

Reviews

M. Carmen África Vidal Claramonte. *Traducción, manipulación, desconstrucción*. Colección Biblioteca Filológica de Salamanca. Salamanca: Ediciones Colegio de España, 1995.

It is some considerable time since Translation, as an independent academic discipline, took its place in Spanish universities. Since then several journals and professional publications have appeared, serving to disseminate theoretical reflections on traductology and work on literary, technical, and legal translation, among others. The number of these publications has increased over the last few years, and the accumulated experience has also given rise to an increase in quality. It is within this parameter of quality that a place of honour is occupied by M. Carmen África Vidal Claramonte's recent book *Traducción, manipulación, desconstrucción*. Because of its originality and the treatment given to its contents, this book has become an essential text for students of translation and traductology.

Dr. Vidal Claramonte combines two highly valuable qualities which enable her to theorize with agility, imagination and mastery on translation and traductology: her experience as a translator and her thorough linguistic training. Her translation experience includes the translation into Spanish of six books and more than a hundred articles, for which she has been awarded national translation prizes; as a specialist in English studies, during the time when she was university lecturer in Alicante, she acquired the skills required to examine and write published works on the more important literary and cultural phenomena of the twentieth century, so that today she is one of the best-known specialists on the cultural phenomenon known as Postmodernism. Equipped with these theoretical and practical instruments, Dr. Vidal Claramonte offers us, in her clear, transparent prose style, three studies titled "Sobre el estado de la cuestión" ("On the State of the Question"), "La traducción como manipulación" ("Translation as Manipulation"), and "Desconstruir la traducción" ("Deconstructing Translation").

The first of these studies is an introductory review of present-day translation problems. Entitled "Sobre el estado de la cuestión," it consists of six sections which deal with six vital questions in the speciality: translation studies, the qualities required in a translator, the translator's intention, the problem of equivalence, the existence of an *Ur-Sprache*, and the types of translation. Those who wish to update their knowledge of the basic questions of translation will find in Dr. Vidal's work a clear, up-to-the-minute overview of these questions, based on epistemological concepts and generous references, in a 44-page chapter packed with information.

The second chapter is titled "La traducción como manipulación," and is a critical analysis of all that is represented by the so-called Manipulation School of Central European origin both linguistically and culturally. As Vidal Claramonte affirms, "the

'Manipulation School' presents us with a new paradigm which prefers to put its emphasis not on interlinguistic relations but rather on intertextual ones; likewise, instead of centring its attention on potential translation or translatability, prefers to analyse translations which have already been done." Dr. Vidal brilliantly examines the philosophical foundations of this school of traductological thought and analyses in detail several of its basic concepts, among which is that of polysystem.

The third chapter, entitled "Desconstruir la traducción," is a work of applied theory. Here the author is on home ground, manipulating with ease and familiarity her own reflections on post-structuralism, Jacques Derrida's deconstruction and their application to translation.

To summarize all the foregoing, we can definitely state that whether one agrees or disagrees with the postulates of the questions examined, in particular those of the Manipulation School, or with the contribution made by post-structuralism and deconstruction to traductology, it is eminently true that the specialised reader will not remain indifferent to the imaginative analysis offered with full academic rigour by Dr. Vidal. All her personal reflection on the science and the art of translation is contained in the three chapters entitled "Sobre el estado de la cuestión," "La traducción como manipulación," and "Desconstruir la traducción," which are accompanied by abundant footnotes whose erudition and accuracy provide a solid intellectual base for what she affirms elsewhere, as well as helping the reader to discover new pathways for research into the theory of translation. The book ends with a wide-ranging yet select, up-to-date bibliography of works on translation and in particular on the questions analysed. This bibliography is highly valuable as a basic research instrument for advanced students of translation.

At the same time as we offer our gratitude to Dr. Vidal Claramonte for this new contribution to the world of the intellect, we should also like to make it clear that in our opinion Translation, manipulation, deconstruction is a valuable conceptual work which should occupy its rightful place on the theory of translation bookshelf, alongside the great theoreticians of translation such as Nida, Vázquez Ayora, Bassnett, Lefevre, Santoyo, Rabadán, Peña, Hurtado and others; the author has courageously approached translation in a serious, confident, academically rigorous manner and from an interdisciplinary standpoint.

Enrique Alcaraz Varó

***Diccionario de uso inglés-español/Spanish-English.* Directed by Aquilino Sánchez. Madrid: SGEL, 1993, 450 pp. • *Diccionario de uso pocket inglés-español/Spanish-English.* Directed by Aquilino Sánchez. Madrid: SGEL, 1993, 274 pages.**

Very often, and perhaps as a result of the false cliché that would make us believe that any product coming from abroad must be better, those of us who have made English a way of life let only a limited series of publishers control the field of English teaching and translation. This has led us, on the one hand, to believe that any textbook published in

Britain is better and, on the other, that we are to dismiss all dictionaries made in Spain, in such a way that the books used in Britain in classes of Spanish as a foreign language had been made in England (the famous *Calatrava* series), while the materials we used with our students also came from English-speaking publishers.

Fortunately, it has been shown that, as far as textbooks and grammars are concerned, a contrastive view is necessary, and the mother language of a student has a bearing on the way he or she will learn English, which means that some structures will need more insistence than others (for example, conditionals are almost similar in English and Spanish, whereas French speakers are likely to encounter more difficulties). In the case of dictionaries, the times in which infamous word-lists with false friends were mercilessly circulated are over, and the work we are dealing with might well be the best response to the avalanche of English-Spanish dictionaries made in Britain which, despite their obvious merits, cannot help being a tool for English-speaking students who desire to learn Spanish, and therefore fail to give sufficient explanations of the pitfalls of the English language.

The authors of this dictionary, under the wise direction of Professor Aquilino Sánchez, from the University of Murcia, have clearly wished to create a useful working instrument, and this is why little frequent forms which would be of little use to language learners. In this way a detailed treatment of the lexical units is achieved, similar to the one that may be found in larger dictionaries, especially in the case of idiomatic examples which cannot be found in traditional repertoires, such as *ancha es Castilla* or *para más inri*, which show also the needs of foreign learners of Spanish have been taken into account.

