocot I find the theory—like Transmodernism in relation to the lack of hierarchy of Buddhism—more applicable to other readings that do not necessarily have to coincide with the topic of eastern spirituality.

## ***Part V: Transcultural Femininities***

This is one of the most interesting sections of the book, because in terms of literature analysis it takes into consideration some ideas that have been previously left out of postmodern analysis. With this I don't mean that they have not been studied, but that, if they have, it has been in isolation. For example, in Marc Amfreville's essay, silence is considered a crucial piece of information sharing in the same strategy as Duce shows with Adichie's texts. At the same time, "adaptation is seen as an adoption" (208). This idea is excellent in the sense that it gives adapted texts a whole new intention without forgetting the original text. It also opens the possibilities of criticism when analysing adaptations. The second essay of this section by Violeta Duce seems to follow the conversation that Amfreville had started by considering globalization as the main narrative of the contemporary world and the main trend of the transmodern. This implies a movement towards otherness. At the same time, as Duce perfectly points out in her essay, one of the opportunities that transmodern theory brings is the possibility for women to be subjects of history that the postmodern did not allow. This section, together with the essays that compose it, is



brilliantly structured, since there is a constant dialogue between them both. As Duce underlines, these narratives and this new way to confront them is transforming women's genealogy.

## **Part VI: Conclusion**

Considering that there is a common thread linking all the essays, this conclusion is not only necessary from an editorial perspective, but it also gives meaning

to the whole book as a transmodern text; it aims to go beyond what has been said, and opens a utopian conception of this paradigm. It provides a final thought on how Transmodernism appropriates postmodern and modernist concepts by shading new light into them.

This collection allows readers to get an overview of the new transmodern paradigm as well as the different possibilities that arise when using it in literary criticism. The way in which it is structured through key concepts makes the text accessible to the readers without losing its intention.



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## BOOK REVIEWS

NOELIA SÁNCHEZ CAMPOS

*Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*

# ***Frankenstein Revisited: The Legacy of Mary Shelley's Masterpiece***

Borham Puyal, Míriam, ed. 2018

Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad Salamanca. x + 100 pp. ISBN: 978-84-1311-006-6

**M**ary Shelley's *Frankenstein* has incessantly attracted critical attention and the versatility of this masterpiece has provoked perpetual re-interpretations around what has been termed "*the Frankenstein myth*".

Miriam Borham Puyal's *Frankenstein Revisited: The Legacy of Mary Shelley's Masterpiece* (2018) provides a valuable contribution to the ongoing debate around Mary Shelley's work and, especially, its entrance into a wide variety of mediums, including forms such as video games and vlogs.

In the five chapters that constitute the volume, all the different contributors display an acute understanding of the fact that, as Borham-Puyal claims in the introduction, the Frankenstein myth "transcends the novel it came from" (15). One comes to face the fact that the literary text that initiated the myth is, simply, the beginning of a vast aftermath of derivative productions that ought to be carefully examined.

Shelley's novel merely serves as the basis on which to lay the foundation for a thorough analysis of the means in which *Frankenstein* has been made accessible to a whole new audience. One of the main purposes of *Frankenstein Revisited* is precisely to make the transition from the text

to its adaptations, bearing in mind that such adaptations appear within a multiplicity of formats, all attempting to accommodate the interests of the current technology-driven audiences.

In this respect, *Frankenstein Revisited* effectively expands the conversation that has been established among the critical community on the subject of Frankensteinian adaptations, including Caroline Joan Picart's *Remaking the Frankenstein Myth on Film: Between Laughter and Horror* (2003), Mark A. McCutcheon's *Medium Is the Monster: Canadian Adaptations of Frankenstein and the Discourse of Technology* (2018), and Megen de Bruin-Molé's *Gothic Remixed: Monster Mashups and Frankenfictions in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Culture* (2020). McCutcheon places a significant amount of attention on the impact of technology and navigates between "popular culture and scholarly literature" (4) in an attempt to bring those concepts closer together. Similarly, de Bruin Molé's study highlights the need to approach Frankenstein "as a distinctive genre, at the intersection between mashup, remix, adaptation, and appropriation" (3). Joan Picart takes a similar stance and reinforces the notion that Frankenstein cinematic representations extend beyond "classic horror renditions, producing, among others, comedic and science fiction variants" (1).

Borham Puyal's collection of essays inserts itself in the midst of this insistence for a further exploration of the Frankensteinian universe. The contributors to *Frankenstein Revisited*, as the reader will see, all align themselves with this call for a broader vision of *Frankenstein*, illuminating the ways in which the classical text has continually reinvented itself so as to fulfil the needs of the new generation of consumers. The book has been organised following a chronological order, which greatly facilitates our discernment of "how the intersections of time and space have determined the reception and adaptation of the myth" (Borham-Puyal, intro. 17).

## Chapter 1

In this chapter, Marta Vega closely examines the entrance of *Frankenstein* in popular culture. The main aim of her essay is to highlight the movement of the story well beyond the literary realm so as to follow the evolution of the Frankensteinian myth. The distance that can be traced between the original novel and its subsequent theatrical and cinematic adaptations is regarded in a positive light. The changes in the portrayal of the characters themselves, especially the doctor and his creature, are seen as enhancing rather than 'corrupting' the myth.

