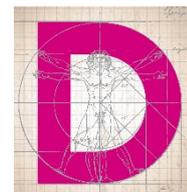


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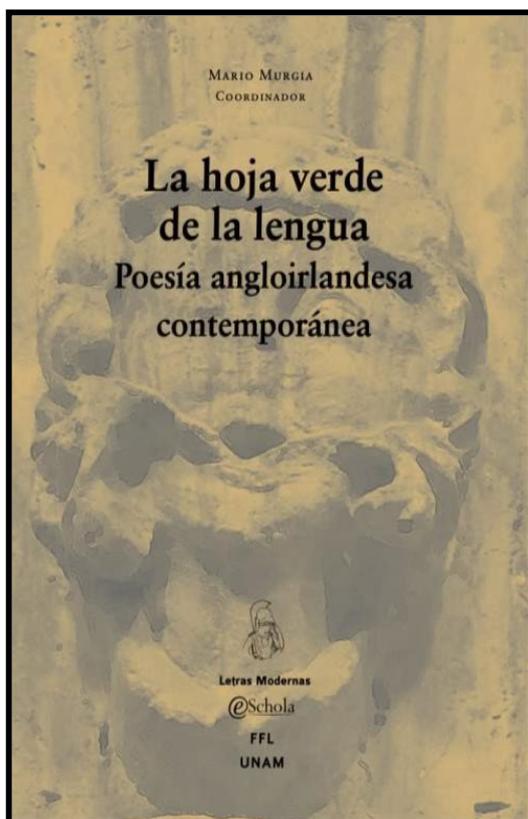
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BOOK REVIEW: LA HOJA VERDE DE LA LENGUA. POESÍA ANGLOIRLANDESA CONTEMPORÁNEA

RESEÑA DE LIBRO: LA HOJA VERDE DE LA LENGUA. POESÍA ANGLOIRLANDESA CONTEMPORÁNEA

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During the beginning of the 20th century, Ireland began suffering the consequences of an unstable political scenario: on the one hand, it had just become partially independent from British rule, and, on the other hand, the two World Wars aggravated and hindered the already difficult situation Ireland was going through. With such a delicate panorama, the literary sphere went into the shade, and Irish poetry became gradually and inevitably silent. Furthermore, this literary situation was intensified by the death of two of the great figures of all times of Irish literature: William Butler Yeats in 1939 and, two years later, James Joyce. Nevertheless, Ireland has always been a nation characterised by having a magnificent and ancient literary tradition and being one of the most important literary spotlights. Thus, it is not surprising that this dark literary creative block began to lighten up in the second half of the 20th century. What is more, the second part of the past century was marked by a whole new production of poetic pieces full of innovative and versatile features, never seen before. This emergence can be seen as a consequence of the independence of Ireland feeling as a self-assured country and with its own structure.

It is in *La hoja verde de la lengua. Poesía angloirlandesa contemporánea*, coordinated by Professor Mario Murgia from the National Autonomous University of Mexico, where this new production of the second half of the 20th century and beginning of the 21st century can be highly regarded. A literary production characterised for being particularly dynamic and vigorous. The main aim of this book is to pay tribute, and give voice and recognition, to the most outstanding poets who represent the Irish verse of modern and contemporary times. In order to do this, many academics, writers and critics across the globe have given different aesthetic and theoretical approaches to the above-mentioned works, while providing several analysis, interpretations and readings of contemporary Irish poetry. The result is an extraordinary and unique book, fruit of the exceptional work and collaboration of scholars, who share the same passion towards Irish poetry—a poetic production marked by the unforgettable history of the country—which still lives among the Irish and those in the diaspora.

La hoja verde de la lengua, written in Spanish, is divided into four main sections, three of them comprise diverse essays and one with additional activities. The first three sections are titled: Panoramas, Entre poetas / entre poemas and Dos poemas, un diálogo y un testimonio. Panoramas has a total of five essays, which reflect upon the most common topics in contemporary Irish poetry. The first essay, written by Mario Murgia, is entitled “Irlanda Y México: una breve cartografía poética”. This essay explores the symbolic similarity between maps and poems, as the way for individuals to search and find their own self and space in the world. To illustrate this, Murgia has chosen the works of Eavan Boland and Alberto Blanco which, despite being dissimilar, share the vision of maps as poetic objects. The second and third essays from this volume have the female figure as the main protagonist. Through an ecofeminist and ecocritical approach, Manuela Palacios González discusses in her essay “Imaginarios animales de las poetas irlandesas actuales: una aproximación ecocrítica” different poetic pieces by women authors. All these poetic pieces have two aspects in common: first, the connection between women and animality and, second, the sea as the escape route for oppression and lack of freedom. The third essay, with the figure of the woman as the main focus of attention, is “Mother, baby, home: trauma y silencio en la poesía irlandesa contemporánea”. Marcos Hernández

González begins exposing the poetic approach towards the traumatic and shameful events that occurred in the Mother and Baby Homes between 1935 and 1945 in Ireland. Then, Hernández González moves on taking three female poetic voices as examples to explore the capacity of their poems to express the most inner and profound feelings. The last two essays refer to past centuries which determined Irish poetry. The fourth essay called “La Gran Armada de 1588 en la poesía angloirlandesa” by José Ruiz Más shows the reader how this historical event, which has always been seen as an unforgettable and victorious event for the British, has been received by the Irish throughout the decades in a completely different manner. With the aid of selected extracts from Irish poetry, the reader can feel the same sympathy and solidarity towards the Spaniards who, one day, departed from Lisbon without imagining the tragic series of events that were about to unfold. Finally, in the last essay of this section entitled “Ciaran Carson y Seamus Heaney: traducir la Edad Media”, writer Raúl Ariza provides a critical panorama of the two epic poems, *Beowulf* and *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, translated by the authors mentioned in the title of the essay, respectively.