In the organization of entries, a criterium can be traced which we had already seen in German dictionaries, as the same entry gives access to *apartado*, *apartamento* and *apartar*, which certainly entails a departure from the usual procedure, but allows the learner or translator to have a better grasp of the word family.

Another of the details that show that the authors actually wish to offer a useful tool is the exhaustive and accurate allophonic description of Spanish, which is counterparted by an excellent summary of English phonetics in the introduction, miles better than the traditional statement “*p* como en *pato*” that was given in many dictionaries, which did not even mention the aspiration of voiceless plosives in initial position. In fact, it has given us a great pleasure to see how Spanish authors have overcome the usual inactivity when it comes to teaching Spanish as a foreign language, and we have reasons to confirm this is a good dictionary of Spanish usage, which makes us believe that it will be successful also among foreign learners.

Such desire to produce a dictionary of usage comes to the foreground in entries such as *añoranza*, the translation of which proposes *longing*, *yearning*, *nostalgia* on the one hand and *hankering* on the other, but also mentions the prepositions, *for* y *after* respectively (as we would find in a monolingual dictionary), in order to avoid the Spanish learner’s temptation to use *of*. Also, the fact that the authors have accepted the challenge of including a syllabic division of English, which causes trouble even among native speakers, shows us that producing a practical dictionary often entails facing difficulties and successfully overcoming them.

There is wide evidence that shows the validity of this work, such as the translation of *juez instructor* as *examining magistrate*, the accuracy of which is similar to that of the versions offered by lawyers and experts in Legal English and Legal Spanish, or the translation of *hardware* and *software* for *soporte físico* and *soporte lógico*, respectively, in line with the proposal of the Spanish Real Academia de la Lengua. Nevertheless, the authors do not want to be excessively prudish, and are willing to offer alternative spellings in Spanish, such as *euskera/eusquera*, which might probably displease Spanish purists, but most certainly will prevent a great deal of perplexity among English-speaking readers of Spanish contemporary newspapers.

Finally, an analysis of a dictionary as a working instrument must necessarily mention its presentation. This work has a handy, resistant format, which enables learners to use it in the classroom, thus avoiding the burden of larger volumes, which leads to have a more reduced version for frequent use and a more detailed one for written translation and homework. The same can be said about the pocket edition. All these features result in two useful, complete and accurate dictionaries, which can be perfectly used as an alternative to the most frequent works we all have in mind.

Miguel Ángel Campos Pardillos

***La presencia ausente: perspectivas interdisciplinarias de la posmodernidad.* Ed. Román Álvarez Rodríguez. Cáceres: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Extremadura, 1994, 192 pp.**

It might seem that postmodernism is on the wane, or at least that it has lost some of its initial seductive force, replaced by a—very postmodern—sense of indefinition and disenchantment, the feeling that the absence of secure positions will not, unfortunately, lead to any confident procedure. While that is so, one may ask, to what extent are those theories one could tentatively ascribe to this movement still valid? A rapid glance shows that many instances of “postmodern thought” do still have appeal and practical use, and remain undeterred by their secular theoretical opponents. And all the more so at a time when the term “postmodernism” has become almost worn out.

This collection of essays by leading scholars and artists aims at a reassessment of the undeniable achievements of what is, despite the trivialization of some of its philosophical stances, still a far-reaching, interdisciplinary movement. So the book contributes to a rehabilitation of postmodernism approaching the great variety of what could be termed “postmodern attitudes,” and pointing to the relevance of some of its perspectives in order to come to terms with the future. As Román Álvarez, editor of the work, rightly points out, postmodernism is far from the usual academic climbing on the bandwagon, it “does not amount to a mere fashion, a mere word devoid of meaning that one is bound to use at random; it is much more than a movement invented by scholars in order to write about and make their livelihood from it. Postmodernism is a meditation on the society we live in, an attitude (or, rather, several attitudes), variegated ways of living that coexist, or should coexist, in peace.”

Thus, the book reviewed discusses the relevance of postmodernism in several areas of contention. It also sets forth several strategies to deal with the deadlock which postmodernist thinkers and their contenders seem to have reached. Through essays on postmodernist fiction, feminist literature and criticism, philosophy and sociology, the challenge of *fin-de-siècle* postmodernism is approached with insight and an uncommon accessibility. The first two contributions are signed by two leading theorists. The essay "La posmodernidad de la ciencia: contra algunos dogmas del nuevo relativismo cultural" by Christopher Norris, professor at the University of Wales, Cardiff, and author of several studies on Derrida and poststructuralism, assesses current relativist—"postmodern"—trends in the philosophy of science, a rather thorny subject. His contribution is a call for caution in the face of sceptical positions on the question of scientific value; in a rather unfashionable move, Norris posits a revision of discredited concepts such as "truth," "progress" or "rationality," as a necessary securing of the ground for an eventual sorting out of the relativist *impasse*.

Also relevant is the essay by Michel Maffessoli, a well-known name among sociologists and readers acquainted with cultural theory. His article, "El ritmo del barroco posmoderno," proposes a reading of certain present-day cultural icons that could be considered, in his view, as signs of the times. As an example, Maffessoli offers an analysis of the social meaning of the *walkman*.

Any brief survey of the development of contemporary criticism of value, representation, and the historical subject, makes it clear that there are several opposing fronts. Some of them are well known, such as the criticism coming from neo-conservative, Marxist or feminist quarters. Yet the relationship between antagonistic positions is often complex, and their different viewpoints are not so clear-cut. Feminism, for example, is by no means a homogeneous adversary of postmodernism. There are several points of contact, and some feminist theorists apply to themselves the epithet "post-structuralist" or even "postmodern." The contribution by Rosa María Rodríguez places feminism in the context of the modernist tradition that goes back to the Enlightenment, and then in the broader context of a (*transmodern*) culture that cannot ignore the development of postmodern thought as a questioning of the bases of modernity. Her approach is challenging and thought-provoking; weighing up the pros and cons of affirming woman's identity is just the starting point of a broad agenda that should be given the utmost consideration.

For their part, Esther Sánchez-Pardo, Francisco Collado, Allan Lloyd Smith and Manuel Brito deal with postmodern literature; Esther Sánchez from the point of view of formalist developments in recent feminist and marginal literatures in the U.S., with a section devoted to experimental fiction (*cyberpunk* fiction and hypertexts); Francisco Collado and Manuel Brito focusing on similarities and differences in the transition from modernist to postmodern narrative and poetry, and Allan Lloyd Smith contributing with an essay on Donald Barthelme.

