

Annie Finch, New Formalism, and American Yuppie Poetry of the 1980s

When new formalism appeared as a poetic movement in the early 1980s it was sometimes described as “Yuppie poetry” because of its return to traditional poetic forms. Much of the criticism of the time associated this movement with the conservative politics of Reagan’s America, not so much because of the content of the poetry, but rather, because this type of poetry used formal and aesthetic conventions that had largely been disavowed by most poets of the 20th century. In much the same way that Reagan’s politics gestured to an idealized past, a ‘golden era’ of America that has since been lost, so too was new formalism often considered to be a gesture towards an idealized poetic past before the experimentation of modernism and the abandonment of rhyme and meter with the widespread popularity of free verse.

Annie Finch is often regarded as a key figure in the New Formalist movement. Her works, however, allow us to construct an interesting counter-narrative to the commonly held views regarding New Formalism. While the movement is often regarded as patriarchal, Finch’s works exhibit features of what H el ene Cixous calls * criture f eminine*. Politically, it is also unclear whether her work – in form or in content – can at all be aligned with the term ‘yuppie’ as it appeared in common discourse. The term “yuppie” is somewhat contradictorily used to describe the ideal bourgeois subject of the time, and to simultaneously denigrate and disavow this subject. It is both what the middle-classes desire, and what they seek to criticize.

New Formalism is similarly a contradictory project, and Finch's work allows us to see many of the contradictions of the 1980s, and in particular, it allows us to see how foundational national mythologies mix uneasily with the mythologies of capitalism. New Formalism also draws on the earlier confessional poets who were popular in America during the 1960s and who did, at times, rely on traditional rhyme and meter. Part of the reason that New Formalism appears to be such a contradictory project is that the confessional poetry of the nineteen-sixties was itself a contradictory project whose emphasis on individualism was at odds with its left-wing politics and could easily be co-opted into the neoliberal project.

This paper will examine how Finch's poetry both revives and challenges American national mythologies and how myth and archetype are employed throughout Finch's works both as a gesture to the past and as a critique of her present.

Bio note

James Papoutsis (Ph.D., English, York) is currently a contract faculty member of York University in Toronto. He specializes in contemporary literature, American literature, and popular culture. He has published fiction in numerous national and international literary journals and his work has earned him a number of major arts grants. He is currently completing a novel with the support of a Canada Council grant. He has also worked in theatre, both as a playwright and more recently as part of a collective that developed an audio-based experimental theatre project that was featured in the Festival Of Original Theatre. He recently delivered papers at the CAAS and PCA/ACA conferences about his ongoing research on literature and culture post-1945.

"Scarcely silent though often unheard":

Eurydice and Echo in the Poems of Harryette Mullen and Kathleen Fraser

Kathleen Fraser and Harryette Mullen, two American women poets writing in the late 20th Century, craft poems "Notes re: Echo" (Fraser), and "Eurydice" and "Exploring the Dark Continent" (Mullen), that use myth to critically explore how gender, pedagogy, and race are entangled in literary productions. At the same time, these poems participate in Bay Area debates about poetics, engaging claims made by some male Language writers. Enacting a feminist politics, these writers shape poems that employ shifting first and third person speakers, arguing for a poetry that is critical, communal, and liberatory.

In her poem, Fraser uses the epistolary to probe social and literary politics and their relation to feminism and friendship. "Notes re: Echo" is comprised of dated prose sections that sometimes read like journal entries, within which are interspersed two letters composed by "Echo" addressed to "Dear Narcissus." Dedicated to Language writer Steve Benson, Fraser's poem uses the letter to formulate questions of language and sentences: "is language, in fact, the pool?" (52). In Fraser's poem Echo is not pulled along by Narcissus's concerns, not condemned to repeat, as she is in the myth, what Narcissus speaks, but finds herself pursuing her own writerly pleasures.

While Fraser's poem works to deconstruct and refigure the myth of Echo and Narcissus, Mullen's poetry recycles materials within and between poems to produce a cacophony of voices and references which not only enact feminist critiques of race and gender, but also engage questions about the nature and practice of poetry. Eurydice is, the poem tells us, "scarcely silent though often unheard." She has a voice but is not listened to. Shifting from a first to a third-person perspective, the poem aligns Eurydice with other gendered constructions in Greek poetry and myth, such as the sphinx. The poem invokes "juicy voices. Pour them on," closing with "she" conceding,

as if in an argument, to being swayed by music, “as darker she goes deeper,” marking Eurydice's agency as she willingly succumbs to the sound of music. The poem on the facing page, “Exploring the Dark Content,” takes up the possibility of this “darker” community. Its title makes reference to content that is “dark”—about blacks—and also difficult and painful. While the title of Mullen's poem recalls Western colonialist figurations of Africa as a “dark continent” and also references Sigmund Freud's comment that female sexuality is a “dark continent,”¹ its first line, which includes the deictic “this,” entertains a conversation with Language writer Ron Silliman, a writer who frequently employs deictics. Mullen exposes the imbrications of gender, race, literature and like Fraser, she deploys poetry and myth as tactics for speaking back to and re-imagining poetry and its liberatory potential.

Sources

Fraser, Kathleen. *il cuore: the heart: Selected Poems 1970-1995*. Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1997.

Mullen, Harryette. *Sleeping With the Dictionary*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.

Bio note

Robin Tremblay-McGaw, MLIS, PhD, is a Lecturer at Santa Clara University where she teaches classes on critical thinking and writing, film, gender and sexuality, rhetoric, and literatures of the world. She is also a faculty associate for Bard College's Institute for Writing and Thinking and the Language and Thinking Program. She has written a book of poems entitled *Dear Reader* (Ithuriel's Spear 2015) and her critical and creative work has appeared in a variety of journals, including *MELUS*, *Aufgabe*, *HOW(ever)*, *Feminist Spaces 2.2*, and elsewhere. Currently with Rob Halpern she is co-editing an anthology of essays on New Narrative to be published by *ON: Contemporary Practice*, Fall 2017.

¹ Freud writes, “We know less about the sexual life of little girls than of boys. But we need not feel ashamed of this distinction; after all, the sexual life of adult women is a ‘dark continent’ for psychology” (Question of Lay Analysis). *The International Dictionary of Psychoanalysis* notes “Freud borrowed the expression [dark continent] from the African explorer John Rowlands Stanley's [sic]description of the exploration of a dark forest—virgin, hostile, impenetrable” (<http://www.enotes.com/psychoanalysis-encyclopedia/dark-continent> 12/3/07).

Let the Nectar Mixed with Good Cheer: Sappho and Skepticism

This essay is a composition on Hume and Sappho arguing four syllogisms. I first discuss debts to ancient philosophy in the *Treatise*. I describe Sextus Empiricus' *Outlines* as an explication of the procedural utilization of the standards of a formal school of Hellenistic skepticism, written for attentive students. Self-reflexive, hermeneutic, and theoretical, I describe this rhetorical heuristic as the muse inspiring in Hume a pervasive literary interlocutor. Yet, I argue Pyrrhonism is mainly founder Aenesidemus' theoretical commitments to Academic skepticism. Further, I argue that analytical index in history scours from exegesis its significant rhetorical activity *isosthenia* as robustly performative in contemporary rhetoric. An ancient cultural phenomenon of seeking out *ataraxia*, Hume's interlocutor, in contrast, is quite modern. Since using Sextus as practicum seems ostensibly antediluvian, I then argue the contemporary Skeptic might still employ something of an approximate method to classical *isosthenia*. I introduce this alternate heuristic with the suggestion that conceptual material be drawn from the work of 20th century poet and novelist Hilda Doolittle, in her use of Sappho. I describe incisive depictions of Sappho as poet, as attributes of the archetypal Skeptic, whose actions and perspective flesh out a robust agency. I turn to Hume's *Dialogues* to motivate two significant attributes: Sappho's moderation and her constancy in love. Informed by feminist work on intersectionality, I argue this Skeptic states as historical what is also disavowed as real. The *epoché* is more mythical in procedural generation than real; the Humean-Sapphic true philosopher conceives of *isosthenia* not as logical but aesthetic. Such a conception is consistent with Pyrrho's alleged indifference to rationality (as in Timon's *Silloi*). In summation, I suggest Hume's interlocutor is a modern classical apologist and that Pyrrho is more distinctly understood via Sappho's mythic poeticizing.

Bio note

Paul is a graduate student at SFSU, focusing primarily on the intersection between feminist theory and the philosophies of history and literature, though he reads widely and has paid particular and critical attention to Western philosophy for close to a decade. He has plans for doctoral study abroad, and intends to teach at the graduate level professionally.

Sylvia Plath and the Agony of Life

Like a young Electra in her particular Hades, Sylvia Plath's best poetry shows the assumption of nakedness and death as the necessary path towards the freedom of the mind. A careful analysis of the Greek myth and its main versions, together with some of her last poems, proves that the appeal goes far beyond the circumstances of her life and death, and becomes a nude testimony of the age where she happened to live. The authority that she utterly rejects, enlarges its canvass to comprehend the world exposed to the tyranny of fascisms which leave society momentarily handicapped or crippled. Her cry is the cry of humanity in search of meaning and responsibility, a necessary assertion.

Bio note

Rosa Burillo es Profesora de la UCM desde 1991 y Profesora Contratada Doctora desde 2008. Su especialidad es la Literatura Norteamericana, sobre todo el Relato, investigación que desarrolla dentro del grupo Poetics. Ha escrito artículos sobre J.D. Salinger, William Maxwell, John Updike, Raymond Carver, John Cheever, Jhumpa Lahiri y Thomas Pynchon. En 2007 publica su libro *Señas de Identidad*.

Searching for the Myth through A. S. Byatt's Poets

The proposal intends to show A. S. Byatt as the conjurer behind Randolph Henry Ash and Christabel LaMotte, fictional poets, and as ghostwriter of the poems of these two characters in the search of the “key to all mythologies” and to present the novel *Possession* as reconstruction of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The idea is to unveil the journey that the main characters, scholar Roland Michell a man obsessed with Ash, and Dr. Maud Bailey a woman dedicated to the study of LaMotte, undertake, leading them through hell; hell bequeathed by Dante, who ultimately catalyzes and socializes the mythical and mystical underworld categories. This constitutes a set of intuitions of what could not be accidental in the novel; a memory of the *cantos* that compose the *Inferno*. A memory of what the underground and parks have come to mean in contemporary fiction. The paper seeks to establish a relationship between the poetry of Randolph Henry Ash and Christabel LaMotte, who, in search, of the origin of myth, end up guiding Roland and Maud to a postmodern paradise. The main idea is the conviction that those texts within the text help prepare the layout and reconstruction of the *Comedy* offered by Byatt, and wants to show cases in which art is a reinterpretation of myths and, in this novel in particular, a reinterpretation, a rewriting and a reimagining of said reinterpretations. Dante is not the only archetype that *Possession* follows; references from Hercules to Eve, from Ragnarök to Alice, can be found. In the novel the staging of the myth is not rigid and does not need to be consistent: one character can be at one time Adam and Dante but it does not necessarily mean that his counterpart playing Eve must also be Beatrice. This fact multiplies the reenactments throughout the text offering several readings of the mythological pillars. However, in every case fear and love, and by all means, poetry, would be the driving force that would guide the characters through hell searching for a kind of redemption that they don't even know they are seeking. This paper will show Byatt as a puppeteer poet that, through Ash and LaMotte, will take the reader into a journey of reinterpretation of mythology.

