

## **PLENARY SPEAKERS**

### **Cultural Identity in the Global Press Era: Ethnic American Press, an Overview**

*María José Coperías Aguilar, University of Valencia, Spain*

Alongside the mainstream press in English published in the United States, there are an important number of newspapers published by and for diverse ethnic communities. This paper intends to explore the aims and scope of the newspapers related to four of these communities: Hispanic, Asian American, African American and Native American and why they are relevant in a global, English-driven era.

### **Interculturality: New Sensibilities in the Representation of Culture in Language Learning**

*Robert L. Davis, University of Oregon, USA*

What is the role of cultural learning in language acquisition? In this presentation, we will consider the changing role of culture in language curricula, and describe the framework of “interculturality” as an interdisciplinary tool for enhancing both language and cultural acquisition in instructed contexts.

### **Comparing Literatures, Comparing Sensibilities: Challenges and Benefits for the 21st Century**

*María Losada Friend, University Pablo de Olavide, Sevilla, Spain*

In the light of the ongoing and never-ending debate on the usefulness of Comparative Literature as a critical and instructive tool, a revision of critical voices on the topic (Bernheimer 1995, Spivak 2003, Domínguez, Saussy & Villanueva 2015, Tötösy de Zepetnek 2017) is provided to face the new ways of reading that our educational systems require nowadays. New strategies to read, assimilate and discuss literature(s) in our Universities can be based on comparative concepts to activate ways that reveal modes of sensibility, diversity and conceptions of the world. My intention is to discuss advantages when combining *fin-de-siècle* critical, literary, and artistic texts to trace the exposure of sensibilities and cultural codes.

### **Bitch or Martyr? The Problematic Portrayals of Anne Boleyn in 21st Century British Historical Fiction**

*José Igor Prieto Arranz, University of the Balearic Islands, Spain*

Considering the relationship between historical fiction and national identity discourses, and the special importance of the genre within the British literary tradition, this paper focuses on literary representations of the Tudor period—arguably the most popular setting for British historical novels—and, more specifically, 21<sup>st</sup>-century fictional representations of Anne Boleyn, a historical figure that has often been revisited, although no agreement seems to have yet been reached regarding either her character or historical relevance. In her insightful study, Burstein argues that the sheer number of novels written on Anne Boleyn is itself testimony to the fact that a definitive account of her life has not yet been written. In her own words, the Anne featured

in novels ever since the 1950s ‘is vengeful, near hysterical, frequently asexual, and power mad’ (2007: 3), thus easily re-incarnating ‘the Bitch’, the central figure in Harlequin novels identified by Susan Ostrov Weisser (1994) and, equally frequently since the 1930s, ‘the Witch’ (Hui 2018). Anne-the Witch further problematises literary representations of Anne-the-Bitch which, according to Burstein, are probably best seen as antiromances whose characters ‘believe that they are operating within the conventions of a functional romance narrative’ (2007: 4).

In light of the above, this paper will look into the literary treatment that Anne Boleyn has received in post-millennial British literature, covering the low, middle and high-brow divisions across the British historical fiction continuum. Thus, this research will analyse the literary afterlives of Anne Boleyn penned by Man Booker Prize winner Hilary Mantel (*Wolf Hall*, 2009; *Bring Up The Bodies*, 2012), popular fiction author Philippa Gregory (*The Other Boleyn Girl*, 2001), and popular historian and middle-brow fiction author Alison Weir (*Anne Boleyn: A King’s Obsession*, 2017). The aim will be to consider the extent to which these recent revisions of the Anne Boleyn story conform or not to the long-established patterns identified by Burstein (2007) and Hui (2018)—otherwise put, do these narratives reaffirm the Anne the Bitch/Witch pattern? And which role—if any—do they grant Anne in that foundational time that was the Tudor period?