It is uncommon to read contributions by plastic artists, and this adds to the value of the contributions by Juan Luis Moraza, a leading Spanish sculptor, and Chema Cobo, one of the most representative Spanish painters. The former is deeply concerned with the conscience of the complexity of the world that permeates contemporary thinking as shown

in art. In a similar, but aphoristic and poetic way, Chema Cobo offers us a delightful array of reflections on art, language, culture and life, while África Vidal closes the volume with a witty, scrupulous and at times mordant glossary of common postmodern terms.

The result is an engaging volume that will be of interest to readers in the fields of English philology, sociology, philosophy and art. The updated bibliography (816 entries), compiled by África Vidal and Román Álvarez, is one of the most complete bibliographies on postmodernism and related subjects to date.

Ovidio Carbonell

M. Carmen África Vidal Claramonte. *Futuro anterior: reflexiones filológicas sobre el fin de siglo*. Barcelona: Promociones y Publicaciones Universitarias, 1994, 157 pp.

One may think of the paradoxical implications of this suggestive title, *Futuro anterior*, as regards Spanish verbal inflexion (*pretérito imperfecto* also lends itself to fruitful combinations), or one could turn to the no less paradoxical speculations of Derrida's theory on the certain *past* quality of both present and future, and the relationship between past and future that, precisely, shape a rather inexistent present. Nevertheless, the feeling of a future that *happened before* bears the Nietzschean tinge of recurrence, as well as the postmodern yield to exhaustion. Everything has already been said; cynicism and a playful curiosity should replace any search for essences or transcendence. The Holy Grail at the turn of the millennium is found empty; its existence as a commodifiable artifact is all that remains.

Far from indulging herself in yet another circular piece of speculation, África Vidal embarks on a journey across some of the most relevant areas of contention in contemporary cultural debates. The first chapter evokes a *post* which is at the same time a beginning and an end. It is time to recapitulate what it is that we are left with, now that the clamour of postmodern speculation has somewhat faded. While postmodernism championed a fondness for narcissistic contemplation and homogeneity, it is also true that this attitude has favoured a climate of tolerance as yet unknown, though clearly insufficient. Certain trends of postmodern thought find it inappropriate, or even impossible, to pursue a political course of action.

What, then, is to be done? Is it possible to write history, deal with distinct identities, even follow a concrete educational programme? *Futuro anterior* searches for answers to these questions. It is, above all, a book about the teaching of literature as well as how to teach students to read the world around. If postmodernism left many questions unanswered, it is from the mechanisms of postmodern thought and its critics that a proper course of action could arise. Therefore, the first chapter is an assessment of those postmodern characteristics that have proved to be most influential or beneficial, as well as an appraisal of some of its most acute criticisms. The second chapter comes to grips with the reality of teaching after postmodernism: the encounter of opposing, even conflicting attitudes within academic institutions, and the possibility of achieving a critical and fruitful rather than destructive thinking.

Reflecting on the world as a text poses a good number of questions on language. M. Carmen África Vidal then turns to the issue of *creating* a text: the role of the author, his/her dissolution in the ocean of repetitions and references that shape contemporary fiction, its ultimate expression being the computer-assisted *hypertext*. Originality, identity, the historical subject may all lose their meaning, or at least alter it substantially. Yet it is a characteristic of contemporary culture that there is no single, closed text. Narrative texts elude a linear sequence, and their author appears disseminated, disintegrated in a plurality of textual layers, most of which cannot be clearly assigned to a single, masterful subject. A paradoxical situation is revealed: despite its welcome tendency towards pluralism and the acceptance of the Other, the so-called *death of the author* may carry with it a tendentious homogenization, a “renaissance of the Same,” to the disadvantage of distinct cultural identities. M^a Carmen África Vidal warns against this and many other dangers of postmodern thought inadequately understood. The politics of language points towards the anomalous domain of power: as relevant as what is being said are those blank spaces that remain unuttered, those skipped meanings, the play on words, those imprecise garments that eventually become “the only way to gain access to the realm of ethics.”

The last chapter displays the cultural paradoxes of these anxious times, drawing upon instances of popular and high culture, always interrelated. Cultural icons such as Madonna and relevant theorists such as the post-marxist critic Jameson, among many others, are the objects of a serious reflection on the *fin-de-siècle* cultural hotchpotch. Fashion, sex and love are some of the aspects examined, models of a contemporary society obsessed with nostalgia and simulacra.

In short, this perspicacious book, written in an at times cynical, but always concerned Borgesian style, offers an enjoyable and assertive insight into the predicament of culture studies. It may help us not to waste “the postmodern occasion,” as it has been termed, but, above all, through post-technological icons and signifiers, it will surely give us matter for reflection and perhaps a new attitude towards life and books, the immense library of everyday experience.

Ovidio Carbonell

Walt Whitman. *Hojas de hierba: antología bilingüe*. Trans. and notes Manuel Villar Raso. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1995, 276 pp.

In a brief review like this one, very little that is new can be said about *Leaves of Grass*, one of the most frequently discussed works in the English language and one which has already been translated several times into Spanish by poets and writers as famous as José Martí or Jorge Luis Borges. It therefore seems more advisable to focus on the values and intentions of the translation, and to abstain from reassessing the main traits of a book written by Whitman in 1855 and revised by him time and again.

Translation is characterized by what might be termed a double tension between the reproduction of the source text and the creation of a new text which seeks to attain a degree of efficiency and quality dictated by the target system conventions. In this

connection, in translation studies a now traditional distinction is drawn between the translation of poetry and poetic translation. The former defines a target text which does not aspire to appear as a poem in its own right within the target system, but as a good reproduction of the semantic material included in the source text. Poetic translation, on the other hand, accords the aesthetic objectives, as they are established within the target culture, at least the same importance usually granted to the semantic material of the source text. Thus, this type of translation is ready to give up the contents (at least partially) in exchange for formal excellence. In spite of past controversies which have long raged the literature on translation, currently there seems to be a general agreement as to the idea that the quality and, of course, the legitimacy of the two types are not subjects on which *a priori* judgements can be founded, since each performs a different function and it is the purpose of a given translation (the *scopos*, to use a very much quoted term) which tips the scales in favour of either option.