The author seeks to exemplify the ways in which doctor Frankenstein and his creature are "twisted and changed in multiple ways" (Vega 22) in different adaptations, a circumstance that is aggravated by the insertion of the figure of the doctor's assistant. As Vega notes, such figure is absent in the original text and, yet, becomes a quintessential element in various adaptations. The author correctly demonstrates that the assistant does indeed produce an effect in the narrative, as his presence modifies the way Frankenstein and his creature are perceived by the public.

In theatrical productions, the introduction of a handyman is justified, since "the plays needed someone to introduce us to Victor and his experiment, and the drama required some sort of comic relief" (Vega 25). Through her analysis of the main purpose of the assistant, in both theatre and film, Vega accurately brings forward the belief that such figure plays a crucial role in the amount of sympathy that doctor Frankenstein and his creature attain from the public. The assistant, potentially, has the 'power' to reveal the creature's darker side and doom him to a fatal fate, as he mistakenly endows him with a brain "which we presume makes the Creature speechless and 'monstrous'" (Vega 27). The author of the essay successfully builds the suspicion that the addition of Victor's handyman is by no means coincidental. Ultimately, Vega argues, the heroic status (or lack thereof) of both creator and creature, curiously, largely depends on the active involvement of the assistant, who is by no means a mere spectator of the show.

## Chapter 2

Teresa Gibert's contribution in the collection provides a highly detailed analysis of Mary Shelley's influence on Margaret Atwood's work. She thoroughly investigates Atwood's incorporation of the Frankenstein myth into her writings. In the chapter, she makes direct references to specific stanzas in Atwood's poems to exemplify her points and, also, provides very concrete references that, certainly, guide her readers. Throughout the chapter, the author wishes to highlight those "explicit intertextual references to *Frankenstein*" (Gibert 46) that can be traced in Atwood's creations, including her poetry, fiction and critical productions.

Atwood's science fiction has become one of its most noticeable exponents. Gibert makes reference to the dystopian *MaddAdam* trilogy, with its intertextual connection not only to Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* but also to her dystopian novel *The Last Man* (1826). Gibert contrasts the original Victor Frankenstein and the trilogy's protagonist, Crake, who somehow distances himself from Victor's embodiment of the "mad scientist who plays with God with disastrous consequences" (Gibert 43). The essential difference between Shelley's Frankenstein and Atwood's Crake is analysed, that difference being associated to the fact that whereas Frankenstein assembled corpses' body parts Crake's approach was, rather, based on his "recourse to genetic modification" (Gibert 44). Bearing this in mind, Gibert also reinforces the sense of monstrosity that was so present in the original novel, and helps us understand that calling Atwood's Crakers "Frankenpeople and creepos foregrounds their monstrosity while it simultaneously reveals the monstrosity of their maker" (Gibert 44). This claim builds a tangible point of contact between Shelley's masterpiece and Atwood's dystopian reimagining. Both of them, we learn, place monstrosity and its consequences at the very core of their fictional worlds.

## Chapter 3

Daniel Escandell-Montiel explores the insertion of Frankenstein in yet another highly popular medium: video games. The author clearly states his willingness to approach video games as a format which facilitates the mutations of the original myth. The interactive nature of those games endows its consumers with the possibility of re-discovering Shelley's original characters from a whole new angle. Escandell-Montiel rightly argues that in computer games the monster that is created becomes a closer version to the one Mary Shelley originally intended. Most theatrical and cinematic versions tend to focus on the creature's monstrosity, hence inevitably dehumanising him and reducing our appreciation of his own *version* of the story. Video games have the potential to reverse these dynamics, as Escandell-Montiel notes: "[S]ome of his representations in video games are much closer to

the book's (intelligent) character than the fundamentally irrational monster portrayed in the Universal Pictures classic movie" (54).

In this light, the chapter provides us with sufficient information to become aware of the fact that the video games created around *Frankenstein* entail much more than a purely entertainment element. What we can surely extract from Escandell-Montiel's essay is the conviction that videogames are a powerful medium through which the inherent variability of the Frankenstein myth can be powerfully explored.

## Chapter 4

Transmedia storytelling becomes the focus of Maria Morán Sánchez's argumentation. In a conscious attempt to appeal to contemporary audiences, as Morán Sánchez observes, transmedia offers a continuous, impending connection to the fandom. The chapter manages to immerse us into the world of transmedia storytelling, so that we can comprehend what this concept entails and, also, to increase our awareness of the impact such concept has in its consumers.

In an era characterised by the constant presence of technological innovations, social media platforms have indeed become a channel through which fans build a bridge between their individual demands and the response of producers, as Morán Sánchez asserts: "[T]ransmedia storytelling is a process unique to our digital era, a moment in time in which never-ending connections are created between multiple media systems on a daily basis" (69). Multiple channels are, then, placed at the service of its audience to create a product that will satisfy their desires.