Bio note

Assistant Professor at Universidad Complutense de Madrid. PhD in Comparative Literature and Theory of Literary Discourse and PhD in English. Experience in academic project coordination, cultural management and teaching, specialized in literature and its relations with culture and myth. Worked as Academic coordinator at Instituto Caro y Cuervo; taught in Universidad del Rosario and Universidad Jorge Tadeo Lozano in Bogotá. Coordinated the conference cycles at “Biblioteca-Museo Carlos Lleras”. Author of the book *El abismo lógico*, (UR 2009) and published in *Estudios Ingleses de la Universidad Complutense*, *Anales de literatura Hispanoamericana*, *Razón Crítica*, *Journal of Comparative Literature and Aesthetics*, and *Nova et Vetera*. Member of the editorial board of *Razón Crítica*. Coordinator of the research group Estudios Interdisciplinarios y Literatura Comparada and the project *Complementary Views on British Fiction in the field of Comparative Literature*. Member of the research group [Studies on Intermediality and Intercultural Studies Mediation-SIIM](#).

Mythology and everyday life in Ana Blandiana's poetry

The starting point of this paper are Ana Blandiana's latest volumes of poetry: *The ebb of the senses* (2004), *My country A4* (2010), *The hourless clock* (2016) in order to approach the presence of myth, especially Greco-Latin deities, in her poems. Ana Blandiana (b.1942) is the best known woman writer in Romania, for her numerous books of poetry and prose, her dissident voice during the communist dictatorship and her civic involvement after 1990. Her poetry deals with important existential and metaphysical questions about the self, time, life, and death and the presence of evil in the world. As we shall argue the mythological references in Blandiana's poetry are recontextualized in an everyday environment in a modernist matter so as to make sense of contemporary life.

Bio note

Melania Stancu (b.1979, Bucarest, Rumanía) Assistant Professor of Spanish and Hispano-American Literature in the Ibero-Romance Department at the University of Bucharest. Author of a PhD. dissertation called "The Spanish Avant-garde novel: stylistic particularities". Domains of interest: modernism and avant-garde literature in Spain and Latin America, metaphor theories, cognitive poetics.

**Renouncing and Re-writing Myth: Imagining Anew and Employing Feminist
Agency in Natalie Diaz's *When My Brother Was an Aztec***

Mojave poet Natalie Diaz's *When My Brother Was an Aztec* (2012) is a powerful poetry collection that illustrates how both the rejection and re-writing of myth can be catalysts for a re-imagining of cultural choices and women's rights.

In her collection, Diaz employs the primary god of war in ancient Mexico, *Huitzilopochtli*, to make sense of a brother's Methamphetamine addiction and the effect this has on the narrator and her family. Just as this god was given sacrifices, the family in Diaz's poetry is threatened by the fact that they, too, will be sacrificed to and subsumed by addiction itself (what *Huitzilopochtli* represents). However, the narrator finds agency and strength and combats this contemporary form of the ancient god by rewriting yet another myth--the myth of the empty land, which settlers employed when they justified colonial takeovers of Indigenous peoples.

The myth of the empty land, a dominant ideology at the time of the "discovery" of the "New World," was a colonial one which understood the Americas as being a realm void of civilized peoples and as wilderness that needed to be groomed according to the dictates and beliefs of European "civilizations." This myth has fed the denigration of Aboriginal peoples until the present day: such a myth does not simply reside in the past but carries over into the present where, as Diaz's collection indicates, "some white god" is still responsible for the "hell they've mapped out" for Aboriginal populations.

However, Diaz's narrator refuses to be swept away by the effects of colonial injustice traceable to colonization and disregard for the original peoples of the Americas—epidemic addictions that infest her nation, attitudes towards Indigenous women that

would take away their power, and widespread poverty. By refusing to participate in myths that would sacrifice her to a life of no choices she is also able to resist the angry god of addiction, modern-day *Huitzilopochtli*, that has taken over her brother. She employs personal agency to retain health in the midst of a disease that ravages not only individuals but also families and nations.

I argue that *When My Brother Was an Aztec* inevitably suggests that it is through the act of discarding inherited myths, most notably, national ones, that Indigenous peoples, and women in particular, can refuse to walk in the footsteps of dangerous legacies.

Bio note

Stephanie McKenzie is a literary critic and poet. Her monograph, *Before the Country: Native Renaissance, Canadian Mythology* (University of Toronto Press, 2007), examines Indigenous literature in the period of a literary and social revival and Canadian mythologies that responded to this renaissance. McKenzie is the author of three books of poetry, all published by Salmon Poetry (Cliffs of Moher, Ireland). The latest, *Saviours in This Little Space for Now: Poems for Emily Carr and Vincent van Gogh* (2013), engages with the work of Canadian artist Emily Carr who was influenced first-hand by numerous Indigenous myths. McKenzie's current research focus is Caribbean women's poetry. She teaches in the English Programme, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University. For more information about McKenzie's work see www.stephaniemaymckenzie.com

The Windigo and the Hydra: Myth, identity and heritage in the poetry of Louise Erdrich

As the daughter of a Chippewa Indian mother and a German-American father, Louise Erdrich (b. 1954) has always explored identity and heritage in her writings. Unlike other writers of Native American descent, Erdrich does not make an extended use of Native folklore nor sets most of her writings in a remote past. Instead, she focuses on portraying contemporary Native American life and using Aboriginal traditions to present universal themes.

While Erdrich is best known as a novelist and short story writer, she has also authored three volumes of poetry; *Jacklight* (1984), *Baptism of Desire* (1989) and *Original Fire: New and Selected Poems* (2003). It is precisely in her poetry that myths and mythmaking acquire a thematic presence, and they will serve as seeds for many of her later novels. In this sense, Erdrich makes use of Native American myths, but she also includes allusions to Western classical mythology and mentions figures from the Roman Catholic tradition, evoking her double heritage.

In *Jacklight*, for instance, the author incorporates different mythical figures such as the owl and the tree people. She presents a wide range of speakers, as if she were willing to capture the multiple reality of Native American life and traditions from different points of view, including the perspective of one of the best known Native American myths, the *windigo* (or *wendigo*), in her homonymous poem.

Erdrich uses spirituality as a unifying thread in *Baptism of Desire* (1989). Written when she was pregnant, she uses the classical myth of the hydra in the homonymous poem to describe the experience, while the speaker compares herself to the Biblical figures Mary and Eve. Apart from incorporating myths with a clear revisionist intention, Erdrich concocted her own myths in the narrative poems devoted to

Potchikoo, a character of her own invention. In those poems, supernatural events coexist with contemporary Native American issues and Catholic references.

This paper will try to describe how myths and mythology work in Erdrich's poetry. It will attempt to elucidate if poems are an exercise of self-ethnography that enables Erdrich to look at her own heritage from a double perspective, presenting myths as an insider and an outsider, as a subject and an object at the same time. Finally, the paper will focus on how Erdrich explores her own identity through myth and her achievements creating a new hybrid mythology.

Bio note

María Porrás Sánchez has a PhD in English Literary and Cultural Studies from Universidad Complutense de Madrid. At present, she combines her postdoctoral research with her work as a literary translator and copyreader for publishing houses such as Editorial Siruela or HarperCollins. She has taught at Aberystwyth University (Wales-UK) and she has also worked as an arts administrator for Instituto Cervantes.

**Toward a corporeal feminism?:
Myth and the irruption of chaos in Gloria Anzaldúa's poetry**

In a critical encounter with the work of Gloria Anzaldúa and Elizabeth Grosz, this paper will explore the notion of "chaos" understood as a poetic matrix to rethink the self beyond fixed myths of femininity and the human. Elizabeth Grosz, in her keynote address at the 2007 Feminist Theory Workshop at Duke University, claimed, building on Deleuze's concept of chaos: "In the beginning is chaos. We need this conception of the real which is outside representation. And the only name we can give it is chaos". This interest in chaos refers directly to her understanding that the female body has remained colonized through discursive practices produced by sexually specific male bodies. The regulatory practice of naming is presented here as a mechanism of dominance and control.

Gloria Anzaldúa, lesbian feminist poet, academic and activist born in Texas, struggles in the borderland territories of both the Chicana and the queer: for her, it is the labels imposed by male dominance in culture that are responsible for her division in terms of identity. To overcome the violence that the dominant symbolic system effects over her being-in borderlands, she proposes the "mestiza writing", an exercise of deconstruction of the inherited, but also of construction by embracing heterogeneity, indeterminateness and fluidity. Through mestiza writing, Anzaldúa aspires to transform the culturally confined woman-human "I", into a "total Self" which transcends the boundaries of the body itself by conceiving corporality as liminal, a continuum which is constantly in contact-with and affected-by other beings. This unbounded corporality finds its way of expression in the poetic creation of alternative myths, as well as in the shifting from English (the language of power and cultural value) to Mexican Spanish (the language of certain intimacy).

Challenging the notion of the human, which is assembled around a rigid system of symbols that assures the pre-eminence of the male body, the notion of chaos presents

a path towards thinking of corporeality as liminal, constantly on the threshold. In the same way, mentioning chaos is to attest to the bodies' "ability to always extend the frameworks which attempt to contain them, to seep beyond their domains of control" (Grosz, 1995). Opposed to the masculine rational, it could be argued that chaos echoes the Freudian "feminine dark continent". However, we will discuss that after being appropriated by feminist theory, this idea of "darkness" loses all its negativity, appearing instead as an unrestrained space for potentiality, matrix for new meanings and becomings .