Bilingual editions like the one analysed here obviously tend towards the “translation of poetry” option. Since they are intended for readers possessing a reasonable mastery of the source language, the presence of the original as it was written by its author allows them access to its formal virtues, while, at the same time, they can also turn to the translation for help with at least their more superficial problems of comprehension. Thus, when a translation is designed to be included in a bilingual edition, it does not usually aim to replace the original (the function, *par excellence*, of poetic translations), but to accompany it by providing support for a reader who does not have complete mastery of the source language. This seems to be the main function all through this anthology of *Leaves of Grass*, translated and annotated by Manuel Villar Raso, since he keeps as close to the source text as possible, offering the classic structure in which the translation matches the original line by line or with a minimum carry-over to the next line. The reader is thus enabled to focus on the English version and, at a glance, clear up any doubt he may have as to the sense of the words or phrases of the source text. The translator will offer him exactly that in a version which marries correctness in the use of Spanish with the closest approximation to the source text. Villar Raso’s version succeeds in this aim, and even provides a series of footnotes, usually to explain cultural and geographical references in which the mere transference of the semantic material could not suffice. This last feature further confirms the auxiliary nature of this translation in line with its being issued in a bilingual edition. The intention behind the translation can easily be appreciated through a quick comparison between this version and that by Borges, probably the best known in Spanish. Though the anthology selected by Borges is based on a different source text and many of the poems chosen are not to be found in Villar Raso’s translation, if we compare for instance the two versions of “Song of Myself” it is clear that the one written by Borges is intended as a replacement for the original and, in consequence, aims to stand as an autonomous poem of high quality, even if this means some degree of conscious deviation from the original.

Another important feature of Villar Raso’s version is the fact that it is a retranslation. Usually, when there has been no important change in the literary conventions of the target system, retranslations tend to be, with the occasional exception of theatre translations, more and more oriented towards the reproduction of the original. This is possibly due to

the fact that the only works that are retranslated are those which have entered the canon in the new system, and this new status gives the translator greater leeway with the specific conventions of the target literary system in a situation in which the nature of the recognized "work of art" acquires greater importance. In fact, on the back cover there is a statement which expands on something said by the translator in his introduction: "The novelty and interest of this BILINGUAL ANTHOLOGY . . . rests on the fact that for the first time we are offered a Spanish translation of Whitman's poems in their first versions, in which the urge that brought them into being manifests itself much more faithfully than do the final ones, expurgated by the poet himself." Thus, the idea of "fidelity" prevails in the translator's intention to such an extent that, in a very unusual but significant move, it is claimed that the source text chosen in this case is the most faithful to the "spirit" of the writer—curiously enough, actually against his will, because Whitman asked to be published always in the last version to be revised by himself, i.e. what is commonly known as the deathbed edition. The claim that this edition is the most faithful is also extremely revealing as to the prerogatives of every translation, which in the act of interpretation establishes its own source text. In this case, the situation is made much clearer by the two facts that the translator has had to choose among several possible source texts, and that he has sifted even that version and kept only a part of it—presumably what he sees as the most genuine part.

In short, we have here a new Spanish version of *Leaves of Grass* whose main innovation lies in the fact that it presents the poems in a version, the first one, scarcely known in the English-speaking countries and completely unknown in the Spanish literary system. This is, undoubtedly, a new contribution that should be welcomed. From a stylistic point of view, Villar Raso's translation is what has been termed a translation of poetry, i.e. an auxiliary version. Its formal ambitions are therefore limited, though it shows a clear concern for correctness and it pays special attention to linguistic tenor, much in line with this type of translations, which on the semantic level stay very close to the original at the same time as they respect target language usage.

Javier Franco Aixelá

William Shakespeare. *Titus Andronicus*. Ed. Jonathan Bate. The Third Edition of the Arden Shakespeare. London: Routledge, 1995 • William Shakespeare. *Antony and Cleopatra*. Ed. John Wilders. The Third Edition of the Arden Shakespeare. London: Routledge, 1995 • William Shakespeare. *King Henry V*. Ed. T. W. Craik. The Third Edition of the Arden Shakespeare. London: Routledge, 1995.

We welcome the publication of *Titus Andronicus* (edited by Jonathan Bate), *Antony and Cleopatra* (edited by John Wilders) and *King Henry V* (edited by T. W. Craik), the first three plays to appear in the third edition with a new concept of editorial work. The Arden Shakespeare has been a landmark in textual analysis and critical research for nearly one hundred years. It has been the origin of a textual revolution in the editing of Shakespeare plays and has been particularly productive in the last decades of this century. The new

series retains its pioneering spirit and presents a challenge to other Shakespearean critical editions for it sets out to find new ways of making Shakespeare meaningful to a new generation. Its contemporary concerns and detailed account of facts and problems related to Shakespearean criticism and theatrical production of the plays gives it a greater critical value.

Editions can be measured by their aims which, in this case, may be summed up by the insistence “upon the highest standards of scholarship and upon attractive and accessible presentation.” “Textuality” and “theatricality” are to be considered the outstanding features of the new Arden. The text is the nodal point of the whole critical process. The edition is based on reliable texts and edited from the original quarto and folio but presented in a modernised version with a textual apparatus full of commentaries and notes. They explain verbal difficulties as well as the different interpretations given by editors, critics and performers to the Shakespearean plays in order to make possible a wider variety of critical approaches.

The edition uses a threefold structure. The text itself is followed by the commentary and textual notes. The traditional division into acts and scenes is preserved but has less prominence than it used to since it is of secondary importance bearing in mind the original shape of the Shakespearean text. It is preceded by an introduction which contains not only the traditional sections devoted to text, date of composition and dramatic sources, but also new ones such as the history of the critical and theatrical reception of the plays. The introduction also discusses the particular problems posed by them, for example a section is devoted to the question of the tragic in *Antony and Cleopatra*.