In her essay, Morán Sánchez exemplifies this through a specific transmedia Frankenstein recreation, called *Frankenstein M.D.*, which has become "a multiplatform transmedia adaptation developed through YouTube by following the format of video-blogging" (71). Morán Sánchez makes it clear that this curious transmedia rethinking of the myth remains, to a large extent, truthful to Shelley's original tale, with some modernising touches. This faithfulness successfully encompasses a broader audience, one that includes "fans of the novel and people who are not familiar with the book, but can still get entertained and recognize the popular references included in the narrative" (78). Thus, this chapter illuminates the notion that transmedia does indeed aim at a wider conception of *Frankenstein*, one that appeals to different types of consumers.

## Chapter 5

The final chapter examines yet another format in which *Frankenstein* has proliferated: TV series. This medium has renovated classical literary tropes and added certain 'freshness' to them. Leonor Ruiz-Ayúcar reveals the ways in which Victorian texts acquire an exceptional significance through TV series, which paves the way for a re-examination of what we thought we knew about *Frankenstein*.

She places her main focus on the series *The Frankenstein Chronicles* so as to demonstrate that, in this particular case, what the audience witnesses is by no means simply another adaptation of *Frankenstein* but, rather, a complete reimagining of it. Within this, the figure of the detective becomes central, as in *The Frankenstein Chronicles* we encounter "the importance of the psychological and paranoid mental state of the detective, and the moral transgressions committed by the cities' inhabitants" (Ruiz-Ayúcar). The author clarifies that the abovementioned series is set well before the Victorian era and, yet, as she notes, there is an undeniable Victorian (and Gothic) trace permeating the show. The parameters of Victorian society, its fears and anxieties, are all found in the series in multiple ways, which adds to the uncanniness of it all. Once again, assigning the role of hero and monster is complicated, which prompts "the audience to reevaluate whether these monsters have been unjustly vilified or whether there is a monster inside all of us" (Ruiz-Ayúcar). These same moral dilemmas around monstrosity that the show elicits most probably were also shared by young Mary Shelley at the time of producing *Frankenstein*.

In conclusion, *Frankenstein Revisited* constitutes a great contribution to the field of Frankensteinian adaptations and prompts their readers to consider such adaptations in their broadest sense, one that includes the different mediums that the contributors exemplify through their chapters. The collection of essays included in the book successfully sets a tone that, as Borham-Puyal claims in the introduction, "welcomes critical studies on the legacy of *Frankenstein*, its impact and reception, as well as its rewriting in different media (literature, film, television, videogames, vlogs) and for different audiences" (17). In this respect, the present study aligns itself with current critical views and joins their collective attempt to both enlighten and demystify *Frankenstein*. 200 years after its original publication, the myth still continues to be surrounded by ambiguities and paradoxes. *Frankenstein Revisited* certainly constitutes an enriching study that sheds light on some of those paradoxes and invites readers to construct their own version of *Frankenstein* while appreciating all the contributors' enhancing theories on such a wonderful, everlasting myth.



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## AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS

SANTIAGO BAUTISTA MARTÍN

*Universidad de Alcalá*

# ***Intervention Study on L2 Teacher's Motivation and Identity Based on the L2 Motivational Self System: (Re)constructing the Ideal Teacher Self of Bilingual Pre-service School Teachers***

Director: Dr. Antonio García Gómez

In a context in which English-Spanish bilingual programmes are being implemented all across the country, the topic of my proposal is the development of motivation and identity in pre-service bilingual primary school teachers. The main purpose of this research is to verify whether Kubanyiova's adaptation of Dörnyei's *L2MSS* (Second Language Motivational Self System) can be applied to a group of trainee bilingual primary school teachers. More specifically, a) if the system would help to effectively increase and maintain their motivation for teaching; and b) if visualisations and narratives will turn to be effective for the development of their *ILTS* (Ideal Language Teacher Self). Therefore, an intervention programme will be designed on the basis of Kubanyiova's previous work (2007, 2012) and following the conditions pinpointed by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) that make the attainment of this ideal image feasible. This intervention would consist of a set of practical workshops that will require an active participation on the side of the participants, something that might eventually turn to be challenging

due to their scarce availability outside their academic duties. In these workshops the *Future L2 Teacher Selves* of the participants will be progressively strengthened through different visualisation and narration techniques. In order to collect a series of data, each of the participants will be interviewed at the end, so that it can be known to what extent the initial hypothesis has been successful or not. Taking into account the nature of the matter studied here, which is both dynamic and complex, it looks like the most suitable method of analysis will be qualitative, as Dörnyei (2009) himself has claimed. Once an interpretation of the significant data collected has been carried out through a systematic analysis, it is expected to get some significant results that would eventually lead to draw a set of relevant conclusions. The scope of this research is twofold: on one hand, to sketch the identity of bilingual primary school teachers, and, on the other hand, to contribute to initial teacher training by helping them to become aware of their own current and ideal selves, thus motivating them to bridge the gap between both and to pursue their teaching ideals from a realistic point of view.