Bio note

Sara Torres is a PhD student at Queen Mary University of London, working on lesbian desire and writing. BA in Spanish Language and Literature at the University of Oviedo and QMUL; MA in Critical Methodologies at King's College. Her research focuses on the study of cultural representations and signifying practices through an interdisciplinary critical apparatus which interweaves Psychoanalysis, Feminisms and Queer Studies. With her first book *La otra genealogía* (Madrid: Torremozas) she won the Gloria Fuertes National Poetry Prize. In 2016 she was awarded a scholarship by the Antonio Gala Foundation with the project of writing a novel: *Vida Mínima*. Her second book of poems, entitled *Conjueros y Cantos*, was published by Kriller 71.

Tejer y destejer: tradición y reescritura de mitos clásicos en la poesía de Aurora Saura, Ana M^a Alcaraz y M^a Cruz Agüera

En nuestro trabajo analizamos las referencias a la mitología clásica en la obra poética de tres poetisas contemporáneas: Aurora Saura Bacaicoa, Ana María Alcaraz Roca y Mari Cruz Agüera, tratando de poner énfasis en el modo particular en que abordan los mitos que afectan a protagonistas femeninas, donde en mi opinión se puede distinguir un enfoque diferenciador con respecto a otras versiones, basado en la reivindicación de la figura femenina, libre de la sumisión a la que se ha visto sometida tradicionalmente y libre también en mayor o menor medida de convencionalismos y patrones, en la estela del estudio pionero de la poeta Alicia Suskin Ostriker *Stealing the Language* (1986).

Nuestra intención es la de abarcar y reunir la mayor parte de textos dispersos – incluidos los inéditos- de las abundantes referencias que existen a la mitología grecolatina con el fin de contribuir a que vean la luz futuros trabajos que incluyan las voces actuales, incluso las menos conocidas pero no por ello menos válidas, para obtener un corpus amplio y representativo y para que particularmente la voz femenina deje de ser un murmullo y se escuche nítida y clara, dándole el lugar que le corresponde, que muchas veces se ha limitado al de Musa, cuando en realidad en multitud de ocasiones su papel ha sido el de vate de primera magnitud, y alcance así un plano de igualdad con respecto al de poetas del sexo masculino. Afortunadamente somos conscientes de que nos sumamos a otros estudiosos de ambos sexos que han defendido y defienden que ser mujer u hombre no sea más un condicionante que se traduzca en exclusión o discriminación de cualquier tipo dentro de los estudios literarios y del ámbito de la creación, marco en el que se inscribe la *Asociación Internacional de Mitocrítica Asteria* y a estudios como *Mitos de la sabiduría femenina entre tradición y subversión* (Coord. Carole Viñals), No monográfico de *Analecta Malacitana*, anejo CI, Málaga: Universidad de Málaga (2015), o *Nuevas formas del mito*.

Una metodología interdisciplinar. Estudios reunidos y presentados por José Manuel Losada. Berlín: Logos Verlag (2015), por poner dos ejemplos recientes dentro de nuestras fronteras. En la misma línea avanza desde 2008 la revista de mitocrítica *Amaltea*.

Palabras clave:

Mito grecolatino - Poesía contemporánea - Aurora Saura - M^a Cruz Agüera - Ana M^a Alcaraz

**“Clitemnestra o el crimen”¹ de Marguerite Yourcenar:
¿emancipación o pasión de una mujer?**

En su poemario en prosa *Feux*, publicado por primera vez en 1936, Marguerite Yourcenar pone en escena nueve personajes mitológicos. La mayoría de ellos vienen de la mitología griega, excepto el de María Magdalena que viene de la tradición judeocristiana. Cada uno de ellos encarna, a través de su experiencia particular, un ejemplo de la noción del «amor loco» del que habla Marguerite Yourcenar en su prefacio de 1957.² La mayor parte de los personajes mitológicos son mujeres. De hecho, entre los nueve poemas del poemario, seis se consagran a figuras femeninas (Fedra, Antígona, Lena, María Magdalena, Clitemnestra y Safo) y los otros tres a figuras masculinas (Aquiles, Patroclo, Fedón).

En el presente estudio nos interesaremos por un poema que habla de Clitemnestra, titulado «Clitemnestra o el crimen». Hay que señalar aquí que para cada poema Marguerite Yourcenar mezcla con destreza en el título lo concreto —a través del nombre— y lo abstracto —a través del concepto asociado al nombre gracias a la partícula copulativa «o»—, invitando así de entrada al lector a una interpretación alegórica del poema.

Clitemnestra, como lo cuenta el antiguo mito, es a la vez la esposa ofendida, la madre lastimada y la amante vengativa. Contraimagen de Penélope, Clitemnestra es víctima y verdugo, mientras que la primera encarna la esposa fiel, paciente y agradecida.

Marguerite Yourcenar, de acuerdo con su proyecto literario —enseñar las manifestaciones del amor loco—, transforma el personaje mítico de Clitemnestra en un modelo del amor absoluto y, por ello, se concentra en la revelación de su amor por

¹ *Feux*, Marguerite Yourcenar, colección « L'imaginaire », ed. Gallimard, 1974. A partir de ahora, cada referencia de página hecha estará sacada de esta edición.

² « Produit d'une crise passionnelle, *Feux* se présente comme un recueil de poèmes d'amour, ou, si l'on préfère, comme une série de proses lyriques reliées entre elles par une certaine notion de l'amour » («Consecuencia de una crisis pasional, *Feux* se presenta como un poemario de amor o, si lo preferimos, como una serie de prosas líricas vinculadas entre ellas por una cierta noción del amor»), *ibid.*, p.11.

Agamenón, a pesar del abandono, del engaño, de los crímenes y de la muerte. Esta confesión se expresa ante unos jueces frente a los cuales Clitemnestra aparece como culpable, siendo esta la primera transformación de la fuente original. De hecho, la autora des *Mémoires d'Hadrien* da a Clitemnestra voz de mujer y no de madre, ya que el poema está constituido por un monólogo que se concentra únicamente en la historia de amor que vivió Clitemnestra.

Clitemnestra se afirma también como amante en su relato. De hecho, sin eludir completamente las causas y los colaboradores de su crimen, los deja en un segundo plano. Por ejemplo, al contrario del mito, Clitemnestra no pone el asesinato de Ifigenia cometido por Agamenón como la razón principal de su acto funesto. Esto es muy importante puesto que Clitemnestra excluye con su gesto una venganza de linaje, o sea, que se emancipa del marco familiar. En último lugar, Egisto, considerado en la mayoría de las versiones del mito como el principal cómplice de su crimen, aparece aquí como un amante insignificante y poco temerario que sufre la decisión apasionada de su amada. Estas dos subversiones de la tradición permiten a Clitemnestra liberarse de toda influencia y de todo grupo humano. En este poema, Clitemnestra actúa únicamente por y para ella misma, por el amor que ella sola vivió y sufrió.

Además de la esposa ofendida que actúa según su libre albedrío, Clitemnestra fue también, durante la larga ausencia de Agamenón, una soberana responsable, ya que tuvo que reemplazar a su marido en el poder. Su compromiso con la vida de la ciudad transcurre en un contexto contemporáneo que no puede escapar al lector de 1936, en particular, y al lector contemporáneo, en general. De hecho, Marguerite Yourcenar alude varias veces, a través de la voz de su personaje, al «lodo de las trincheras»,³ recordando así las condiciones de lucha de la Primera Guerra Mundial. Esta elección no es anodina, ya que sabemos que el período de la Gran Guerra constituye una época de emancipación de las mujeres, a pesar suyo, pues mientras los hombres estaban luchando, las mujeres tuvieron que reemplazarlos en los campos, en la mina y, en

³ « Messieurs les juges, vous ne l'avez connu qu'épaissi par la gloire, vieilli par dix ans de guerre, espèce d'idole énorme usée par les caresses des femmes asiastiques, éclaboussée par la bouche des tranchées » («Jueces, solo lo han visto orgulloso de gloria, envejecido por diez años de guerra, suerte de enorme ídolo cansado por las caricias de la mujeres asiáticas, salpicado por el lodo de las trincheras»), *ibid.*, p.121.

general, en todos los trabajos habitualmente reservados a ellos. Clitemnestra encarna a todas las mujeres anónimas de este período.

¿Cómo tenemos que interpretar la distancia formal, diegética y contextual que toma Marguerite Yourcenar respecto al mito original? Todo parece decir lo mismo: la autora vuelve a escribir el mito como una venganza de la amante, no de la madre. Ya no se trata de una venganza de la sangre, sino del amor. Así, Clitemnestra no aparece como una mujer cuyo lugar principal es el *oikos*, como una mujer que vengaría un linaje, sino como una amante que venga su dolor de mujer engañada. Además, el papel político que desempeña cuando Agamenón está ausente la aleja una vez más de su papel de esposa y de mujer. Sin embargo, hay que examinar si la emancipación aparente de Clitemnestra en el poema de Marguerite Yourcenar tiene como auténtica meta mostrarnos a una mujer emancipada. De hecho, el proyecto de Marguerite Yourcenar es enseñar los efectos del «amor loco», o sea, los efectos de una experiencia particularmente individual, «llena de emociones y de peligros»,⁴ y no el trayecto de una mujer en una sociedad con reglas de las que querría liberarse. Por eso tendremos que analizar la parte de emancipación real de Clitemnestra y la parte de acción del personaje que, aunque pueda mostrarnos a una mujer emancipada, tiene solo una fuente: la pasión individual.

⁴ Son las palabras de Marguerite Yourcenar en su prefacio: « [...] un thème particulièrement riche [...] d'émotions ou de dangers. » («[...] un tema particularmente rico [...] en emociones o e peligros»), *ibid.*, p.21.

El Ciborg español: Voces femeninas en la literatura digital española.

Este trabajo explora algunas de las voces femeninas más características en el marco de la literatura digital en español, tratando de descubrir la singularidad de sus propuestas y repensando su colaboración en la construcción de nuevos modelos de identidad femenina a través del uso de la tecnología y de sus posibilidades aplicadas a la creación artística y literaria.

A través del análisis del trabajo de Marla Jacarilla, Tina Escaja, Belén Gache, Lara Coterón o Amalia Ullman, contenido en el corpus de *Cibería: Biblioteca de Literatura Digital en Español* intentaremos trazar el panorama de la creación desde campos híbridos e interdisciplinarios que conjugan literatura, artes e informática desde un plano técnico e ideológico que escapa a los clichés de la “creación femenina”.

