

Reviews

Gibert Maceda, Teresa y Laura Alba Juez. Coord. 2008. *Estudios de Filología Inglesa. Homenaje a la Dra. Asunción Alba Pelayo*. UNED: Varia.

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The sizeable volume entitled *Estudios de Filología Inglesa. Homenaje a la Dra. Asunción Alba Pelayo* (“Studies in English Philology. A tribute to Dr. Asunción Alba Pelayo”) is, as the title suggests, the result of the wish of many of Dr. Alba’s colleagues and friends to pay her a well-deserved tribute for her prolonged professional work, on the occasion of her retirement. Thus, this extensive publication (615 pages long), edited and coordinated by Teresa Gibert Maceda and Laura Alba Juez, contains the contributions by a numerous group of lecturers and researchers from English departments at several Spanish universities, especially those Dr. Alba has been teaching at along her extensive professional career. All these colleagues have contributed their papers or had their names included in the *Tabula gratulatoria* as a tribute to her work. The product is a generous work which will no doubt be of great interest for all those working in the field of English Studies, be it in the field of linguistics, literature, translation, or even history and culture of English-speaking countries.

The general structure of the book consists of seven sections: three of them, the prologue, the biographical notes and the “letter to a friend”, precede the four sections of papers (devoted to English linguistics and language teaching, English literature, translation, and history and culture of English-speaking countries), with a *tabula gratulatoria* at the end. One might have also expected a final section with a summary of the contents, and of course, some final dedication to Dr. Alba, although the reader’s expectations in this respect might have been fulfilled with the initial sections.

The book starts with the “Prologue”, written by the editors, Dr. Laura Alba Juez and Dr. Teresa Gibert Maceda, who introduce Dr. Alba to the reader. They emphasize, amongst her many virtues, not only her academic relevance and her devotion to teaching, but also her enthusiasm and creativity, especially in the academic sphere, considering her participation in the creation or foundation of a number of Departments of English Studies in Spanish Universities, in addition to her human quality and her humanitarian work. Then, the “Biographical notes”, by the late Dr. Enrique Alcaraz, help the reader to better understand Dr. Alba, where he points out three of her main virtues and qualifies Dr. Alba as a warm, active and learned woman. These two sections are followed by a “Letter to a friend: a personal impression about *Unamuno y Greene. Un Estudio Comparativo*” by Dr. Rafael Páez, which, through a fictional epistolary conversation between the author and Dr. Alba, acts as both an introduction and a summary of one of the most famous and widely cited works by Dr Alba, *Unamuno y Greene (Un estudio comparativo)*, published in 1989, with a second edition in 2002. In this section, Páez praises the study, and pays special attention to Dr Alba’s exquisite language, her clarity, the purity of her style, and to her “dosis de pasión personal .. fruto de .. un interés humano por acercar(te) a un problema ...” (p. 29) [“dose of “personal passion [...] born of [...] a human interest to make the reader approach a problem”; our translation].

These short introductory sections, which show, describe, and to a certain degree bring home to the reader the importance of this book (given the human and professional qualities of the person it is a tribute to), are followed by four large parts, which make up the bulk of the

book. These four parts, which vary in length, are devoted to four great areas within English studies, precisely the “four great areas of study Dr. Alba worked on” (p. 23): (I) English linguistics and language teaching, (II) Literature in English, (III) Translation, and (IV) History and culture of English-speaking countries. Given the large number of papers in these sections, we shall concentrate here only on the first and last contribution in each of them, and shall list the other studies, so that the reader can become acquainted with the contents of the book.