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 AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS
 

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GORKA BRACERAS MARTÍNEZ

UPV/EHU

# ***Radical Environmentalism and Literature: An Analysis of Nature, Environmental Exploitation and Direct Action***

Directora: Dra. Amaia Ibarraran Vigalondo

**R**elationships between humans and the natural world have been portrayed in literary works dating from the 19th-20th centuries. Today, as a result of the changing environmental situation, new kinds of human-natural relationships are occurring and thus, these are being represented in literature too. Starting from the premise that ecocritical approaches to literature are concerned with the study of said relationships, the aim of this project is to study how these new ways of human-natural contact are represented in US literature. The project will, more specifically, focus on the presence of radical environmentalism in literature from an ecocritical perspective.

The main objectives of the project are threefold and interdependent. First of all, attention will be paid to nature writing and to more traditional relationships between humans and the natural world in four literary works in which radical environmentalism has a widespread presence. These works are *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, *Hayduke Lives!* (both written by Edward Abbey), *Jokerman 8* (by Richard Melo) and *The Secret World of Terijian* (by an anonymous author). Although this activism is their main focus, there is also space for the portrayal of human-nat-

ural relationships related to issues like spirituality or freedom. The second objective of the project will be the study of the environmental impact caused by industrial and capitalist powers. The exploitation of nature by these powers has become another way of relationships with the environment and a source of problems worth considering. Finally, radical environmentalism in literature will be studied paying attention to different aspects: actions, philosophical and political ideas, etc. The boundaries between reality and fiction are somehow blurred in these works, not only due to the fact that they had a considerable impact in the real-life movement, but also because, in turn, the works have been influenced by real-life events and people. For this reason, although the project is concerned with literature, other fields like history or philosophy will have an important place in the course of the analysis. Despite the problematic fact that radical environmentalism has been labelled as terrorism, the analysis of the works will depict it as just another kind of human-natural relationship. The present thesis will allow for further research in other artistic disciplines such as cinema, videogames or even music, because radical environmentalism has become quite an important phenomenon worldwide and examples of this environmentalism are not uncommon nowadays.

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## AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS

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PAULA BUIL BELTRÁN

*Universidad de Zaragoza*

# ***Subtitling as a Teaching Tool in English for Infant Education***

Directora: Pilar González Vera

**N**ew technologies have invaded our daily lives and this is reflected in the fact that, nowadays, nearly everybody owns an electronic device, from laptops to smartphones. As a consequence, the use of computers and the Internet inside the classroom is progressively more frequent. At the same time, subtitling as a teaching/learning tool has become more popular. For that reason, some researches are analysing how the adaptation of different tasks through the use of subtitling methods has some influence on the learning/teaching process.

Therefore, in the aim of enhancing the reflective skills—commonly known as listening and reading—of university students of the degree of Infant Education, this paper uses an interlingual active subtitling task during their learning process to analyse its effectiveness. In order to achieve the aim that has been set, this paper explores the use of Task Based Learning (TBL) in ESP classes, and it shows a teaching unit related to Visual Literacy, a unit inside the teaching guide of Infant Education Degree.

The method through which results have been drawn is based on the establishment of a control group and an experimental group. Both groups have been taught the same content through different methodologies and similar materials, the first one using a more traditional method while the experimental group has used TBL and interlingual subtitles. Results during this first experiment showed to what extent the implementation of subtitles inside the class could raise the students' motivation, lowering their anxiety level and helping them in the improvement of their comprehensive skills in a more enjoyable way.

In the future, the perspectives are good. Every year more researchers are investigating on the use of subtitles in the class. In this respect, the idea is to implement similar teaching units based on TBL and active subtitling during an entire ESP course at the University of Zaragoza. Once the study has been applied, firm conclusions can be drawn on how effective this new methodology could be in order to improve, primarily, students' passive skills. This will help ESP students to develop a better comprehension of documents and oral English, which may help them to develop their future careers.

## AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS

SUSANA GARCÍA MONTOSA

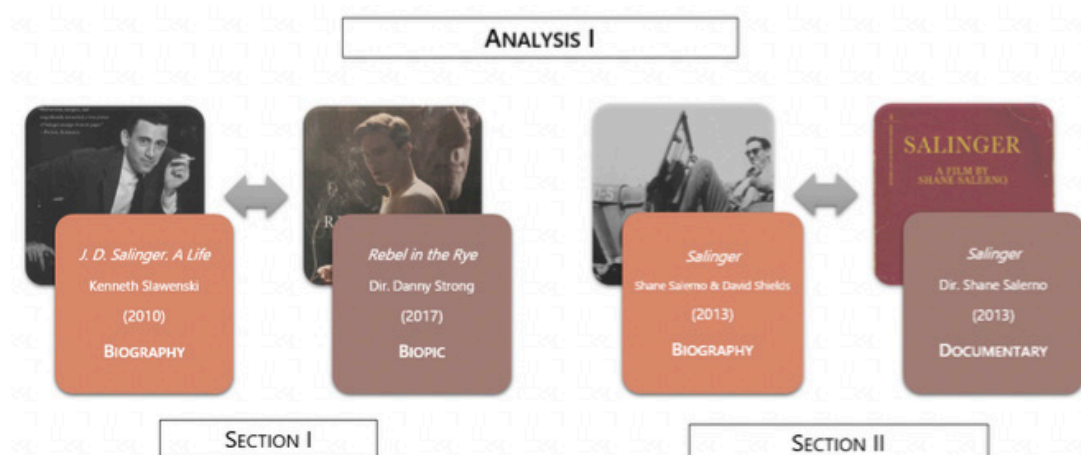
*Universidad de Granada*

# ***Sonny, the Catcher: The Swinging Between Fiction and Reality in Life Writing and Life Filming about J. D. Salinger***