Plays are not only textual artifacts since they were written to be performed. The introduction and the commentary “are designed to present the plays as texts for performance.” This is why their theatrical dimension is a major concern of the new Arden edition which offers a close reference to stage, film, and television versions where the dramatic text comes fully to life. So we get a balanced presentation of the Shakespearean text which cannot be reduced to mere textuality. Thus the introduction to *Titus Andronicus* opens with a reference to the theatrical conditions in Shakespeare’s lifetime for they made possible the staging of Elizabethan plays, reflecting those special circumstances under which they were produced. Later we come across a section entitled “The Theatrical Life” where there is a detailed account of the staging from its first performances to the present day in order to give a comprehensive view of the theatrical potential contained in the text. The same applies to the edition of *Henry V* in the section “*Henry V* in Performance.”

The Arden edition is also successful in the way it incorporates the trends of contemporary criticism emphasising the relevance of culture and history in the shaping of the text produced in a context to which it belongs and refers. The editors of the Arden Shakespeare are well aware, in the same way as cultural materialists would be, of the fact that plays are historical productions within a particular time and culture. The edition, therefore, tries to present each play as “shaped in history” since they have a historical dimension which limits and influences their textuality. Hence there is a positive consciousness of texts as historical products. It means that to come to terms with their sense, you need to be familiar with the context which creates them.

The multidimensional critical effort made by the editors is to be valued for this new series is meant to provide an open forum for the discussion of contemporary critical issues about different aspects of Shakespearean studies which are analysed from a wide range of critical approaches and perspectives. So we have editors from both sides of the Atlantic with a comprehensive view of Shakespearean criticism. Moreover there is a strong feminist concern as a consequence of the relevance given to feminism in this series where there are more women editors than in previous editions. This is why we expect a positive feminist approach to some of the forthcoming texts, for example with the edition of *Hamlet* edited by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor. This up-to-date critical insight makes the Arden contribution more valuable and more exciting.

The visual dimension of Shakespeare's drama is strongly stressed for the important role which it plays within the theatrical process. It means that performances in the theatre, and on film, and on television provide a new understanding of the plays. They contribute greatly to a deeper experience of the dramatic text which affects our imagination in many ways. The visual aspect is shown both in the relevance given to visual material where there are photographs and practical ideas, and in the presentation of the content and design, with new covers which have been redesigned. Therefore the reference to productions and interpretations challenges past editions and presents a new way of editing plays since they are regarded as theatrical texts. Discussion of dramatic aspects is also included to complete a view of the theatrical potential of the text.

Many reasons may be adduced to justify the appeal of the new edition which lies in the fact that quality has been matched with proven editorial success. The new Arden is Shakespearean in every sense even in its commitment to business, making the edition accessible to a great variety of readers for it contains not only scholarly but also informative material. Its general acceptance may be the greater because it also presents Shakespeare's complete works in single play editions.

However, an important question remains to be answered if the third series is going to be successful in the long run. Will it continue to set the standard for scholarly editions of Shakespeare's plays? The list of distinguished scholars who are going to contribute to the whole series seems to maintain our highest expectations. We can only say at the very outset of its publication that it is one of the finest critical editions of all time so far. And we very much hope that Arden's well that ends well.

José Manuel González Fernández de Sevilla

John K. Eastman and Víctor M. Pina. *Write Right*. Alicante: Aguacilara, 1995, 205 pp.

Over the last few years the ever-growing demand for EFL books for intermediate students has been complied with a wide range of reference grammars that have proved quite useful at different levels, both in secondary schools and language schools. Clear and comprehensive though these materials may be, the Spanish learner often feels that their treatment of some points is either over-theoretical or a little on the short side. They are

written with different users in mind and, accordingly, their approach bypasses a number of practical problems that are specific to Spanish speakers. Of course, teachers are fully aware of these problems. As soon as they start correcting any written work they realise that the vast majority of errors are brought about by interlingual transfers from Spanish into English, as the student's performance is continually dominated by his or her mother tongue. Whether they like it or not, this means that some reflection on the cross-linguistic similarities and differences between the two systems involved is deemed necessary, and this is not easily tackled by resorting to the traditional grammar book.

Such a cross-linguistic approach, based on contrastive analysis, constitutes the very essence of the book under review. Being conceived as a dictionary of the most common errors, it draws on the assumption that mistakes contain valuable information on the various strategies that Spanish students employ when they set pen to paper. In the introduction such mistakes are classed according to their nature, namely conceptual non-equivalence between languages, fanciful coinages, false friends, over-generalizations, literal translations, and so forth. They are also assigned labels that help the student identify the kind of trouble spot that each entry presents.

The first section, appropriately entitled "Rules of thumb," is a user-friendly A to Z of grammatical and word-usage guidelines. Its headings are arranged by title (i.e. *a and an; after and before; ago and before; ago, for and since*; etc.) and contain a simple explanation of the point that is treated, followed by illuminating examples and typical mistakes that can be caused due to verbatim translation. It is worth noting that metalanguage is used sparingly throughout the book and, wherever possible, it is replaced by tips or "hatpegs" in the form of simple rules that assist memorization. Thus, under the heading of *as and like* the hatpeg is "like + noun phrase or pronoun/as + verb phrase," and the entry on *past tenses* is introduced with the basic principle "do not use the past continuous without another past (or past perfect) in the same sentence." These golden rules are supplemented, where relevant, with usage notes that clarify some obscure points of grammar and advise the student to avoid hairsplitting (e.g. *should vs. ought to*). In this respect, one can only praise the authors for their choice of omissions. Far from detracting the pedagogical merit of this book, it definitely contributes to make grammar more accessible to intermediate learners.

Also in this section, the authors call attention to the different renderings of Spanish *sin, que/lo que, (no) tener que*, etc., which are a frequent source of errors. Punctuation, capitalization, and consonant doubling and reduplication are also itemised and explained in detail with enlightening rules of thumb. Perhaps one of the most remarkable accomplishments in this section is the treatment of hyphenation and syllabic division, as these particular items are very often overlooked in orthodox grammars.

Section 2, "Class," contains a listing of 34 mixed errors and problem areas which reinforces some of the points that are treated elsewhere in the book. A few entries are devoted to the most common deviations that can be encountered at sentence level due to Spanish interference, such as postposition and inflection of adjectives (**this night so special* → *this very special night*; **more easy* → *easier*) and transfer of cleft patterns (**it was then when* → *it was then that*). There are also some entries that deal with lexical howlers that arise from paronymic influence (**considerated* → *considerate*), corrections

of syntactic asymmetries (**it is impossible that I do → it is impossible for me to do; *not always the world is going → not always is the world going*) and handy hints on the sequence of tenses, contracted forms and punctuation.