Las principales cuestiones a las que nos queremos acercar son:

- ¿Podemos identificar una identidad tecno-cultural femenina homogénea en el campo de la literatura digital en español? O, por otro lado ¿los trabajos aquí reunidos sólo son ejemplos aislados en un vacío cultural?
- ¿Qué espacio ocupan los discursos de género en la literatura digital escrita por mujeres? ¿Comparten estas creadoras un marco común de referencias ideológicas y estéticas feministas; o unas problemáticas similares, como la asimilación de una genealogía feminista en sus discursos, la negociación o reivindicación de un espacio propio en la ecología de los nuevos medios, las relaciones de poder y el empoderamiento tecnológico como herramienta política, o la metonimia cuerpo-casa, cuerpo- máquina?
- ¿Está la literatura digital contribuyendo a la creación de una nueva identidad tecnológica, cultural y femenina, que utiliza la mitología

del cyborg doméstico, del pastiche, del teletrabajo y de la reivindicación de un cuarto propio conectado?

Esta revisión del trabajo del trabajo de las creadoras de literatura digital en español responde principalmente a dos necesidades. La primera, hacer visible la diferencia y dar un espacio, un “cuarto propio conectado” a la mujeres artistas que escriben y teclean en español. La segunda, analizar las tácticas usadas por las autoras para descubrir qué estrategias políticas comunes de posibilidad y diferencia se están generando, qué modelos e imaginarios se están propagando y contagiando o si por el contrario son prácticas únicamente unidas por el género de sus autoras. Para ello, nos acercaremos a la figura del ciborg doméstico español, un pastiche sarcástico que pretende ironizar sobre el enunciado de “mujer, arte y tecnología” y sobre la problemática de la representación o mejor dicho –auto representación- de la mujer, explicando la subversión de estrategias, la repetición, el exceso, la digitalización como nueva feminización, y el ciberfeminismo entre otras.

Abordaremos estas cuestiones desde una perspectiva comparatista situando las obras citadas en diálogo con sus posibles filiaciones directas o indirectas del mundo del arte, la tecnología y la teoría en el ámbito hispanohablante (Eulália Grau, Paz Muro, Ángela Ruiz Robles, Elena Asíns, María Núñez, Elena del Rivero, Esther Ferrer, Tina Escaja, Patricia Mayayo, Remedios Zafra, Carmen Navarrete, Claudia Gianetti, entre otras); así como del ámbito anglosajón (Sadie Plant, Donna Haraway, Katherine Hayles, entre otras) ayudándonos a comprobar o cuestionar si existe una genealogía culturalmente propia o posiblemente una asimilación de referentes extranjeros en un proceso de educación forzoso.

Bio note

Laura Sánchez Gómez: Licenciada en Bellas Artes por la UCM de Madrid, trabaja en la gestión cultural mientras investiga en su Tesis doctoral sobre las prácticas artísticas y literarias en el medio digital y sus procesos de circulación cultural. Es miembro del grupo *LEETHI (Literaturas Españolas y Europeas del Texto al Hipermedia)* y del proyecto de investigación *eLITE (Edición Literaria Electrónica)*.

María Goicoechea de Jorge: es profesora en el Departamento de Filología Inglesa II en la Universidad Complutense de Madrid (UCM) e investigadora principal del proyecto [eLITE-CM](#) en Edición Literaria Electrónica. Es miembro de LEETHI (UCM) y de HERMENEIA (Universitat de Barcelona), dos grupos de investigación interdisciplinarios dedicados al estudio de la literatura en la era digital.

Following the Old Stones Skyward: Mythmaking in Gwendolyn MacEwen's Poetry

Canadian poet Gwendolyn MacEwen remains a major voice in the second half of twentieth-century Canadian poetry. Her nine major volumes of poetry, *The Rising Fire* (1963), *A Breakfast for Barbarians* (1966), *The Shadow-Maker* (1969), *The Armies of the Moon* (1972), *Magic Animals* (1974), *The Fire-Eaters* (1976), *The T. E. Lawrence Poems* (1982), *Earthlight* (1982) and *Afterworlds* (1987), are the work of a major mythmaker. They all testify to her deep concern with poetry as a form of self-exacting intellectual discipline and as craftsmanship capable of turning human beings back upon themselves with a new awareness of what it means to be perceptive to the multifarious world within and without. MacEwen remained an autodidact all her life, always busy reading, travelling, exploring cultures exotic to Canadians' eyes, learning and translating foreign languages – from Arabic, Hebrew, French and Greek. All this helped to shape her poetic imagination and verbal craftsmanship. There is thus a vortex of traditions and cultural clusters informing her poetry. She was familiar with the basics of Gnosticism, with the Cabbala, esoterism, mysticism and the Hebrew lore. And not only that, she found herself attracted to psychology, to theories of the unconscious and archetypal patterns in the history of humanity, to anthropology and myth. This is why Jung, Boehme, Frazer's *Golden Bough* and Robert Graves' *The White Goddess* were included among her readings. She was also fascinated by Mid-East and Mediterranean cultures: Egypt with its pharaohs, hieroglyphs and religious iconography, Greece with its ancient myths, Israel with its presence of divinity – all of them lured MacEwen's imagination and provided much of her *materia poetica* and motifs. MacEwen's use of myth and the exotic is no mere escapism. Hers is a mythical perception of reality, for myth provides her with a key to interpret the unity or sameness of all things, all places, all times, all loves. Her perception of human beings and their place in the cosmos is imbued with the secrets of mythological lore. She always strives after an insight into the mythical dimension inherent in the

phenomenal, mundane world. In this sense, Frank Davey draws an enlightening distinction between artifactual and kinetic myth. In MacEwen's poetry myth is more kinetic than a purely artifactual or ornamental by-product. While artifactual myth has to do more with craftsmanship and the purely literary use of myth as rhetorical strategy, or as artifice, with the rhetorical statement of emotion, kinetic myth is myth embedded within phenomenal reality, "actively incarnate in realistic scenes, witty colloquial language, and explicit references to the personal life of the writer."¹ The former kind of myth Davey associates with the so-called mythopoeic poets, Macpherson and Reaney among them, while the latter he sees as one of MacEwen's main contributions to Canadian poetry: "The work of MacEwen [...] has restored the value of mythology to Canadian poetry. She has demonstrated that it need not be merely a system by which one escapes worldly events, but in fact can be found emanating from those events and providing understanding of our very real sensual and Heraclitean world."² Kinetic myth seeks to communicate the unspeakable through earthly, concrete terms, for the divine is incarnate in the mundane. It affords an insight into the divine that pervades terrestrial reality and proclaims the universality of human dilemmas, the fundamental sameness of all times and all men.

MacEwen's attempt is to create a personal mythology suitable to her visionary art. She makes it her task to make the world whole again, to cleanse humans' inner vision and make them alert to more subtle nuances. Her poetry traces the paths the human imagination has taken throughout history, for she is concerned with "the archetypal patterns that emerge and re-emerge from ancient times until now."³ In her poetry she finds out recurrent patterns in the seemingly chaotic labyrinth of the unfolding spirit of humanity – mythical patterns that allow her to impose temporary order upon reality despite its Heraclitean nature. This is the "labyrinth of the archaic human imagination as it has dreamed through history",⁴ as Rosemary Sullivan points out. It is then no surprise that she should resort to

¹ Frank Davey, "Gwendolyn MacEwen", in *From There to Here. A Guide to English-Canadian Literature Since 1960*, Press Porcepic, Erin, Ontario, 1974, p. 178.

² F. Davey, *ibid.*, pp. 178-179.

³ George Woodcock, "The Translucent Glass: D.G. Jones, Gwendolyn MacEwen, Margaret Atwood, Dennis Lee, Patrick Lane, Robin Skelton", in *Introduction to Canadian Poetry*, ECW Press, Toronto, 1993, pp. 141-156, p. 151.

⁴ Rosemary Sullivan, *Shadow Maker. The Life of Gwendolyn MacEwen*, Harper Collins Publishers Ltd., Toronto, 1995, p. 84.

myth as a decoding key into reality. In MacEwen's poetry the ordinary is imbued with a mythical burden if seen through the inner vision of the imagination. In this paper we will explore how the patterns of mythmaking operate in MacEwen's poetry.

Bio note

Leonor María Martínez Serrano works as a Lecturer in the Department of English and German Philology at the University of Córdoba (Córdoba, Spain), where she pursued her doctoral studies and gained a PhD in Canadian Literature. She is a member of the research group *Writs of Empire: Poetics and Politics in Modern and Contemporary Literatures in English* at the University of Córdoba too. Her research interests include world poetry (European, American and Canadian poetry), Canadian Literature, High Modernism, First Nations and Oral Literatures, Literary Theory, Philosophy & Ecology, Literary Translation, and Comparative Literature. She has been a Visiting Scholar at the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia (Canada), the University of the West of Scotland (UK) and the University of Białystok (Poland).

**Niedecker's Allegorical Vision: Re-framing Myth and the Material in
Objectivism. A Cross Linguistic-Literary Proposal**

Lorine Niedecker's (1903-1970) poetry came to be associated with the Objectivists in the 1930s. This group of poets was at work in the creation of a new poetics that, by means of a repertoire of formal strategies (seriality, among others), aimed at highlighting the material mediations of language and ideology. On the one hand, objectivists eschewed their contemporaries' inclinations toward transcendence and myth, by returning to Imagism and recuperating Imagism's focus on the particulars of history. Niedecker actively participated in constructing an objectivist poetics whose internal consistency stands in opposition to the hegemonic logic of rationality and the good life –as defined by the standards of Cold War rhetoric.

In part, this paper will be an exercise both in linguistic and literary analysis, focusing on how cognitive, semantic, discursive, contextual, biographical, and geopolitical knowledge can enrich our understanding of Niedecker's poetry. In Niedecker's poetry, we argue, we can find both a rejection and a reelaboration of myth in a good number of poems. We will engage in a close reading and a thorough analysis of some of her 1950s poems and prose pieces with special attention to her encoding of experience in "dual" pieces (poetic-fictional compositions) where she, by recourse to metaphor and allegory, explores and deconstructs the language available to working class young women like herself.

From a linguistic point of view, we will focus on two companion pieces, the short story "Switchboard girl" and the poem "The elegant office girl..." within the framework of cognitive linguistics and cognitive narratology, using the concept of storyworld possible selves, or projections of the self into storyworlds. Storyworld possible selves (SPSs for short) are conceived as blends resulting from the conceptual integration of two isomorphic mental spaces -- the focalizer or narrator construct, and individual readers' self-concept network --, and allow a detailed analysis of the features in these mental constructs with a bearing on meaning

construction and reader immersion, both on an individual basis, and on the basis of the expectations and interpretations shared by communities of readers. In both pieces it is possible to identify linguistic cues pointing to the projection of reader SPS blends with the narrator, which extend their matches to the writer herself. The resulting complex network affords the linguistic study of intersubjective cognitive coordination between writer and reader via the mediating space of the homodiegetic narrator or the lyrical voice. The findings seem to confirm the role of Dante's allegoric descent to hell as a main source of isomorphic matches with the narrator's personal descent to the realities of American working-class women in the 1950s, in turn connected to the writer's concerns and experience, and extending their matching tendrils, within the complex SPS network, to contemporary readers' feared possible selves in an increasingly Dantian social landscape.