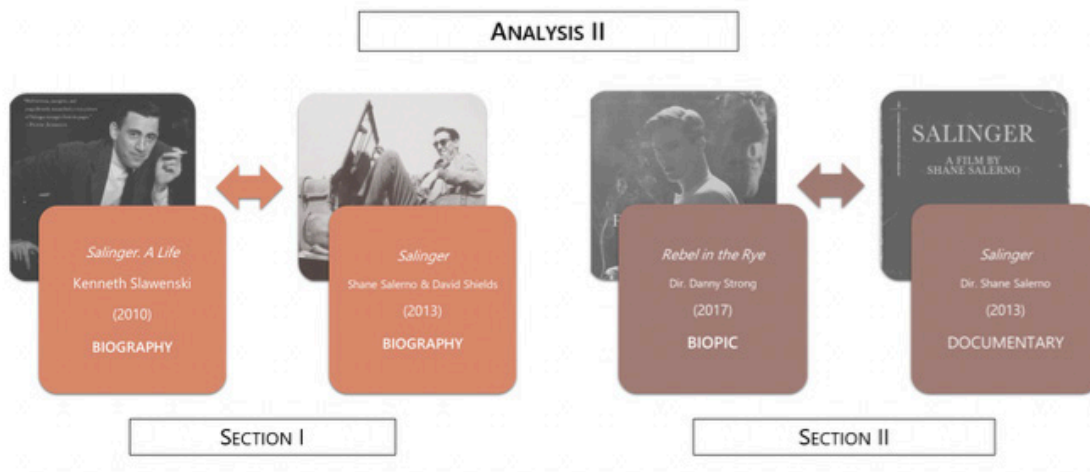
Directora: Dra. María Elena Rodríguez Martín

**F**ollowing the research lines of adaptation studies and life narratives, the purpose of my doctoral thesis is to analyze the relationship between reality and fiction in the genres of biography, biopic, and documentary about American writer Jerome David Salinger, author of the acclaimed novel *The Catcher in the Rye* (1951). Using as corpus the biographies *J.D. Salinger*.

*A Life* by Kenneth Slawenski (2010) and *Salinger* by Shane Salerno and David Shields (2013), and their audiovisual counterparts, the biopic *Rebel in the Rye* by Danny Strong (2017) and the documentary *Salinger* by Shane Salerno (2013), the hypothesis of this doctoral thesis is based on the belief that what we find in the before-mentioned life narratives is a case of multilayered adaptation.



The research unfolds in a double analysis. The first one consists of two sections: section I compares Slawenski's biography with its audiovisual homologous, Strong's biopic, while section II follows a similar structure comparing Salerno and Shields's biography with its counterpart documentary. This analysis is illustrated in the following chart:



explained above and considering this research is encompassed in the field of English Studies, I will apply two theories developed by American scholars: Seymour Chatman's views on narratology applied to adaptation, and Robert Stam's intertextual dialogism theory. The combination of these two theoretical frameworks will allow a thorough analysis of the chosen corpus at a structural and narrative

The second analysis has also two sections: section I focusing mainly on the comparison of the life writing sources only, that is, the two biographies; and section II on the life filming sources, that is, the biopic and the documentary, as illustrated below:

The main aim of this thesis is to find out what the studies on life narratives add up to adaptation studies. The form in which the previous double analysis has been shaped attempts at proving how adaptation can be approached from different perspectives, not just in the traditional book-to-film transference. In order to carry out the analysis

level, with the close observation of the different elements in the texts, and at a historical, cultural and ideological level, with the identification of the different filters applied to the adaptation of Salinger's life and works.

The comings and goings between reality and fiction that may be found in my analysis can make us question if there is a limit at all. My hypothesis is that it doesn't have to be. It can be a case of multilayered adaptation, one in which different filters overlap to create intertextual stories and characters that mingle until the line between them becomes blurred.



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## AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS

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MARÍA HEREDIA-TORRES

*Universidad de Granada*

# ***Jane Austen and Transmedia Narratives: Analysis of the Web Series Based on Her Novels***

Directora: Dra. María Elena Rodríguez Martín

**A**daptation studies have significantly evolved during the past decades and have moved from fidelity discourses to analyses that take into account new filters and dimensions. Moreover, the way we consume audiovisual products has changed and is not limited anymore to television and cinema, or not even to a single platform. Due to the development of social media and streaming platforms, different sources are used in order to create stories — or recreate them.