Section 3, “Dictionary of errors and their corrections,” constitutes the core of the book. In its 63 pages the authors itemise a selection of more than 700 recurrent errors and provide their corresponding corrections, as well as labels that indicate the category they fall into. One is again and again impressed not only with the great variety of items taken up for discussion (faulty generalisations, deviant spellings, confusable words, prepositional verbs and phrases, etc.), but also with the fact that the examples that illustrate each mistake are based heavily on actual samples of compositions.

Finally, in the last section, students are given a good chance to test their active control of grammar with a good number of exercises (error detection, gap-filling, spelling, punctuation, etc.) which range over the different headings and entries of the book. Interestingly, the answer key suggests all the possible corrections, which makes its use suitable for those studying on their own.

Given that the book focuses on composition-writing, it should be noted that the concept of “error” is understood in its broadest sense, as it also encompasses mistakes related to stylistic choice and appropriateness. So, for example, the authors rightly object to the overuse of such vacuous words as *good* and *nice*, and disapprove of the use of phrases like *get in touch with*, *something like that*, and *have got* on the grounds of stylistic inadequacy, since more often than not they are inappropriate in formal writing.

The inventory is virtually exhaustive, the layout of entries is carefully worked out, and the comments are revealing and to the point. It is only very occasionally that one misses relevant information. For example, as regards the use of *to* after *speak* and *talk*, the authors say that *with* is correct in American English, but they could have mentioned in passing that this usage is not uncommon in standard British English. Also, in the note dealing with the omission of *the* before *court*, the contrast between *in court*, *at court* (the king’s or queen’s residence) and *on court* (in tennis) calls for inclusion. Furthermore, bearing in mind that the book is intended for intermediate students, perhaps a few entries on co-occurrence might have fitted the plan of the dictionary. I am thinking about such common-core collocations as *banana skin*, *orange peel* and *great difficulty*, since they lend themselves more readily than others to the production of glaring errors (**banana peel*, **orange skin*, **big difficulty*).

Whatever this critical comment may be worth, it is doubtless a drop in the ocean compared with all the virtues of this book. The overall design is easy on the eye and makes the book easy to follow. I am sure it will be as useful to students as to the majority of non-native teachers like myself, who are aware of our own limitations, and are always grateful for any help in our own learning process.

Antonio Lillo Buades

José María Tejedor. *An Introduction to English Literature with Selected Readings*. Coll. Ricardo Navarrete, chs. 7 and 8. Sevilla: Kronos, 1995, XIX + 614.

As the author states in the Preface, this volume is “designed for first and second year students at Spanish Universities where a course such as an ‘Introduction to English Literature’ is a requirement for English majors and a common option to all sorts of students.” The work suits the needs of undergraduates and university tutors for an introductory guide to the history of English literature from the Anglo-Saxon period to the present day. Its general plan is that of a very illuminating diachronic introduction, but it also furnishes a more detailed analysis of the relevant works of the different periods. It offers a comprehensive general study, yet maintains a high academic level, keeping footnotes and literary jargon to a minimum and with an up-to-date vision of the discipline.

On the other hand, this volume represents, to the best of my knowledge, the first introduction to English literature to have been published completely in English—in Spain—to meet the needs and requirements of those reading English, either as a first or second option, within the new modular system. The speed of publication alone would make it a relevant book, since it represents a contribution of Spanish lecturers to their field of English literature. Another aspect to be taken into account is that it is published by a private Spanish publishing house, whose volume of English publications will hopefully increase in the near future. However, even leaving aside these extrinsic—albeit fundamental—characteristics, the importance of the book is obvious due to its intrinsic value.

With this book we not only have a serious guide to the study of English literature but also some of the most outstanding texts from the literary production of the different periods. As an anthologizer, the author is innovative and classic at the same time. A great variety of texts is included at the end of each chapter, incorporating less known contemporary authors such as Jefferey (sic) Simons and Matthew Sharpe, together with Chaucer, Shakespeare or Dryden, for example. The selection of texts by the major authors is also balanced. We can find, in every chapter, classic excerpts together with other not so famous pieces: for instance, a “Burlesque of Lope de Vega” by Samuel Johnson, quite appropriate for Spanish readers; or “L’Allegro” and “Il Penseroso” by John Milton together with a more predictable extract: book 1 of *Paradise Lost*. Thus, the selected readings offer variety and provide students with an excellent, brief anthology that gives a wide perspective on the literary production of the British Isles. All these points make the book a valuable tool for teaching purposes.

One of the issues that must be taken into account when writing a book such as this is selection. That is, “important” texts, famous authors, and relevant literary movements and tendencies must be merely named or simply left out if a thorough study of others is attempted. This leads us to the controversial topic of the literary canon and its various revisions. As José María Tejedor states, the one “included in the content units is quite narrow” and “it only mentions several major authors”; it could not be otherwise in a work of this nature. The only objection might be that this fact, along with the organization of chapters 5 and 6, entitled respectively “Eighteenth-Century Literature: 1700-1798” and “Romantic Poetry: 1798-1897” makes it impossible to include a study of some eighteenth-

century prose writers and novelists—particularly women—who are being increasingly read now at the end of the twentieth century. Jane Austen is the clearest example of this omission, since only one paragraph is devoted to her (292), in a section entitled “Romantic Poetry” including detailed studies of other authors and works.

The organization of the book is diachronic, with eight chapters about the different ages of literature from the Old English period to the twentieth century. It is made complete by an Introduction, two Appendices, a short bibliography section and a complete Index. The Introduction offers a description of what the main characteristics of a text are for it to be considered “literature,” and an analysis of the features of the different literary genres. That task might likely require several theoretical monographic studies, therefore any explicit definition is cleverly avoided by describing the general distinguishing features of the various literary forms, and through the illustration of texts belonging to different historical periods—with a clear didactic purpose. One would probably appreciate a graphical division of the different parts of this extremely helpful section, so that they could become typographically more attractive to readers.