The first part, “English linguistics and language teaching”, consists of seventeen papers. The first of them, “The Construction of Identity through Small Talk in Media Interviews”, written by Dr. Laura Alba Juez, is a fascinating study of strategies and functions of small talk in TV and radio interviews, based on twenty interviews conducted in British and American English; the last one is an interesting paper by Dr. Verónica Vivanco entitled “Discourse Patterns and Progression in Aeronautical Texts”, where after exploring the pragmatic features typical of advertising messages in aeronautics, she concludes that the dual or contrastive pattern does not always appear in this type of text, which rather follow a single pattern. In between these two papers, there are other attractive studies on various topics related to linguistics and language teaching by experts in the field: “Las palabras pequeñas: el lenguaje en la sociedad global”, by Dr. Román Álvarez Rodríguez and Dr. M^a del Carmen África Vidal Claramente; “Explorando herramientas para el aprendizaje online”, by Dr. Pablo Cancelo; “The Role of Context in the Interpretation of Academic and Professional Communication”, by Dr. Pilar Durán Escribano and Dr. Ana M^a Roldán Riejos; “Hacia una orientación lingüística de la traducción: léxico y aspecto verbal”, by Dr. Linda Escobar; “Modelling Final Declarative Intonation in English and Spanish”, by Dr. Eva Estebas Vilaplana; “Language and Ideology in the Knowledge Society: A Corpus-Based View of ‘Person’ in Business English”, by Dr. Pedro Fuertes Olivera; “A Focus-on-Form Approach in Language Pedagogy: Research in an EFL Context”, by Dr. María Pilar García Mayo; “La percepción sensorial y el léxico de la comida y la bebida en inglés y español”, by Dr. Margarita Goded Rambaud; “Dinámicas discursivas en la conceptualización del tiempo: efectos de la perspectivización en inglés antiguo”, by Dr. María del Carmen Guarddon Anelo; “Reconciling Language with Culture and Cognition in Politeness Theory”, by Dr. Victoria Guillén Nieto; “Internal and External Constraints in Meaning Construction: The Lexicon-Grammar Continuum”, by Dr. Ricardo Mairal Usón and Dr. Francisco José Ruiz de Mendoza Ibáñez; “*TH*-Clefts in English: Form and Function”, by Dr. Elena Martínez Caro; “The Paradoxical Nature of the English Word *Down*. The Case of *Downtown*”, by Dr. Ana Pinto Muñoz; “Variaciones grafemáticas de los anglicismos en los medios de comunicación: tendencias y factores condicionantes”, by Dr. Félix Rodríguez González; “Early and Late Northumbrian: the Case of the Ruthwel Cross Runic Inscription”, by Dr. Inmaculada Senra Silva.

The second part, “Literature in English”, is made up of sixteen papers devoted to literary works greatly heterogeneous in nature. The section starts with the revealing essay by Dr. José Antonio Álvarez Amorós, entitled “A Reappraisal of Henry James’s Ideas on Theatre and Drama”, where he studies the strange love-hate relationship between Henry James and the dramatic genre, with a thorough interpretation and distinction between the notions of “theatre” and “drama”, following James himself. This paper is followed by “¿Autobiografía o puro cuento? (Re)construcción de la identidad chicana en *Caramelo*, de Sandra Cisneros”, by Dra. María Antonia Álvarez; “Aventuras y respuestas: las pequeñas revistas americanas de poesía: 1970-2000”, by Dr. Manuel Brito; “Roman Shakespeare and the Elizabethan View of the Roman Empire”, by Dr. Marta Cerezo Moreno; “*The Old Manor House* and *A Simple Story*”:

A Harsh Lesson on Women's Defencelessness", by Dr. Aída Díaz Bild; "From Physical to Personal Frontiers: Catharine Parr Traill's 'Pioneer Woman' Redefined in Margaret Laurence's *The Diviners*", by Dr. Gretchen Dobrott; "Elegías y anti-elegías: el caso de Death de John Clare, o una expectativa frustrada", by Dr. Fernando Galván; "Subverting the Master Narrative of Heroic Conquest: Thomas King's A Coyote Columbus Story (1992)", by Dr. Teresa Gibert; "Miguel de Unamuno y Graham Greene: coincidencia en torno a los cuidados de la fe", by Dr. Santiago J. Henríquez Jiménez; "El teatro de Hugo Whitemore: un naturalismo innecesario", by Dr. José Mateo Martínez; "'Softened by Tenderness?': sentimiento y ambigüedad en la obra de Frances Sheridan y Mary Wollstonecraft", by Dr. Isabel Medrano Vicario; "'The Castalian Liquor': goce y mitificación del vino canario en la literatura inglesa", by Dr. Tomás Monterrey; "La España decimonónica vista por un inglés", by Dr. Catalina Montes; "Vínculos y ausencias del padre en la literatura postcolonial angloindia", by Dr. Juan Ignacio Oliva; and "Times of War and Peace: Sequels and Phobias in Rebecca West's *The Return of the Soldier*", by Dr. Lina Sierra Ayala. The section ends with the enthralling "124 Is Haunted. The Ghost Story as 'Ghost Text' in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*", by Dr. Justine Tally, who explores Toni Morrison's *Beloved* within the context of Afro-american folklore, Freud's theories, the philosophical, spiritual and scientific ideas of the 19th century, and the stylistic figures used by writers of the same generation of the great age of ghost stories, especially Mary Wilkins Freeman.