The main aim of this PhD thesis is to analyse different transmedia web series which adapt the works of Jane Austen. These series use different platforms in order to modernise and adapt the novels to 21<sup>st</sup> century USA and UK for a new digital generation. Stories are retold through videos in YouTube and entries in different social networks (Twitter, Instagram and Tumblr, among others); therefore, different theories based on transmedia storytelling will be applied in order to analyse how these platforms have been used to narrate the story (Jenkins 2011; Scolari, Jiménez and Guerrero 2012) and how the audience can interact with it (Pratten 2015; Hayes

2007). The relationship between transmedia and adaptation will also be explored in order to study how these new trends may be used to recreate these novels. On the other hand, different approaches will be taken into consideration (Cartmell and Whelehan 2010; Cardwell 2007; Stam 2017) to present and analyse the extra-cinematic filters that have been applied to modernise the plot and adapt the story.

The most important challenge that will be faced is the interdisciplinary nature of the study itself because I attempt to discover how different elements and social media platforms have been connected to adapt Jane Austen's works in a completely new and innovative way that modernises and retells classic novels written between the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. Finally, this analysis will allow us to propose a classification that could be used in the future to explore this type of adaptations taking into consideration all the aspects abovementioned. This is relevant because it can open a new path both in adaptation studies and in transmedia storytelling, and will enable us to go beyond traditional adaptations and implement a new way of connecting with the original text.



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## AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS

ANDREA LLANO BUSTA

*Universidad de Oviedo*

***Rumbos afectivos: género, trauma y emociones en la ficción contemporánea de autoras indodiaspóricas***  
***[Affective Courses: Gender, Trauma and Emotions in Contemporary Fiction by Indodiasporic Female Writers]***

Directora: Socorro Suárez Lafuente y Dra. Alejandra Moreno Álvarez

**O**ver the last couple of decades, there has been an increasing interest in decolonising the field of trauma studies (Craps; Rothberg). However, the research to date has focused mainly on challenging the Eurocentric prevalence of Western conflicts, theories and values with little attention paid to the incorporation of the overlooked experiences of the female population. Accordingly, the current thesis seeks to explore the gendered nature of trauma—from the Partition of India in 1947 to migration and present-day violence—and its intergenerational and transcultural reach as presented in selected contemporary narratives by Indodiasporic writers.

For that purpose, the analysis adopts an interdisciplinary approach that draws on postcolonial (Butalia; Pandey; Spivak), feminist (Braidotti; Butler; Gubar), trauma (Das; Hirsch; LaCapra) and affect theory (Ahmed; Hemmings; Raymond). Beyond the main objective previously stated, there is an additional threefold aim: (a) to examine the

effect of collective traumas on individual psyches in search of patterns of behaviour that replace binary thinking with fluid identities; (b) to delve into the potential of sisterhood as a means to subvert victimization; and (c) to determine the extent to which literature may represent and encourage the development of empathy, particularly with regard to Western readers.

Although results and valid conclusions remain inevitably limited at this early stage, it is possible to foresee marked distinctions between the impact of key traumatic events for men and for women, since the experiences of the latter tend to be family- instead of politics-oriented. Likewise, those disruptive scenarios may even foster the establishment of female friendships among otherwise dichotomous characters, thus drawing attention from a painful episode and highlighting its potential overcoming. Therefore, the future findings of this project seem likely to contribute to the decolonisation of trauma studies from a gender perspective that also encompasses regeneration in the aftermath of trauma.

## AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS

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**DANIEL PASCUAL**

*Universidad de Zaragoza*

# ***Digital Practices in Scientific Communication: An Analysis of Pragmatic Strategies in Research Project Websites and Social Networks***

Director: Dra. Rosa Lorés-Sanz y Dra. Pilar Mur Dueñas

**I**ncreasingly collaborative, globalized, multidisciplinary academic research is nowadays encouraging networked partnerships funded by international programs. The way of producing and disseminating knowledge is changing, triggered by the Internet and the ubiquity and popularity of digital genres and media. These enable international research groups to spread their investigations and projects around a wider, heterogeneous audience and potentially achieve higher reputation and bigger impact. Websites and social media are particularly helpful for the dissemination of research project updates, results and outputs, both visually and linguistically, due to their technological and textual affordances. Through these media, research groups offer project explanations and updates, simultaneously catering for accountability as regards the funding body and visibility towards the digital readership. In this endeavor, pragmatic strategies –textual units of varying length conveying interlocutors’ specific intents and leveraging the affordances of the medium where deployed– allow researchers to convey their communicative purposes and help users unveil how information is disseminated, findings publicised and potential readers addressed.

Hence, this doctoral thesis, framed within academic computer-mediated communication and internet pragmatics, seeks to analyse the prominent pragmatic strategies deployed by international research groups in project websites and social media. For such an analysis, a corpus was collected comprising the websites of 30 research projects participating in the European Horizon2020 program, the current biggest research and innovation framework. Drawing on extensive literature and the choices of research groups in the corpus, Twitter was chosen as the most representative social network for research-related purposes. Tweets from the existing 20 Twitter accounts out of the 30 projects selected were accordingly compiled. Further criteria for the compilation of the corpus included a temporal overlapping of projects with the elaboration of the doctoral thesis and the participation of Zaragoza-based institutions as partners in the projects.