Reason, here (in Niedecker's writing), is truly seen as reverting to myth in its embodiment in the binarisms of social relations (rich vs. poor, knowledgeable vs. ignorant, powerful vs fragile). The domination of the individual (Niedecker as a working class poet and employee, as well as many of her past and contemporary readers) by social structures such as 'productivity' (workforce, new life) and the division of labour, is seen as ridding the woman poet, and, through her, her readers, of their purpose in existence.

Bio note

M. Ángeles Martínez specializes in English linguistics and narrative discourse analysis, and is a member of the English Language and Linguistics Department at the U. Complutense of Madrid. Her research in cognitive literary linguistics and narrative studies has been published in journals such as *Narrative* (2014), *Journal of English Studies* (2015), *Babel Afiel* (2015), *International Journal of English Studies* (2013) and *Poetics Today* (2002), as well as in collective volumes in De Gruyter (2016) and John Benjamins (2016), among others.

Esther Sánchez-Pardo teaches Literatures in English at U. Complutense in Madrid, author of *Cultures of the Death Drive: Melanie Klein and Modernist Melancholia* (2003), and co-author of *Ophelia's Legacy* (2001). She has coedited *Women, Identities and Poetry* (1999), *Feeling the Worlds* (2001) and *L'Écrituredésirante: Marguerite Duras* (2015). Her numerous translations and essays have appeared in books and journals such as, *Regarding the Popular Modernism, Postmodernism and High and Low Culture* (2011), *Visual Cultures* (2010), *Canadian Studies: The State of*

the Art (2011), *Henry James's Europe: Heritage and Transfer* (2011), *Modernism and the Short Story in English* (2012) and *Recalling War: Representations of the Two World Wars in British Literature and Culture* (2014).

**Wanderers, Vagabonds, Seekers and Pilgrims:
The Myth of the Quest in Denise Levertov**

Although Denise Levertov never explicitly aligned herself with the feminist movement prominent during the 60s in the US, her poetry always sought to respond to tradition in an idiosyncratic manner. Her special upbringing and her experience as an outsider early on from her childhood endowed her verse with the informing metaphor of the seeker, the wanderer, the vagabond or the pilgrim in constant spiritual quest. This metaphor can be traced on multiple layers in her poetry. The first of these overlapping and converging layers is her biography,¹ which depicts her as the daughter of a Russian Jew who converted to Anglicanism and travelled from Russia to London; shows her as a child and young adult aware of the evils affecting Europe in between the I and the II World War—the Jewish diaspora and their persecution or the Spanish Civil War; and portrays her voyaging from London to the US in the late 40s. Levertov described her feelings of not belonging in split-terms: “Among Jews a Goy, among Gentiles (secular or Christian) a Jew or at least a half-Jew, (which was good or bad according to their degree of anti-Semitism) among Anglo-Saxons a Celt; in Wales a Londoner who not only did not speak Welsh but was not imbued with Welsh attitudes; among school children a strange exception whom they did not know whether to envy or mistrust: all of these anomalies predicated my later experience” (Levertov 260).

Another layer in which the metaphor of the pilgrim or the wanderer can be found is in Hasidic mysticism, mainly the myth of The Wandering Jew. This religious myth blends seamlessly into her early interest in John Bunyan’s Christian allegorical narration, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. The other two layers are the spiritual quest for happiness, which can be traced back to the Romantic heroes of 19th century poetry and the search for self-fulfillment and communion with nature characteristic of American transcendentalism. Thus whether in the form of a

¹ Two biographies have been written to date: Donna K. Hollenberg’s 2013 *A Poet’s Revolution: The Life of Denise Levertov* and Dana Greene’s 2014 *Denise Levertov: A Poet’s Life*.

dogmatic religion or a cultural-historical movement, her verse is distinctively informed by the confluence of those pulling forces.

The aim of this paper is to analyze a selection of Levertov's poems which deals with the mythical figure of the seeker, the wanderer, the vagabond or the pilgrim and her further development of it both as a pilgrim herself and as a witness of other seekers. Some of the poems selected are "Looking Walking Being", "Overland to the Island", "The Fountain", "A Cloak", "Oracle", "A Traveler", "The Broken Sandal", "Footprints", "Life Is Not A Walk Across The Field", "The Secret", "Pig Dreams" or "Sojourns in the Parallel World". In contrast with Classical epics whose heroes, such as Ulysses or Aeneas, perform an arrival-oriented quest, or at least goal-oriented towards a social, political and historical achievement and public recognition; for Levertov the quest is a succession of unexpected encounters, treasures and lessons that lie ahead hidden in each secret disclosed only as one advances one more step of the journey.

Works Cited

Levertov, Denise. *New and Selected Essays*, New York: New Directions, 1992.

Bio note

Cristina M. Gámez-Fernández teaches at the University of Córdoba, Spain, and has spent research periods at Stanford University and Wheaton College (US) and Trinity College Dublin (Ireland). She is one of the Founders of AEEII (Spanish Association for India Studies), also serving as Secretary-Treasurer from 2007-2009. She guest edited "Contemporary English Writing in India" (2012), an issue of the *Journal of Post-Colonial Cultures and Societies* and "Muslim Identities in Literature and Film" (2015), an issue of the *Journal of Contemporary Literature*. She has also been co-editor of *India in the World* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2011), *Tabish Khair: Critical Perspectives* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2014), and *Shaping Indian Diaspora: Literary Representations and Bollywood Consumption away from the Desi* (Lexington Books 2015).

Dorothy Parker's Poetry against Resisting Myths in Women's Magazines

Mircea Eliade defines myths as stories (partly real, partly sacred or fictional) that have existed since the dawn of times. Such tales tend to be repeated throughout history and are exemplary, because they serve as models for proper (or deviant) human personality and behavior. The patriarchal nature of the Western world explains why it has traditionally chosen women to be mythologized: to rule their public images and private lives, and consequently, to ensure men's supremacy over them. Our societies have permanently constructed compulsory archetypes of ideal or tainted femininity to circulate as myths until our days. Propagated by multifarious cultural discourses of women's submission to male norms and privileges (including powerful propaganda in the printing press), these clichés deny women's identity and their talent to (re)create their own narratives. To avoid the first embryos of demythologization of these misogynist stories by female pens and feminist activism in more modern times, a potent magazine industry has become a key patriarchal institution to disseminate old myths as stereotypes of femininity. It has also indoctrinated women, understood as a homogenous group, to fit into the binary opposition proposed by such tales: the angelic self vs. the evil self, to prolong the status-quo of gender inequality. This article explores the social pressures of the popular magazine culture on American women during the early 20th century and the amusing jabs of the poet Dorothy Parker (1893-1967) at her own sex, in presumed complicity with the myth-making of the prevailing patriarchal ideology of the United States during this historical period. Instead of reflecting anger or dismay, her satirical verses, published in fashionable periodicals like *Vogue* or *Vanity Fair* where she used to work for, intertwine humor and faultfinding from a woman's perspective, to undermine prefabricated myths of ideal femininity that did not necessarily correspond to the reality of the female population of her time. For the fun of her male readers, Parker openly ridicules icons of happy, domestic femininity and the newer cliché of the flappers (as gold-diggers or heartbreakers), which were idolatized or scorned, respectively, in texts, images and subliminal messages from advertisements in women's

magazines. In fact, such publications revisited archaic myths of womanhood, brought up to date within the context of consumerism, capitalism and materialism that seduced and subdued women during the interwar years in America. Beneath her wit and jokes, Parker's poems also exhibit a tragic autobiography of unrequited love and psychological harm, which surreptitiously builds virtual bonds of sisterhood between her and her female readers, who could also feel excluded or would not identify themselves with the myths of domestic happiness or the flapper's nightly fun from popular magazines. Instead of creating new, contemporary stories of female agency and empowerment to replace or re-imagine old tales of patriarchal imprint, Dorothy Parker laughs last because her verses of comedy and drama illustrate clever survival strategies for a woman writer in the 20th century: her use of humor to have access to the *feudal* art of poetry, her talent to demythologize gender stereotypes without enraging men and her ultimate victory of making fun of herself.

Bio note

Francisco José Cortés Vieco (Ph.D. & M.A. in Literary Studies, Complutense University of Madrid, PhD Thesis Award 2012-2013) currently teaches British and North-American Literature at Complutense University of Madrid (UCM), and he is also a PhD student in Gender Studies at University of Alcalá. He has previously taught English at Autonomous University of Madrid, and he has participated in summer courses at University of Oxford/Exeter College and University of Edinburgh. He is also a member of two research groups: "*Estudios de la Mujer en el Ámbito de los Países de Habla Inglesa*" (UCM) and "*Escritoras y Escrituras*" (University of Seville). One of his main areas of interest is the poetry, novels and autobiographies of women writers from the 19th and 20th centuries. Apart from other works in national and international journals and publications, he is the author of the translations and critical editions of Emily Brontë's poetry: *El romancero de Emily Brontë: antología épica y lírica* (Seville: Arcibel, 2014) and Christina Rossetti's poetry: *Monna Innominata y otros poemas* (Madrid: Rilke, 2016).

**“Praise be to young Eros who fucks all the girls”:
Sex, Love, and Myth in Lenore Kandel’s Poetry**

In the same context in which the members of the Beat Generation developed a deep interest in politics, drugs, sex and the making of an alternative way of living the American reality of the 1950s and 1960s, several women participated in the phenomenon behind the cameras. One of them was Lenore Kandel, whose explicit poems dealing with sexuality were banned and labeled as “hard-core pornography”. The aim of this talk is the analysis of the mythical figures (from both Eastern and Western cultures) that appear in Kandel’s work and the way they subvert the conservative models of sex and love relationships dominant in the period. In normative sections of the society, women had a role quite similar to that of the Victorian “Angel of the House”: they were the ones to deal with housework and child-caring, always ready to please their husbands but keeping the image of saints. Appearances were to be kept and they were seen as supporters of marriage as their main goal of life and a pledge of faithfulness. Thus, when Kandel’s poetry was published, it meant a complete breakup with female stereotypes, as she showed that women were as willing as men to enjoy hedonic lifestyles in which sex was one of the most important elements. Therefore, we will also try to explore how different mythologies helped her present and defend in her work new views of love and sex from the point of view of a new kind of woman who is, not only open to practice a free-love philosophy of life, but also willing to defend sex as something sacred and to be enjoyed rather than unclean or sinful, as women were told to pretend. Be it female or male, different deities and religious relationships will appear in her poetry as rhetorical figures, objects of desire and devotion, presenting sex as a sacred stage in which the woman will have an equal part with the man, no longer being the inferior devotee, but an active part of that divine experience.