A brief chronological table is included at the beginning of each unit so that readers may analyse the various literary developments and their impact, in the light of contemporary political, social and intellectual British and European events, particularly those Spanish. Concerning Anglo-Saxon Literature, upon defining what is understood by the term, the author analyzes briefly the prose of the period and offers a panoramic view of the religious, elegiac, and epic poetry to finish with a study of *Beowulf*. Complementing a detailed discussion of the different texts, useful information is provided about their location. It is also interesting to find the original text of the *Hymn of the Creation* by Caedmon, followed by two different versions—one rather literal, and another a more elaborate translation—in order to show the process of translating and the real flavour of Anglo-Saxon texts.

The second chapter covers medieval literature from 1066 to 1510. Its first section is devoted to Middle English poetry, wherein we find a penetrating exploration of the alliterative revival, the ballad and the romance as characteristic literary forms of the period, with a synopsis of the main features of the latter, followed by analyses of medieval prose and drama in their various manifestations. The last part of the chapter describes Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales* and its qualified position in the literary panorama of his time. As stated above, the selection of readings is exceptional in that it illustrates intertextuality offering, for example, the medieval popular ballad *The Ballad of Sir Gawain*, “a retelling of a popular story that is also the main plot of ‘The Wife’s Tale’ in Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales*” (54).

Renaissance literature is dealt with in the light of a scholar’s general introduction made by a scholar, thus including all the main points relevant to understanding this excellent literary production, but also including textual problems and their implications, as well as illuminating graphics on the physical structure of Elizabethan theatres and private banqueting-halls. These graphics and tables offer precise data from modern research in the field, as both text and notes substantiate, and they prove to be very useful to students at all levels. The same could be said of the table in chapter 5 (217) with a

synthesis of eighteenth-century coincidences and/or differences between novels and romances, to illustrate the origins of the genre.

As Ricardo Navarrete and Tejedor suggest, chapters 7 and 8 offer a slightly different structure and method. As the literary cannon is not so well established for nineteenth- and particularly twentieth-century literature, their answer is to offer a more general study without singling out literary figures, although—as the volume proves—some writers can never be overlooked in any study.

The two Appendices: “Writing a Paper” and “Terminology” represent a very complete synthesis, giving students a solid guide on how to write essays, including not only general ideas, but also pointing out general mistakes, offering even synonyms, and describing strategies on how to write for meaning. Appendix II supplies a time-saving “map” for problems big and small concerning literary terms. It proves essential when trying to check for the appropriateness of the terms we use and their exact meanings, thus serving as a veritable dictionary of dictionaries.

In view of the favourable aspects reviewed above, I feel this book will be of great interest to all those involved in literature, be they students or teachers. It contains clear insights and the issues are intelligently presented. A useful guide that will be invariably revisited.

María Jesús Lorenzo Modia

Susana Onega, ed. *Telling Histories: Narrativizing History, Historicizing Narrative*. Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1995, 208 pp.

The interest in the relation between historical texts and fictional narratives is, in many ways, typically “postmodern.” The question of how historical figures, events and social attitudes can be thematized and appropriated in fiction is a subject that has enjoyed currency throughout the 1980s—now partially enhanced by the practice of the so-called “cultural studies.” Supported by the works of several contemporary philosophers and critics, such as those of Jean-François Lyotard, Paul Ricoeur and Hayden White, literary studies have over the last two decades witnessed the foregrounding of the common links between history-writing and fiction-making and, consequently, the growing relevance of the principles of historiography to our understanding of the different cultural and literary traditions.

As a (foreseeable) consequence, literary critics and theorists also share this concern with the question of historical representation. Susana Onega’s edited collection of essays is a good instance of this contemporary interest in what Linda Hutcheon has labeled “historiographic metafiction”—that is, the tendency of fiction to engage the question of how the discourse of history is constructed, (self-)validated and imposed on individuals by institutions (sometimes by thematizing it, sometimes in its own structure). *Telling Histories*, which brings together papers and lectures read at a Symposium on History and Literature held at the University of Zaragoza in early 1993, is intended to add new and refreshing considerations to the study of the interchange between history and literature. The

purpose of the volume is to offer a various and comprehensive study of the relation between these two disciplines in different literatures in English. Ranging from Salman Rushdie to Angela Carter and from Victorian to postmodern fiction, the essays collected intend to provide analyses of the different ways in which the fictional integration of historical elements affects (and is affected by) narrativization and the structure of the novel (both as individual work and as genre). The essays explore issues related to genre criticism and authorial intention (1) showing how the construction of concepts such as subjectivity or social representation, among others, are historically determined and (2) unveiling how these historical constructions are subject to the kind of rhetorical deconstructive (postmodern) readings that disclose their institutional interests.

To sum up, "historical understanding" appears, in the context of contemporary fiction, as a notion hardly distinguishable from that of "literary study," given the reflexive interests of so many postmodern novels. The fictional examination of history through its own narrative devices opens the way for a critique of literature as pure textuality. However, in this collection as well as in others, the question remains to elucidate what kind of intellectual and ethical agency these "new historicist" novels can ultimately articulate. Perhaps a study of the parallel interests of history and fiction will someday give us a hint.

Ricardo Miguel Alfonso

José Manuel González Fernández de Sevilla. *El teatro de William Shakespeare hoy*. Montesinos, 1993.

This short and eloquent book contains a well-illustrated life of Shakespeare from his birthplace to his tomb, a chronology of his life, works and contemporaries, and an excellent bibliography. But the most significant word in the title is the last. What does Shakespeare mean to us today? Jan Kott, to whom Dr. González refers, knew very well that Shakespeare was the contemporary of Queen Elizabeth and James I, of Sidney and Donne, of Bacon and Hooker, of the Spanish Armada and the Gunpowder Plot. By saying that Shakespeare was our contemporary, he was merely stressing the fact that each new generation, each audience indeed, believes that the plays speak directly to them. What was true of Polish audiences after years of Soviet domination is equally true of British ones today.

An actor, Leslie Sands, described in his autobiography of his experience of playing the title-role in *Coriolanus* during the Second World War, and how he found that text-book interpretations of the play were turned upside down. The hero and his aristocratic supporters seemed to be fascists, only the warhating wife of the hero aroused the sympathy of the audience. The citizens, usually regarded as irrational and cowardly, spoke good sense in educated accents. Even the Tribunes, regarded by Conservatives as detestable villains, emerged as serious trade union leaders defending the interests of their class against the threat of dictatorship. Dr. González makes a similar point: "La rebelión parece ser más que justificada ante unas circunstancias de supervivencia insostenibles."