For the analysis of pragmatic strategies, a multi-faceted methodology was called for. First, corpus linguistics is used to gather quantitative results about the frequency and saliency of pragmatic strategies in webpages and tweets. Second, discourse analysis provides insights

into the prototypical instantiations of such strategies. Third, the framework of multimodality is applied to project homepages as a case study to account for the summative pragmatic values of combining visual and verbal languages. Finally, an ethnographically-oriented perspective helps retrieve contextual evidence from informants through semi-structured interviews to support textually-based results. Findings show that three main macro-categories of pragmatic strategies coexist in project websites and Twitter: communicative pragmatic strategies report project progress and explain its goals and technicalities; promotional ones advertise the project as a collective entity, its members

and research results, and interactional ones connect with potential readers and bring research closer to society. An in-depth analysis of the macro-categories brought about a fine-grained data-driven taxonomy of 30 pragmatic strategies encountered in Twitter and the different web sections (e.g. about, work packages, partners, news and events, output). Overall, this doctoral thesis intends to delve into the pragmatics of research projects digital communication in academic, international environments to understand current aims and practices of international research groups, who attempt to exploit the affordances and advantages of digital genres and media.



## AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS

MARÍA EVA PIÑEIRO FARIÑA

*Universidad de Santiago de Compostela*

# ***Language Contact: The Influence of English on the Hispanic Community of the United States***

Director: Dr. Ignacio Palacios Martínez

**L**anguage contact situations between Spanish and English, together with the role of the mass media in the spread of Anglicisms into the language of the standard Spanish speaker, have been extensively studied (Elías-Olivares et al. 1985, González & Luján 2003, Marcos Pérez 1971, Potowski & Cameron 2007, Rodríguez Segura 1999, among others). However, very little research has been done on the influence of Anglicisms on the mode of expression used by the Hispanic press of the United States (Ferro 2011, Patzelt 2011). In this context of the state of the art, this research intends to explore the main features and frequency of the Anglicisms used by the Hispanic online press in the Northeast of the United States. The theoretical framework established to this end is grounded on three main strands: the definition of Anglicism, the description of the main features of the Spanish used in the U.S., and the main characteristics of newspaper headlines, which will be the main focus of my analysis. As far as the methodology is concerned, using as the basis for my work a self-compiled dataset of approximately 70,000 words, a selection of twenty-three Hispanic publications will be described in terms of the date of their foundation, readership, mission statement and sections. The sources used for the selection of these publications include the *Hispanic Yearbook* (2008-2009), *Veciana-Suárez's Hispanic Media, USA* (1987), and some well-known websites in the field. After selecting the publications, I will focus on their headlines

(30 per section) and will compile those which include Anglicisms. The Anglicisms recorded (around 3,100) will be classified and entered into a dataset according to their grammatical and semantic category, type of borrowing and frequency. Finally, I will explore their scope taking as reference dictionaries such as *DRAE* and *CLAVE*, dictionaries of Anglicisms (Alfaro 1964, Lorenzo 1996, Rodríguez 2017, Moreno-Fernández 2018), and *CREA* (*Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual*).

Preliminary findings show that there is a proportion of barely 4% of Anglicisms (397.4 Anglicisms every 10,000 words) on the dataset. If we regard the grammatical categories they include, it seems that anthroponyms (35%), together with nouns (25%), are the most common. In relation to the semantic areas they cover, sports (15%), social life & human types (13%), and technology (11%) are the most productive, showing very similar proportions. Concerning the type of borrowing, there is a clear predominance of pure Anglicisms (61%) if compared to other types (e.g. loan translations 16%, loanblends 13%). Finally, regarding their scope, while *CREA* includes a proportion of 68% Anglicisms, Moreno-Fernández's dictionary, which focuses specifically on the Anglicisms which are exclusive to the U.S., only registers a proportion of 2%. This means that there does not seem to be a significant difference between Anglicisms in U.S. Spanish and those which affect other varieties of Spanish, which in turn reveals that the mass media world seems to be operating on a more global scale.



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## AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS

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IRENE REPISO RODRÍGUEZ

*Universidad Autónoma de Madrid*

# ***Romantic Nature and the Female Sublime in British and American Women Writers***

Director: Dra. Noelia Hernando Real

**T**he aesthetic category of the sublime was deeply theorised by numerous philosophers and writers during the eighteenth century and further developed by Romantic writers. During the last decades, the sublime has been broadly studied from several perspectives. For instance, some critics (Weiskel 1976, Freeman 1995) have claimed that there was a relationship between the theory of the sublime and the rise of the eighteenth-century novel, because both discourses helped to construct the modern identity through the empowerment of the individual experience in the epistemological process. González Moreno (2007) has also underlined the concern of the eighteenth-century aesthetics about the development of the individual, and has explored the blurred limits of the beautiful and the sublime during Romanticism. Furthermore, most feminist critics have stressed the polarity masculine/sublime and feminine/beautiful, mainly established by the eighteenth-century philosophers Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant, and pointed at the male dominant position of the Romantic artist over Nature during the aesthetic experience of the sublime. Following this approach, Mellor (1988) and Freeman (1995), among others, have explored alternative female understandings of the sublime since Romanticism.