Bio note

Elisa Ortiz graduated in English Studies from Universidad Complutense de Madrid (2014). She was granted a stay at the University of Bristol by the Erasmus Program during her last year, and her final paper analyzed the role of politics and human nature in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. Between 2014 and 2015 she studied an MA in Literature in the same university (Estudios Literarios, UCM), and devoted her final thesis to the study of H.D. Thoreau, Jack London and their influence in Sean Penn's film *Into the Wild*. She has taken part as organizer and speaker in several conferences of this faculty during the last three years, and nowadays she is doing her second year of PhD. in Literary Studies. The topic of her thesis is political activism in the performance poetry of Walt Whitman and Allen Ginsberg.

Refashioning the Christian Myth of the Apocalypse: Desolation, Repentance and Spiritual Awakening in Michael Field's *Poems of Adoration* (1912)

In 1907, after more than two decades of devoted Sapphism, literary Hellenism and Aestheticism, Katherine Bradley and her niece Edith Cooper, a peculiar fin-de-siècle literary and romantic couple self-identified with the common masculine pseudonym of Michael Field, resolved to convert to Roman Catholicism in an act of personal engagement with what had already become a trend –or perhaps a form of Zeitgeist– among late Victorian Decadents and Aesthetes (such as Lionel Johnson, Ernest Dowson, Aubrey Beardsley, Oscar Wilde, Michael Field, and Lord Alfred Douglas to name but a few). Their conversion signified an omni-comprehensive shift in their mythological paradigms: Sappho, Aphrodite, Persephone, Medea, the Muses and their recurrent Greek heroines, fervently invoked and celebrated in their first books of verse (*Long Ago, Sight and Song or Underneath the Bough*), were now to be superseded by a pious plethora of Biblical, Christian and specifically Catholic motifs and images.

The shift and replacement called for a discourse of transition, spiritual anagnorisis, and even ontological repositioning that would enable the converted couple to recement and redefine their mythopoetic projects. In this regard, I would like to argue that such a discursive need for redefinition finds fulfilment in the very first lyric of *Poems of Adoration* (1912). In it, Michael Field turns to the Bible, chooses a particularly violent dialogue from the Hebraic *Book of Isaiah*, and transforms what has usually been construed as an apocalyptic prophesy into a (re)foundational declaration of sympathy towards a lonely God, contrition, and eventual self-redemption. Accordingly, and cogently enough, Bradley and Cooper articulate their personal experience of conversion and spiritual awakening as an intimate revelation that recognises their previous indifference to a hospitable –and even seductive– Messiah and ushers in their new birth into the forgotten Christian mythos-logos.

In this paper, I propose to cross-analyse Isaiah's revelations in tandem with Michael Field's *Poems of Adoration* with the initial intention of demonstrating how the prophetic Biblical word can readily be rewritten into a mythology of

conversion that understands the orthodox eschatological discourse –the apocalypse– as an actual invitation to spiritual renaissance. In this cross-analysis, I construct my critical perspective around four valuable sources, namely, Ellis Hanson's *Decadence and Catholicism* (1994), Ruth Y. Jenkins's *Reclaiming Myths of Power: Women Writers and the Victorian Spiritual Crisis* (1995), Cynthia Scheinberg's *Women's poetry and religion in Victorian England* (2002), and Elizabeth Gray's *Christian and Lyric Tradition in Victorian Women's Poetry* (2009), all of which shed ample light on the interplay between Christian mythology and women's poetry in the Victorian era by tracing the most recurrent motifs adopted from the Bible in the genre and, more significantly, unveiling the multiple mechanisms of parody and appropriation that women poets employ to rewrite the sacred myths of their choice. In light of such necessary references, I wish to contend that Michael Field's *Poems of Adoration* may ultimately be interpreted as a theology-mythology of divine desolation that encourages the Christian repentant to embrace God and become a 'treader with Him.'

Bio note

I am Research Fellow at the Department of English and German Philology and a PhD candidate working on the figural presence of the Tiresias myth in fin-de-siècle women's poetry and drama under the supervision of Dr. Laura Monrós Gaspar and Dr. Miguel Teruel Pozas.

**Helene Johnson, *rara avis* del Renacimiento de Harlem:
Langston Hughes frente a la nueva mujer afroamericana**

Helene Johnson (1906-1995) y Langston Hughes (1902-1967), partícipes del Renacimiento de Harlem, tienen mucho más en común de lo que *a priori* podríamos esperar. La primera, casi una desconocida, ha empezado a cobrar importancia a partir de principios de este siglo, gracias a su redescubrimiento por parte de la crítica, principalmente con la publicación póstuma del libro *This Waiting for Love* (2000). El segundo, autor prolífico, es uno de los poetas más reconocidos y relevantes del movimiento literario citado. A través de alguno de sus poemas más representativos (“My Race” (1925), “Mother” (1926), “Summer Matures” (1927)... de Johnson y “The Negro Speaks of Rivers” (1921), “Mother to Son” (1922) y “The Negro Mother” (1931)... de Hughes), compararemos a ambos autores en su contexto. Vamos a centrarnos en ese periodo concreto, teniendo en cuenta el punto de vista de la mujer y la representación de lo femenino, partiendo del enfoque que plasma cada uno de estos creadores en su poesía. En palabras de Cheryl Wall, Johnson es una poeta de “chromatic words” que habla de amor y de sensualidad y que consigue ir más allá de la raza. Con Hughes encontramos básicamente la defensa y representación del mundo de las gentes de color. Hughes llegó a ganarse la vida con la literatura; Johnson no pudo conseguirlo. Era/fue “joven, mujer y de color,” parafraseando a Marita Bonner. Su carrera terminó en 1935 y no pudo ver publicado ningún libro suyo en vida—el mecenazgo y el patronazgo no funcionaban (tampoco) entonces con paridad. Hughes, debido a otras circunstancias, fue más afortunado y pudo dedicar su vida a la literatura. Helene Johnson merece ser homenajeada y revisitada. A través de estos dos autores, vamos a ver el papel del hombre y de la mujer en ese movimiento literario tan relevante y como, cada uno a su modo, utilizaron los mitos, recreándolos y reescribiéndolos.

Bio note

Mario Millanes cursa estudios de doctorado en el Programa de Estudios Literarios de la UCM. Trabaja en una tesis sobre conflictos identitarios en la obra de Langston Hughes. La literatura afroamericana desde sus orígenes hasta el momento actual es pues el centro de sus intereses de investigación.

Mythic Subtexts in Margaret Atwood's *The Door* (2007)

Margaret Atwood is the author of fifteen books of poetry, from her earliest collection *Double Persephone* (1961), which was published privately before she graduated from the University of Toronto, to *The Door* (2007). The title of her first collection suggests some aspects of Atwood's development as well as her recurrent creative concerns about doubling, mirror shapes, and, of course, the importance of myths.

That myths, folktales and fairy tales abound in Margaret Atwood's writings is, by now, a critical commonplace. From brief but pointed allusions to full-scale revisions, she frequently draws on these venerable genres and recasts familiar motifs and stories into contemporary forms. Atwood's literary imagination was nurtured in the mythic fifties at the University of Toronto by her professors Northrop Frye and Jay Macpherson. Frye regarded myth as the key to "the integral meaning of a poem presented by its metaphors, images and symbols" (*Bush Garden*, ix) and Macpherson's poems of the mid 1950s, like "Sybilla", "Sheba" and "Isis" prefigure Atwood's where women speak out of ancient myths and legends. Many of the images recognized as central in Atwood's visual art, fiction, and poetry evoke well-known Greek and Egyptian myths including the Demeter and Persephone, Isis-Osiris-Seth, Theseus and the Minotaur, Daedalus and Icarus, Orpheus and Eurydice, and Narcissus and Echo stories. We also find references to Indian myths of the Canadian Northwest and to trickster figures which appear frequently in world mythology, such as the fox. Images of shape-changing and surreptitious returns from the dead also remind us of Atwood's fascination with the Gothic. A number of Gothic motifs and themes come through folklore, fairytale, myth and nightmare. The emblematic fear within Gothic fantasy is that something that seemed to be dead and buried might not be dead at all. The erosion of boundaries between the self and the monstrous other, and the presence of doubles and split selves are a mark of the Gothic and postmodern sensibility. These elements suggest the co-existence of the everyday with a shadowy nightmarish world and have characterized Atwood's poetry and fiction from its beginnings.

The Door (2007) includes poems written between 1997 and 2007, where we can find autobiographical elements, political issues, and reflections on the creative experience and death. My aim in this present paper is to discuss the presence of mythic subtexts and references in those poems where Atwood deals with the writing process: the nature of authorial identity, the writer's negotiations with truth and the ever complicated relationship between the writer and the audience. In her essay *Negotiating with the Dead* (2002), Atwood states that the poetic project is like a voyage into a dark underworld, a voyage all people take in one form or another. This risky journey to the underworld evokes the mythic figures of Hades, Persephone and Euridice and symbolises the entrance to the wilderness of the self, to the split self, to the doubleness of identity, to the monstrous other. But, as in any Gothic tale, after this momentary departure from the present which is lived and the visible, the poet returns alive and brings knowledge back from an unseen realm.

Bio note

Pilar Sánchez Calle teaches English Language and Literature and American Literature at the University of Jaén, Spain. Her research interests include contemporary literature in English with special emphasis on the representation of gender, identity and exile. Her more recent publications are a book chapter on John Berger's work *A Seventh Man* and an article on Janice Galloway's short story collection *Blood*.

Myth through Revision: Nelly Sachs's "Lieder Vom Abschied," the Myth of Procne and Philomela, and the Trauma of Compounding Loss

Although Nelly Sachs is most well known for her post-WWII poetry regarding her Jewish identity and the effects of the Holocaust, with nearly all critical work centering on this period of writing, this paper instead will focus on one of her often overlooked earlier poetic publications. "Lieder Vom Abschied" ["Songs of Farewell"] (1938) exists as Sachs's second-to-last publication before her flight to Sweden from Berlin in 1940. The poem reveals a woman speaker who, once silent as a swallow's flight ["Schwalbenflug"], finds her voice like the note from a bird's throat ["Vogelkehle"]. Building upon research conducted at the Nelly Sachs Archive in the Stadt- und Landesbibliothek in Dortmund, this paper contends with the poem's original existence as a part of a numbered, unpublished poetic cycle named "Lieder Vom Abschied. An den Fernen." The original manuscripts reveal that the first two stanzas, emphasizing the silence of the speaker, existed as the seventh portion of the cycle whereas the final two stanzas, wherein the woman finds her voice, originated from the twelfth and final portion of this cycle. As one combined poem, the invocation of swallows and the movement from silence to a loudly growing voice issuing from a bird's throat invoke the myth of Philomela and Procne, a myth Sachs herself would have known.