It is important to note that Shakespeare always provides the evidence for the defence as well as for the prosecution. The ambivalence of his art enables directors to pick and choose interpretations either to satisfy the expectations of the age or to confound them. Olivier's film of *Henry V* in 1944 was inevitably patriotic, but like Branagh's more realistic one in 1990, it was based securely on the text. Sometimes there are surprises. Kozintsev's great film of *King Lear* coming from an officially atheist regime was essentially Christian in spirit, whereas Brook's film of the same year belonged clearly to the Theatre of the Absurd.

Dr. González's radical position involves the repudiation of a merely literary Shakespeare, embalmed in Quartos and Folios, demanding worship and orthodoxy. Instead he wants a fluid Shakespeare based on performances. I would agree that this is better suited to an actor and playwright who belonged to the most popular company of his time, than the god-like figure almost divorced from the practical job to which he gave his life. My only doubt is caused by the fact that although there are dozens of legitimate interpretations of each of the plays, there are scores of illegitimate ones. I am reminded of a production at Stratford at which I sat next to a theologian of my acquaintance. We both thought the production was unforgiveably silly, and I asked my friend if he would give me absolution if I were to shoot the director. He replied: "Plenary absolution."

Dr. González discusses many of the plays from his radical standpoint. There is, for example, a fine analysis of the abdication scene in *Richard II* and of Bolingbroke's sense of guilt. Perhaps the Shrew's submission is best played ironically, as it was by Edith Evans and other great actresses. It has always been recognized that the heroines of the comedies are greatly superior to the young men they eventually marry, as the young women in Spanish comedies of the Golden Age far outshine the men. Shakespeare, we may suppose, deplored the *macho* characteristics of his society, although, I suspect, Dr. González sometimes overstresses the feminist outlook. He laments that Isabella in *Measure for Measure* is forced to marry the Duke; but I have seen one production in which she declines his hand. Yet, if she admired and loved him as her spiritual adviser, it would surely be possible for the pious heroine to transfer her affections to Vincentio when he turns out to be the ruler. They are well matched.

Kenneth Muir

Rose Petterson. *Nadine Gordimer's One Story of a State Apart.* Stockholm: Uppsala University, 1995.

In her detailed study of Gordimer's work, *Nadine Gordimer's One Story of a State Apart*, Rose Petterson seeks to establish two main themes which she can interrelate: the political system of apartheid in South Africa and the feminist perspective. With these premises, the five chapters of her book cover different variations on these themes, illustrated with an analysis of her novels which very wisely does not follow a chronological order.

Gordimer's openly political involvement with apartheid in her creative writing is noticeable from her earliest work. Most of her fellow-members in the privileged white

society of South Africa were born and bred with apartheid and accepted it as part of their lifestyle. Gordimer saw the total irrationality of discrimination, was deeply affected by the personal predicament of so many human beings trapped within its inescapable web and reflected it in her work. As she progressed from the earlier creative period to the more recent novels her perception increased and her critical position became fiercer.

The “liberal humanist perspective,” as Rose Petterson dubs it, of *The Lying Days* (1953) and *A World of Strangers* (1958), contained a conciliatory outlook together with a just perceptible patronizing attitude towards the black population. This would give way to a leftist radicalism which was already developed in *The Conservationist* (1974) and would eventually lead her to believe that a violent revolution against whites was the only solution to the racial problem.

Rose Petterson carries out a balanced analysis of this ideological evolution and the effect it has in Gordimer’s novels, without showing any preferences to either period of her writing. Contemporary criticism was less calm. Tony Morphet, for instance, began suddenly to detect, as Petterson reports, “certain ‘flaws’” in Gordimer’s fiction, coming to the conclusion that she runs the risk of being lured into “facile collusion with the international democratic left and its literary establishment.” Petterson’s astonishment at this statement is understandable. In her introduction we read: “Through the years, Gordimer has been criticised for the apparently cold and dispassionate approach she employs in her fiction.” It is this fact, her narrative objectivity, the lack of Manicheanism, that has proved one of Gordimer’s most effective devices in capturing the attention of the international reader and thus focusing his gaze on the ideologically remote world of apartheid.

For the home market, the South African reader, it was an opportunity to study, as Brenda Cooper has said, “an exile literature written from within the country.” Petterson adds that Gordimer was able to “present all South Africans with a mirror image.”

The second main theme in this doctoral thesis is the feminist perspective, more specifically the role of the white woman within an apartheid society. In Gordimer’s novels, says Petterson, “although the South African woman enjoys certain privileges because of being white, her role nevertheless remains one of subservience in relation to the white male.” Petterson analyses the attitudes of several female characters from the novels in their relationships (family, social, ideological, sexual, etc.) to men. This focusing would probably be in direct conflict with Gordimer’s own pronouncement on feminism, specially if we consider statements such as: “It’s not something I would pursue as a separate issue.” or “I don’t think it matters a damn what sex a writer is” (shades of Virginia Woolf?). But the simple fact of her nonconformism, albeit mainly political, makes very tempting a feminist reading of Gordimer despite her own words, which lead Dorothy Driver to define them as “reactionary statements.”

Rose Petterson’s analysis is more restrained. Her intertextual approach ranges from the strictly literary—among others Yeats and Eliot, not Woolf—to the sexual-political psychoanalysis of Wilhelm Reich and the racial theories of Frantz Fanon. Among other issues, she analyses the effect of political implications on family ties, which usually have devastating consequences. Gordimer seems not to think highly of family relationships anyway, specially between mothers and daughters, leading Petterson to state that “[i]t is

obvious that reflections of mothers in the early narratives reveal to what extent Gordimer's childhood experiences influenced and shaped the telling of her one story." A biographical approach is also very tempting. Petterson, fortunately, allows it only six pages.

To sum up, this book covers all of Gordimer's work and it encourages you to seek and find the novels not yet read. The gradual disappearance of South African apartheid, paradoxically, benefits their reading, as the reader can now pay greater attention to their strictly literary value. And, as we can appreciate in the many excerpts Petterson includes in her book, there is a lot to look forward to.

John D. Sanderson