The aim of my thesis will continue these critical approaches in order to reconsider the traditional and patriarchal concept of the sublime in terms of its relation with masculine features and the position of the subject during the sublime process (which is mainly a male dominant position over Nature). Besides, my thesis will contribute further to

the study of the sublime not only by stressing that the sublime suggested a certain intellectual and social power, but also by showing that the traditional and patriarchal ideology attempted to deprive women of the necessary education and social status to understand and experience the power that the sublime implied. In this way, I will try to find out if this deprivation was determining in the relationship between the aesthetic category of the sublime and some women writers, and how they understood and expressed the sublime in their works. This study is set out as a transatlantic comparative approach, so I will consider both the British and American Transcendentalist ideology surrounding the aesthetic concept of the sublime.

A sketchy outline of the texts to consider includes the traditional works by some philosophers during the eighteenth- and nineteenth- century (Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller in Germany; Edmund Burke and William Wordsworth in the United Kingdom; Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau in America), some works that defended a more complete female education in that period (such as Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication on the Rights of Woman*, 1792, and Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*, 1845), and works written by women writers which deal with the concept of the sublime: British works will include Mary Wollstonecraft's *Letters Written in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* (1796), Susan Edmonstone Ferrier's *Marriage* (1818), and Mary W. Shelley's *The Last Man* (1826); and American works will include Margaret Fuller's *Summer in the Lakes* (1843), Louisa May Alcott's *Little Women* (1868), and Sarah Orne Jewett's *A White Heron* (1886).



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## AEDEAN DOCTORAL SEMINAR ABSTRACTS

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# ***Censura y traducción de la obra de George Orwell en China***

Director: Dra. María Losada

**E**l escritor político británico George Orwell fue, sin lugar a dudas, un pilar del anticomunismo durante la Guerra Fría del siglo XX. Es preciso señalar que, transcurrido más de medio siglo desde su muerte, este famoso autor ha conseguido liberarse en parte de la censura oficial comunista de China, un país que siempre actúa bajo un discurso de corrección y control políticos muy reveladores. Este proyecto de tesis doctoral parte del análisis del progreso de aceptación y censura de la obra de George Orwell en la China contemporánea, época posmaoísta (1978-2019). Se propone estudiar de forma crítica la traducción, recepción y censura de la obra orwelliana en el sistema comunista de la China continental. De tal manera, busca determinar el impacto de los condicionantes sociopolíticos en las reescrituras que la obra orwelliana sigue experimentando en los espacios sociales de la China comunista. Plantea también investigar las causas y las consecuencias de la enorme presencia de las traducciones de la obra de Orwell al chino en obras de distintos traductores, tomando como punto de referencia y comparación el número de traducciones al español del mismo autor.

La tesis combina un enfoque traductológico-sociológico (Toury 1995; Bourdieu 1985 y 1996; Lefevre 1992; Chang 2001) y un análisis descriptivo-comparativo que se centra en la novela *1984* de Orwell. En primer lugar, se define el marco teórico, revisando importantes conceptos traductológico-sociológicos a fin de observar el campo de la traducción literaria china donde se gestaron y se publicaron las traducciones de la obra orwelliana. En

segundo lugar, se lleva a cabo una revisión completa de todas las versiones traducidas al chino de la obra de Orwell teniendo en cuenta las transformaciones que experimentó la edición de Orwell y su presentación en la prensa literaria y cultural en la época maoísta y posmaoísta. Por último, se plantea un análisis descriptivo-comparativo que se centra en el rastro de los condicionantes sociopolíticos en el texto, paratexto y metatexto (Genette 1989) en las traducciones chinas de una de las novelas más famosas del autor, *1984*. El corpus de análisis se propone incluir cuarenta y cuatro obras traducidas al chino de la novela *1984*, tomando asimismo como texto de referencia la versión original inglesa (2003) y sus dos traducciones al español de *1984* (2000, 2013), por entender que cuantas más zonas del “mapa” se exploren, más valiosa será la perspectiva de conjunto.

Se buscan resultados que prueben los patrones que se repiten en la traducción orwelliana en el mundo chino. Se describirá una estrategia que, en vez de mostrar una clara tendencia a la censura, busca neutralizar, adaptar e incluso manipular todos tipos de comentarios y críticas referentes a la política, con el propósito final de que los mismos se sumen al contemporáneo *leitmotiv* político del partido y del estado. Como consecuencia, asumimos que la traducción orwelliana en China, en una suerte de paradoja, ha contribuido, por un lado, a promover sin duda la difusión del autor en el mundo chino mediante una enorme presencia de las versiones publicadas, mientras que, por el otro, al estar reescrita y manipulada, ha alejado a muchos lectores chinos del auténtico mundo orwelliano.





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