Unlike the two lengthy initial sections, the two that follow are visibly brief, with only three papers each. The first of them, the third section in body of the book, is devoted to "Translation", and starts with a paper by Dr. Francisco Fernández and Dr. Ana B. Fernández Guerra, entitled "Protocolos de pensamiento en voz alta y traducción: la elección adecuada del léxico". The authors deal with an innovative topic, since their analysis, following the most recent studies in Psycholinguistics, is based on the idea that approaching translation as a product does not really help towards understanding the mental processes translators follow as they work. This is followed by a paper by Dr. Juan J. Lanero on a religious topic, entitled "Las traducciones bíblicas de Coverdale: finalidad religiosa y proceso editor". The section finishes with a hot topic nowadays, with which Dr. Isabel Soto deals in her "Englishing the Spanish, or Fleeing the Mother Tongue". Dr. Soto approaches translation as an activity bringing together two linguistic and cultural systems, and includes the English and Spanish versions of two short stories by Vicente Soto.

The fourth section, "History and Culture of English-Speaking countries", also contains three papers: the first one, by Dr. Luz Arroyo Vázquez, offers an account of the important contribution by two women, Frances Perkins and Hillary Clinton, in two different ages, to social affairs, to healthcare, and thus to the reform of social laws in the United States, in a paper aptly entitled "Frances Perkins y Hillary Rodham Clinton: su contribución a la mejora de la legislación social estadounidense". A similar topic, that of women in politics, is approached by Dr. Antonia Sagrado Santos in her "An Excepcional First Lady and her Role in Politics in the 20th Century: Eleanor Roosevelt". Finally, the last paper in this section, in clear contrast with the two previous studies, is "The Land of Saints and Scholars", by Dr. Patricia Trainor de la Cruz, who explains why Ireland is known under such name, and attributes it to the role it played in the preservation of Christianity after the fall of the Roman Empire in the 5th century.

The book closes with a *Tabula gratulatoria*, which shows again the esteem and respect towards Dr. Alba felt by many of her colleagues who have not been able to participate in this volume, but have wished to pay a small tribute by having their names included at the end.

In general, it appears difficult to make any suggestion which might have contributed to improving this work, especially given the content of the contributions, all of them of a great quality. However, we feel it important to make a few remarks which we have mentioned above. For instance, this volume contains papers in English and in Spanish in a fairly random way, perhaps because this has been left at the author's choice. In our opinion, this gives the book a slightly disorganized appearance. It might seem that, within the sphere of English studies, it might be better if the papers had been published in the language which is not only the object of study, but also the lingua franca *par excellence*, which might also contribute to a greater dissemination of the work abroad. Also, a greater coherence might have been reached by a similar number of papers of each of the four sections, or perhaps through a reorganization under different headings allowing for more similar numbers. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that in a volume of this nature, where each author pays tribute to a person by contributing a paper on their specialized field of study, it is not easy to find parallelisms between the sections. It is, therefore, a volume one might describe as plural and heterogeneous, but also a coherent one, since all the papers are related to English studies, the field where Dr. Alba worked, and hence its *raison d'être* and its consistency as a whole.

Finally, it must be said that the work shows the esteem and warm feelings which Dr Alba has aroused in numerous academics and colleagues during her prolonged academic career. Therefore, this book seems to us a fair sign of recognition in order to pay tribute to a person who has devoted her whole life and work to English studies.

Gerardo Rodríguez Salas. 2009. *Katherine Mansfield: el posmodernismo incipiente de una modernista renegada*. Madrid: Editorial Verbum. 280pp.

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Criticism on Virginia Woolf, Katherine Mansfield and James Joyce has swayed between modernism and postmodernism. Monographs on Woolf's and James' postmodernism abound, yet no such book on Mansfield has ever been published despite the large number of articles and book chapters devoted to the topic. Following in the footsteps of Pamela L. Caughie's *Virginia Woolf and Postmodernism: literature in quest and question of itself* (1991), Rodríguez-Salas fills part of a scholarly gap by discussing Mansfield's work in light of seminal concepts in postmodern theory such as "the split subject", "intertextuality", "irony", "parody" and "pastiche."

The book is divided into four main chapters and a substantial introduction on modernism and postmodernism which sets the theoretical background for Rodríguez-Salas' analysis. There is a chronology at the beginning of the introduction which locates Mansfield's writing within the modernism/postmodernism debates. Then, the four chapters are organized by theoretical concepts and combine in-depth research, wide reading and grasp on contemporary theory both on postmodernism and on Mansfield criticism. The internal structure of the chapters demonstrates coherent methodology and thematic development. First, the author