Thus, with the incorporation of archival and biographical research, this paper will present a two-fold argument: through Sachs's revision of her original cycle, she produces a poem in conversation with the myth of Philomela and Procne that (1) echoes Sachs's own struggle to find voice—starting with the incipience of her poetic writing and carrying on into her publications during a time when many Jewish writers were fleeing Nazi Germany; and (2) provides a space for the poem's speaker to explore traumatic loss—a process Sachs became familiar with through the detrimental loss of her unnamed love resulting in her nearly two year stay in a mental health facility, as well as the impending loss of her Germany, now a hostile and strange place.

Bio note

Liz Schoppelrei is a first year graduate student in the M.A/Ph.D. program in the Department of Comparative Literature at Penn State. They are interested in women poets of the early twentieth century writing in English, Spanish, or German, literary representations of feminist themes and emerging feminist movements in poetry, feminist graphic novels, queer identities in Weimar Germany, and transnational and transatlantic modernisms.

Voices from the Wilderness: Post/colonial Trauma, Spectral Witness, and Environmental Apocalypse in Margaret Atwood's "Circe/Mud Poems" and *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*

This paper examines the ways in which two poem sequences by Margaret Atwood, "Circe/Mud Poems" and *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*, link archetypes of the monstrous-feminine to apocalyptic and traumatic representations of the wilderness as feminized space that is destroyed by masculine aggression and imperialism. Both texts explore how the grotesque figure of the witch or crone, and the accompanying association of women's bodies with animality and abjection, speak to patriarchal fears of dissolution and annihilation due to the absence of clear borders between self and other. Atwood then further contextualizes these fears as central to colonialist discourses that perceive nature (symbolically and textually coded via the bodies of "natives" or women) as markers of an incommensurable, threatening difference. Both poem sequences describe journeys into hostile territories, where the female body is figured as unmapped, untamed country; the male or colonial invader is unwilling to integrate alternative perceptions of the land/world; and violence is always hovering at the margins or borders that separate "human" from "animal." Consequently, the desire for dominance and mastery over wilderness spaces leads to instability, hauntings, waking nightmares, and traumatic loss and displacement. As victims, survivors, and witnesses who participate, both willingly and unwillingly, in the destruction of their own environments, Circe and Susanna Moodie are situated in the poems as spectral absences/presences, speaking from a vanishing wilderness that continues to disappear due to globalization, urban development, and mass species extinctions. Through their voices, Atwood ultimately critiques colonial conquest and expansionism as a traumatic history and ongoing legacy of violence directed toward women, indigenous peoples, and the land.

I argue, then, that Atwood's rewriting of myth and history in her early poetry is a significant strategy that is aligned with her larger project of constructing an emerging postcolonial identity and feminist voice. Furthermore, when read

together, “Circe/Mud Poems” and *The Journals of Susanna Moodie* demonstrate Atwood’s remarkable blending of native cosmology with western mythology in order to assimilate culturally inherited and indigenous modes of perception. Her use of historicizing, mythological, and archaeological imagery links the “archaic mother” or crone to prehistoric, totemic elements found in North American indigenous cultures, myths, and spirituality; and in their emphases on geologic time, Atwood’s texts resist and subvert the colonial narrative to provide a history and imaginary that both precedes and returns to disrupt European invasion and hegemony. Atwood thus engages with spectrality, where, according to Derrida, the spectral is that which returns to haunt the contemporary imagination despite all attempts to obliterate traces of its memory, ultimately forcing us to confront and engage with radical otherness, including our own annihilation. The spectral is also a reminder of the future, and both Circe and Susanna provide prophetic witness to the cyclical violence of apocalypse, as vision and warning of present politics and practices that inevitably lead to environmental catastrophe.

Bio note

Hope Jennings is Associate Professor of English Language and Literatures and Director of Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Wright State University. She teaches British literature, feminist theory, contemporary women’s writing, and gender studies. Publications include *Nostalgia* (Anti-Oedipus Press, 2015), a fictional biography of Mina Loy, and essays in *Angela Carter: New Critical Readings* (Continuum, 2012), *Margaret Atwood Studies*, *Journal of Contemporary Literature*, and *Interdisciplinary Humanities*. She is currently working on a book project, *Remembering the Future: Apocalypse, Trauma, and the Archive in Contemporary Literature and Visual Culture*.

**Reclaiming Mythic Sexual Legacies:
(De)Colonizing Kinship, Kink, and Creation Myth in Chrystos's *In Her I Am***

Chrystos's poetry collection, *In Her I Am*, presents a cartographic narrative that engages historical themes of colonization and imperialism along with their resulting legacies of abuse within relational and sexual contexts. Furthermore, she proposes possibilities of healing and reclamation through non-normative relationship models, somatic healing practices, and reweaving of indigenous myth. In this paper, I will demonstrate the complexity of this mythic roadmap by exploring the volume's retelling of Chrystos's relational experience as a self-described First Nations, Two-Spirit, Lesbian, and Urban Indian. Chrystos discusses her approach to kinship as a non-monogamous lesbian throughout her poems and more heavily in her introduction and concluding pieces. Her communal Sapphic relationship model, in comparison with poets such as Qwol-i (whose poetic lyric, "They took us from our bodies/they took us from our homes," exposes bodily colonization) and Lorde (whose iconic descriptions of women as lovers and friends closely resembles Chrystos's model), serves as a breaking free from patriarchal legacies of dominance through negotiated systems of equitable bonds nuanced in their power boundaries. Chrystos incorporates modern kink culture with breakdowns of binary relations in order to examine the source of colonial abuse legacies. Thus, this paper will explore themes of sexual reclamation through engagement with psychology and social science research focused upon Submission and Dominance, and its role in trauma renegotiation. While Chrystos discusses power dynamics within sexual relationships, particularly within Urban Indian kink culture, she strikes a firm divide between erotic feminine power dynamics and their sadistic patriarchal counterpart. Chrystos names her abuse experience as one of colonial legacy and personal experience. She bonds with her lovers through mutual pain, seeking to heal a shared pain by sorting through inherited legacies of dominance (whether within compulsory heterosexual models or homonormative recreations of sexual scenarios), using the remaining material to rebuild sexual experience as new and otherworldly. Through invocation of indigenous myth, she presents a creation of new sexual possibilities.

As another central aim, this paper will also examine Pan-Indian mythic themes through historical and anthropological methodologies, and through comparison of Chrystos's works with those of her contemporaries. In selected poems, Chrystos invokes Olmec tradition, the iconic Phoenix, the "snake which began the world," among other mythic figures. Her use of imagery, particularly involving the snake closely associated in indigenous myth with fertility and creation, interacts with Gloria Anzaldúa's essay, *Entering into the Serpent*. The colonial interplay with the serpent and its disappearance from iconic symbolism is hearkened in Chrystos's "Your Iridescent Aqua." In multiple poems, her reclamation of such myth is closely followed by modern imagery involving new journeys to other worlds where the speaker and her lovers will rebuild, not through fertility but through erotic intimacy, themselves becoming myth in the process.

Overall, I argue that Two-Spirit Native American poet and activist, Chrystos, engages in (de)colonization of "Urban Indians" from a legacy of white supremacist gender-centric violence in her collection of Sapphic poems, *In Her I am*, and, by invoking creation myth as a path toward psychic emancipation and Sapphic kinship models as a relational ideal through sexual narratives of somatic freedom and feminine dominance, she presents a complex cartography of ethics and Eros.

Bio note

Christina is a first year graduate student in the M. Hum program with a concentration in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies at Wright State University. Her interests include feminist and new materialist interpretations of Shakespearean works, twenty-first century poetry surrounding Social Justice Movements, transnational feminist poetry and memoir accounts of war and neo-colonialism, literary themes involving sexuality, and emerging queer contemporary fiction. She is also interested in discourse analysis of poetry in justice movements as compared with national rhetoric- to include imposition of institutional power, social control, and co-option of such poetic discourse by national power-holders, as well as interplay between local and national poetry/activist movements.

**The Goddess Ishtar in Lesbos:
The Transgender Muse in the Poetry of Sylvia Plath and Denise Levertov**

In one of the key scenes of *The Danish Girl*, Gerda (Alicia Vikander) asks her husband Einar Wegener (Eddie Redmayne), a landscape painter, to fill in for her model (Gerda, a portraitist, is painting a series of Degas-like portraits on ballet dancers and the model hadn't shown up). A close up of Einar's enraptured expression on his face as he slips on his ballerina stockings and silk pumps shows that he is experiencing something akin to a transformation. This moment not only marks the birth of Lili but also the birth of a new muse for Gerda, who gradually discovers in her husband, from this epiphany onwards transitioning to a different gender identity, a fertile source of inspiration. This biopic on Einar's transitioning exemplifies too what it means for a woman artist to suddenly rediscover a Muse that is more fluid and flexible, some with whom she can freely interact without necessarily having to be, in Deshazer's own terms, "dependent upon or superior to" her.

In this essay I would like to explore the inspirational poetry of two U.S. women poets, Sylvia Plath and Denise Levertov. Both poets were instantly assigned the role of the Muse at a certain point in their careers: Ted Hughes certainly used Plath as a creative stimulus, explicitly referring to her as a "source of great deal in his poetry," whereas Levertov, orbiting then around male poetic circles, was often objectified as a Muse figure (Kenneth Rexroth hailed her as "the incarnation of Beatrice). Both poets, in their turn tried to draw inspiration from a male Muse figure: in the case of Plath, this role was played both by her father, Otto Plath, and her husband, or the father later transmogrified as husband (as Plath herself confessed in her *Journals*, the "buried male muse and god-creator" had "risen to be [her] male in Ted"); in the case of Levertov, it was her mentor and long-time friend, Black Mountain poet Robert Duncan, who assumed this role for her ("You are a girl there too / having something of sister and of wife . . . / and I would play Orpheus for you again." *Bending the Bow*). Finally, both poets explored common, uncharted territories in their efforts to reimagine the figure of the Muse as more in harmony with their identities. Poems such as

“Ariel” (“God lioness” as one of its characters), “Medusa,” and “Lesbos” can be interpreted in this context, i.e, as Plath’s last-minute effort to break free from the chains that bound her to her overpowering male Muses by refashioning more powerful transgender Muses. In “Lesbos,” for instance, Plath rejects the eroticized duality male poet/female muse. The male poet is caricaturized as an inane figure and the speaker engages in a homoerotic relationship with a female Muse. The same homoerotic overtones can be found in Levertov’s “Song for Ishtar,” a poem in which the poet assumes the unmaidenly identity of a pig, an animal sacred to the goddess Ishtar, while the Muse is invoked under the ungentle form of a sow. In spite of this apparently binary gender categorization (Poet as pig= male) / (Muse as sow= female), contrarily to what we might expect, it is the pig the one that has his “hollow” fertilized by the moon beams issuing from the moon goddess. Adrienne Rich’s words on the lesbian imagination seem to come true here: “it is the lesbian in us who is creative, for the dutiful daughter of the fathers in us is only a hack.” (*On Lies, Secrets, and Silences*).