Entre poetas / entre poemas gives name to section number three of this book, the most extensive one, with a total of seven essays. Each one focuses on modern and contemporary authors, highlighting their literary contributions. The first essay, written by Gabriel Linares González and entitled “Un relámpago en un cielo claro: poesía y devenir en *Anything Can Happen* de Seamus Heaney”, points out several analogies between three works, which share the same uncertainty towards the historical course: *Anything Can Happen* by Heaney, *Odes* by Horace, and *Leda and the Swan* by W. B. Yeats. The Nobel laureate Yeats also has his place in the following essay of this volume. Nadia López-Peláez Akalay and Beatriz Valverde in “Lo sobrenatural y su simbología en W. B. Yeats, Paula Meehan y Van Morrison” have established, from an ecofeminist perspective, a connection between these three authors in terms of the representation of the natural and supernatural with the social concept of feminism. The following two essays put the poetry written by three contemporary Irish women —Eavan Boland, Paula Meehan and Medbh McGuckian— in the centre of attention. First, in “[A]n intricate orbit about her: poética y autorreflexividad en Boland, Meehan y McGuckian” Julieta Flores Jurado analyses how the above-mentioned female authors contemplate the creation of plastic objects as an analogy of their own artistic methods. In the other essay, Professor María Jesús Lorenzo-Modia chooses McGuckian as the protagonist of her essay “La traducción de la poesía de significados crípticos”. Lorenzo-Modia reflects upon the different external factors which led to a lack of translation of McGuckians' works into Spanish or Galician and provides a thorough analysis of the author's poetic praxis. The last three essays pay attention to four emblematic Irish figures of recent times. David Pruneda Senties, in “Among the bathtubs: la poética del inventario de Derek Mahon”, deals with the functioning and refunctioning of objects through time, space and through utilitarian and affective relations in Derek Mahons' works. Essay number six, by David M. Clark Mitchell, entitled “Syzygy: la poesía de Trevor Joyce”, provides an analysis of how Trevor Joyce's style, characterised by being highly experimental and playing with duality, is present throughout his literary career in his works. Lastly, the seventh essay, which puts an end to the section Entre poetas / Entre poemas, corresponds to Dylan Brennan with his essay

“Vidas infinitas: una exploración de la lírica efrástica en *Still Life* de Ciaran Carson y en *If All the World and Love Were Young* de Stephen Sexton”. Brennan, as it can be foreseen in the title of his essay, explores the relationship between poetry and other artistic forms in Ciaran Carson and Stephen Sexton, finding several points in common between these two touching works that teach readers about art and letters.

The title of section three already gives the reader a hint of what it will comprise: Dos poemas, un diálogo y un testimonio. The first two poems, which the title refers to, were created especially for this e-book: *Pascal* by Moya Cannon and *Dunnock* by Adam Crothers. Both poems are accompanied by their own translation, the former by Juan Carlos Calvillo and the latter by Elisa Díaz Castelo together with Mario Murgia. To complete the first two pieces a note can be found in each of them reflecting upon the translation process and the poetic style of each author. The third piece of section three has the shape of an interview. With carefully selected questions, Rebecca Hodgson invites us to explore and learn about the literary production of one of the most representative female figures of contemporary Irish poetry and award-winning poet, Annemarie Ní Churreáin. Finally, the last work of this section belongs to Adam Wyeth, another award-winning poet who is also a playwright and essayist. In this essay Wyeth reflects upon his creative process and delves into *About:blank*, his latest work characterised by creatively combining prose, verse, monologue and drama all in the same book.

Section four of the book is the one which provides this e-book with the most innovative and unique features. It is in this section where additional activities can be found in order to further work and deepen on each of the essays recollected in this collection. These activities invite the reader to go one step further and reflect upon their reading. In addition, visual interactive material and a list of recommended readings for each essay can also be found if further research on the different topics is desired.

All in all, even though Irish poetry seemed to be diminishing during the rough times of Ireland in the 20th century, its strength and authenticity allowed it to emerge from the dark in ways that only the most unfavourable conditions in history can account for. Should one have to mention any weak point of this e-book, two aspects could be pointed out. First, the subtitle includes the nowadays controversial term Anglo-Irish. Second, it would have been helpful to include the names of the authors in the Table of Contents. However, *La hoja verde de la lengua* has contributed to create, with each page, a virtual forest of knowledge by means of all the remarkable essays it contains. Each and every one of them have analysed contemporary Irish poetry in order to give its main figures the place they deserve. Furthermore, its electronic open-access format has made this virtual forest much more appealing by providing the reader with interactive content in the form of resources such as links to videos or QR codes to scan and make the path more gratifying and enjoyable. Together this collection creates a unique hymn to Ireland, to the Irish and to all those who feel part of the green nation...the nation that always emerges from the ashes.