

Editorial Note *Blue Gum* 4

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Including articles written by undergraduate and postgraduate students from the University of Barcelona and Southern Cross University, Australia, this fourth issue of *Blue Gum* gives an insight to a wide range of topics regarding literature, history and cultural studies: from the portrayal of women in Victorian literature to the silencing of memorial history in Spain, for instance. The issue is divided into three sections. Section one consists of five dissertations written by senior undergraduate students from the University of Barcelona. Section two includes two articles written by MA students (MA CRIC: Construcció i Representació d'Identitats Culturals), one in Catalan and the other one in English. Finally, section three is devoted to the work of two Southern Cross University students, participating in the exchange programme of the UB Centre for Australian and Transnational Studies and the University of Southern Cross.

Section one opens with Heura Abad's "The Portrayal of Women in Richardson and Austen", which, by drawing a comparison between Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* and Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, establishes the differences and similarities present in both artists' work when it comes to the portrayal of women. Taking into consideration the fact that Austen was a fervent admirer of Richardson's work, Abad aims to determine to what extent the work of Richardson, a man writing about women, influenced Austen's portrayal of female characters in her novel. Following this article, Sara Bermejo's "Revising Alice in Wonderland: An analysis of Alice's female subjectivity in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*" hypothesizes that the challenging of gender norms and female behaviour expected in a Victorian society is portrayed through the main character of Lewis Carroll's novel. Bermejo's analysis focuses on Alice's female subjectivity and suggests that her fantastic journey in Wonderland shows a transgressive model for an alternative Victorian female. Next is Noemí Travé's work, "Irish Identity Politics and the Image of the Stone in Yeats's Poetry," which consists of an exploration of the use of the stone as a metaphor in Yeats's poetry. The author analyses the chronological evolution of this symbol and the paradoxes it entails, either from a political, cultural or personal approach, all of which are intended by Yeats in the examples exposed. Consequently, the issue of identity becomes a theme in this essay as well, specifically the definition of an Irish national identity and its negotiation before and after its independence from the United Kingdom. In "Hegemonic Masculinity and the Aging Factor in *The Old Man and the Sea*," Marta Torres gives an insight to the depiction of masculinity in Hemingway's novel. Ernest Hemingway's portrayal of the Cuban fisherman Santiago is described as a wise, courageous, noble and humble individual, an image that differs from the prototypical ideal of manhood proposed by

hegemonic masculinity. By drawing a close analysis of the character of Santiago in the novel, Torres theorises that the character's virtues derive from his old age. Throughout the essay, the notion of hegemonic masculinity, the conception of masculinity in the United States of America and Hemingway's own perception of masculinity will be discussed. To close this section, in "The Docile Bodies & Vulnerability in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*", Veronica Maksymiw combines her own reading of the novella with the ideas of Foucault and Thoreau, among others, to establish a relation of dependence between the capitalist system and physical bodies, being the exploitation of the latter fundamental for power and wealth accumulation, that is, for the prevalence of the former. Her comprehensive approach on the topic covers the notions of docile bodies and vulnerability both from a physical scope (for instance, torture and punishment) and an ideological one (oppression, responsibility), always regarding the episodes in the text that serve to illustrate those notions.

Section two opens with Julia Ojeda's "La filla estrangera: individualitzant l'experiència migratòria, generant esquetxes crítiques." By drawing connections between the female main characters in *La filla estrangera* by Najat El Hachmi and *My Beautiful Laundrette* by Stephen Frears, Ojeda analyses the feelings of detachment and non-belonging as well as the construction of a self-narrated subject of second-generation migrants and of those who migrated as children. She tackles the cultural dimension of language, literacy, family and marriage that influences the characters' conception of their own identity, split into multiple parts from which a new one ought to be built. Next, focusing on Asria Mohamed Taleb's book *A Norwegian hope journey – Between the strong sand and the white snow lives my hope for a free Sahara* and two documentary-movies about the Saharawi question – Iara Lee's *Life is waiting* and Simona Ghizzoni's and Emanuela Zuccalà's *Just to let you know that I'm alive*, Maria Grazia Cantalupo's "The Western Sahara's Diaspora: Homeland, Exile and Resistance among Saharawi Women" gives an insight into Western Sahara's diaspora through the testimonial of women who have seen themselves subject of physical and psychological violence, sexual harassment and forced displacement and separation from their families.

The third and final section of this issue is introduced by "The Art of Forgetting and The Presence of Absence: An Anti-Memorial Investigation in Catalonia," in which Rosanna Pimm creates a recuperative discourse around the silenced historical memory of the city of Barcelona. Site of revolution and anarchy during the Spanish Civil War, Barcelona seems now to have forgotten its past. In order to bring back the memories of its history, Pimm has produced two Anti-Memorial installations of historical memories: one in Barcelona's El Born and the other in Southern Cross University. Finally, in "Santa Muerte, Holy Death: Death and Burials in Barcelona," Jessica O'Connor reflects on the cultural weight of burials in the city and the way death is dealt with by its society. She visits two emblematic cemeteries in Barcelona, Montjuïc and Poblenou, with the goal of materialising her observations through photography, which makes it one of the most creative works in this issue.

On a final note, we would like to thank Isabel Alonso and Martin Renes for trusting us and giving us the chance to participate as guest editors in this fourth issue of *Blue Gum*, as well as the authors for contributing to this issue.