Works Cited

- Duncan, Robert. 1968. *Bending the Bow*. New York: New Directions.
- Deshazer, Mary K. 1986. *Inspiring Women: Reimagining the Muse*. New York: Pergamon Press.
- Levertov, Denise. 2013. *The Collected Poems of Denise Levertov*. New York: New Directions.
- Plath, Sylvia. 1981. *Collected Poems*. Ed. Ted Hughes. New York: Harper & Row.
- Plath, Sylvia, and Karen V. Kukil. 2000. *The Unabridged Journals of Sylvia Plath, 1950-1962*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Rich, Adrienne. 1980. *On Lies, Secrets and Silence: Selected Prose 1966-1978*. New York: Norton.

Bio note

José Rodríguez Herrera is Associate Professor at the Department of English, University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Canary Islands), where he teaches US Poetry and Drama, Film theory and Contemporary Literary Studies. He is author of various works dealing with some major U.S. poets, Denise Levertov among them. In 2007, he published a translation into Spanish of Levertov’s *Sands of the Well*, the first translation of Levertov’s work into Spanish. In the year 2013, José Rodríguez Herrera was awarded the SAAS (Spanish Association of American Studies) Biennial Research Award for his article “A Boundary-Dissolving Binding: The Eclectic Composition Underlying the First Edition of *Leaves of Grass*.”

The cyborg and the goddess: Toni Morrison's Jandine

Jandine is one of the main characters of Toni Morrison's *Tar Baby*. She is a fashion model whose career has been founded by her uncle's and aunt's white patron. This novel was written in 1981, but in spite of that, it serves as a mythological figure for contemporary culture. As an example, they point out the figure of Jandine as an inspirational model for the popular singer Beyonce¹. Jandine has always being one of the most controversial characters of Toni Morrison because of the particular rhetoric used in its figuration. As Holly Blackford points out (2012: 39), together with Adrienne Rich, Toni Morrison "evoke[s] the goddesses to symbolize modern conditions, which divide daughters from not only mothers but from maternal and domestic values." Nevertheless, as the call for this conference claims, "[t]oday, myths can also be catalysts for new ideas and imaginative re-creations." The figure of Jandine today, more than a goddess, can also be considered a cyborg in its relation with contemporary culture. In 1988, Donna Haraway established one of the most important myths for feminist politics and theory, which is the figuration of the cyborg. This myth has materialized contemporarily into the perfect metaphor for expressing differences in the way we understand a cartographical approach of sociological problems. Jandine is configured in Morrison's work as both the fully independent black woman successful in Europe; while, at the same time, she is condemned by the neoliberal values that configure her subjectivity. In a similar vein, the post-feminist/neoliberal feminism embodied in Beyonce is as controversial for our present society as the figure of Jandine in *Tar Baby*. In this paper, I want to explore the potentialities of thinking through the tension between cyborg and goddess to affirm that, together with Puar (2011), we could consider Jandine a "cyborgian-goddess". Putting together feminist theory, contemporary literature and the mass media, we can explore different strategies that will reconfigure the concept of myth for feminist politics.

Bio note

¹ <http://newsone.com/755955/beyonce-should-star-in-toni-morrison-tar-baby/>

Dr. Beatriz Revelles Benavente is a Juan de la Cierva postdoc at Universitat de Barcelona. She defended her PhD thesis on 2014 titled "Understanding Toni Morrison's work in the Information Society." The main objective of the thesis was exploring how Morrison's literature changed the literary object from a static one into a communicative process. Her line of research is situated in the intersection between feminist theory, contemporary literature and social media. Her publications can be found in *CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture*, *European Journal of Women's Studies* and *International Journal of Feminist Politics*. She has also written several chapters in co-edited volumens on Toni Morrison's work.

A Post-human Approach to Feminist Myth Re-Vision

Much has been argued within the fertile critical field of feminism during the thirty years following the publication of Ostriker's *Stealing the Language*. With the advantage of those thirty years, we can now gain a certain perspective on the general context of production and reception of both Ostriker's work and the poetic work she analyzes in her study. With this presentation, I intend to point to some problematic aspects of Ostriker's criticism as they appear in her study and as later feminist criticism tried to solve them. My approach intends to start a dialogue between such answers (mainly Cioux, Hayles and Haraway's) and Karen Barad's material ecocriticism, using her critical construct of phenomenon as an instrument to understand feminist myth revision in the post-human context as intra-action.

This work is funded by the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness (FFI2015-63506P) and the Aragonese Regional Government DGA.

Bio note

Miriam Fernández Santiago completed her PhD in English in 2003. She is the author of *The (Il)logics of Postmodern Humor* (2003) and *The Voice and The Void* (2005). Her main research interests include Critical Theory, Literary Criticism, (Inter)cultural Studies, Postmodern Literature and (recently) Posthuman Theory, Trauma Studies and Ecocriticism. She is currently teaching Critical Theory and English/American literatures and cultures in the University of Granada (Spain). Her previous work on Feminist criticism is scarce but also involves myth revision and posthuman feminism, including "Dos alegorías femeninas del cuerpo postmoderno" Ed. José Manuel Estévez Saa. *Cuerpos de Mujer en sus (con)textos*. Arcibel Ed. Sevilla, 2005; and "Lo Plausible. Similitudes y diferencias entre la Malinche y Pocahontas" (forthcoming).

**From Papyrus to Celluloid:
Classical and Contemporary Myths in Aurora Luque's Poetry**

Aurora Luque (Almería, 1962) is one of the most outstanding contemporary Spanish poets. Both critics and readers celebrate her unique voice, which is constructed through a mythological discourse that combines ancient myths and postmodern images within an impeccable lyric harmony. Thus, in its pages one can find poems about Pandora, Greta Garbo, Hypatia, Ingrid Bergman, Icarus, Bogart or (an ancient and a cinematographic) Ulysses. This paper aims to analyze the re-elaboration of these mythological characters and to reflect on the incorporation of the new myths, born during the 20th century explosion of the film industry. The main goal is to reflect on how the lyrical representation of these characters serves to weave a discourse of social, personal and poetical commitment in the context of contemporary Spanish and European women's writing.

Bio note

Dolores Juan Moreno is Visiting Assistant Professor of Spanish at Clark University (Worcester, MA), where she also serves as the director and coordinator of the project HCH (Hispanic Culture and Heritage), which she created along with undergraduate students in 2016. She teaches Contemporary Spanish literature and cinema, as well as language courses. Her research interests include Women Writers and Filmmakers of the 21st century; Food, Cinema and Poetry and the interdisciplinary connections between the cultures of the Mediterranean. She got her first PhD in 2015 from Universitat de les Illes Balears (Balearic Islands, Spain) with a dissertation on the Spanish poet Aurora Luque and she earned her second PhD at UMass Amherst (MA, USA) in 2016 with a dissertation about Food, Film and Poetry.

Poetry and Translation: Aurora Luque's Art of Making the Old New

A poet, educator, newspaper columnist, editor, scholar and feminist, Aurora Luque (Almería, 1962) is also an acclaimed translator. In 2000 she published *Eros' Dice*, a bilingual Anthology of Greek Erotic Poetry gaining the critics' acclaim. In 2015, she delighted her readers with a new translation of Greek poetry titled *Aquel vivir del mar* (*The Sea, that way of living*), an exquisite selection of Greek poems of maritime theme. Poetry and translation are intimately intertwined in Luque. Luque declares that, for her, translation is "an act of reading" and that as such it is a private act, an intimate act of love (*Eros' Dice, Anthology of Greek Erotic Poetry*, Visor: 2000, 28). She later adds, "I am a friend of my poets and I seek to reciprocate the favor they did me in writing their poetry: I translate them, I edit them, I introduce them to my students or I incorporate them in my poems" (*Una industria extraña* [*A Strange Labor*] (renglónseguido, 2008: 37-38). This paper analyses the way in which Luque brings to life ancient myths using two of myth's primary functions, retelling and re-creating, through her translations and her poetic writing.

Bio note

Maria Elsy Cardona is Associate Professor in the Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures at Saint Louis University in Saint Louis, MO. (USA) and holds a secondary appointment in their Women and Gender Studies Program. Her research and academic interests are on Contemporary Women Poets of Spain, Comics and the Graphic Novel and Translation Studies. She is currently finishing an annotated translation of Aurora Luque's poetry.

Mito y viaje en la poesía de Aurora Luque

La idea del viaje es una constante en la poesía de Aurora Luque y está a menudo conectada con los mitos griegos, especialmente con aquellos vinculados a la Odisea de Homero. Este es el caso de poemas como “La mirada de Ulises”, de su libro *Transitoria* (1998). No obstante, el viaje en conexión con los mitos alcanza valores cruciales en su último poemario, *Personal y político* (2015) donde el significado metafórico del viaje puede fácilmente ser vinculado al nomadismo de Deleuze-Guattari y Braidotti. El propósito de esta comunicación será, en consecuencia, no sólo analizar el rol de los mitos griegos en el contexto del mencionado tópico, sino también estudiar los posibles puntos de contacto entre este y la teoría de Braidotti sobre los sujetos nómada.

Bio note

Josefa Álvarez has a Bachelor's degree in Classical languages and literatures from the Complutense University of Madrid and a Ph.D. in Spanish Philology from the University of Alcalá (Madrid). Actually she is Associate Professor of Spanish at Le Moyne College (Syracuse, NY). Her research interests center on contemporary Spanish poetry and the classical tradition in Spanish literature. Included in her list of publications are the books *Tradición clásica en la poesía de Aurora Luque: Figuras, formas e ideas*, *Laberintos del género: muerte, sacrificio y dolor en la literatura femenina española* (ed.) and the anthology of the metapoetical poetry of Aurora Luque *Fabricación de las islas*.