

The European English Messenger
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The ESSE President's Column

Fernando Galván

In 2009 we are commemorating the Fourth Centenary of the publication of *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, and I am sure many of the readers of *The European English Messenger* must have attended conferences or symposia celebrating these four centuries and seized the opportunity to re-read the sonnets. I was particularly privileged to participate in the 30th Conference of APEAA (the Portuguese Association), which was held in Oporto on 19-21 February, and to listen to the splendid lectures on the sonnets given by keynote speakers Katherine Duncan-Jones (Oxford) and Manfred Pfister (Berlin). Another important commemoration this year has been, of course, the bicentenary of the birth of Edgar Allan Poe, who remains an inspiring source of mystery, horror and fear. But I am afraid many of us have been assaulted by less pleasant and rather more appalling echoes, such as those of the 80th anniversary of the 1929 economic depression. Every time we watch the news or read the papers nowadays we are reminded that the credit crunch and the recession, which loomed ominously on the horizon last year, are definitely with us now. Unemployment is rising almost everywhere: we find that jobs in our field are also at risk, and that a number of vacant positions in several universities are not being filled, while the word *cuts* has probably become one of the most irritating and recurrent terms in our daily conversation. In the last few months, with the aid of the French Association's (SAES) electronic list, I have been following closely developments in the French universities, where cuts in budgets and other legislative reforms are severely threatening prospects for English studies and research and, naturally, the future of our students and graduates.

Members of the ESSE Executive and the Editor of *The European English Messenger* have been attending some of the conferences organised by our national associations since January: John Stotesbury represented ESSE at an English Studies conference on 26-27

February organised by the English Department at the Yerevan State University, Armenia, in celebration of the university's 90th anniversary; Slavka Tomascikova was present at the SAES conference in Bordeaux on 8-10 May; and I went to the conferences of our Hungarian colleagues held in Pécs on 22-24 January, of the Portuguese and the Irish associations in Oporto and Dun Laoghaire (Dublin) on 19-21 and 28 February respectively, as well as to the Swedish and Polish conferences in Malmö and Opole on 16-18 and 19-22 April respectively. The three of us enjoyed these conferences in all sorts of ways, and we are very grateful for the invitations and hospitality of our colleagues in all these places. But we also noticed a growing concern everywhere about the present financial and economic crisis. How far will it affect us in the short term? Is it really going to change our lives as academics and scholars in English Studies? Will it hit ESSE one way or another and thus make us alter some of our plans for the future? Inevitably, these questions have been worrying us over the last few months.

The Executive of ESSE had its usual Spring meeting on 13-14 March, on this occasion in Turin, since we wanted to share part of our time with the local organisers of our next 10th ESSE Conference in August 2010. It was a good opportunity to meet the organising team headed by Giuseppina Cortese and discuss details about the conference; but we also reviewed and talked about the current crisis, trying in particular to find out what we can do to preserve ESSE as much as possible from the present financial and banking risks, and above all how ESSE could help colleagues in greatest need of assistance. Of course, ESSE cannot be completely safe, as nobody seems to be now; the Editor of *The Messenger*, for instance, has noticed an unfortunate fall in the number of advertisements in our pages as publishing houses which used to advertise with us are now more reluctant to do so; this means that revenues from this sector will drop significantly in

2009. Nevertheless, Tim Caudery, our Treasurer, reported that ESSE assets are safe, for the time being at least, since the balance of our two deposit accounts – even though one is in sterling in a British bank, and has thus been affected by the unfavourable sterling-euro exchange rate – is satisfactory. There are two main reasons for that: one is the successful effort made by the Executive to cut its expenses in 2008 (we have spent all in all less than 50 per cent of the budgeted amount for the Executive), and the other is the excellent financial results of the 9th Conference in Aarhus. In the previous issue of *The Messenger* I congratulated our colleagues in Aarhus on their splendid job in regard of the conference's excellent academic standards. Now it is also my pleasure to congratulate them on their financial success, since they received important funding from external research bodies and have thus been able to defray all the conference expenses which would otherwise have had to be covered by ESSE.

Our sound financial footing is indeed a great relief under the present circumstances and will hopefully allow us to continue and even improve our activities, particularly those for which we notice an increasing demand. An example of this are the research bursaries; this year the selection committee has received about 40 applications, which represents an increase of nearly 100 per cent on last year's figures. Consequently, the Executive has decided to provisionally allocate a little more money to the bursaries, in case the selection committee considers it necessary to award a greater number of these grants. This extra money will be drawn from the amount budgeted for Executive expenses in 2009. Obviously the ESSE Board, at its annual meeting, will take a final decision about what to do in this respect in the future.

Another concern of ours, within the context of recession, is the organisation of the Turin Conference in 2010. We have been working with our Italian colleagues in order to cut as

many expenses as possible, and to ensure that the conference registration fee will not be higher than the one in Aarhus (something in the region of €110-130 for early registration by ESSE members) and that inexpensive accommodation will be made available for delegates who wish to participate. We shall also do our best to offer fee waivers to colleagues from countries which will very probably suffer the current recession more dramatically next year. So let me take this opportunity again to encourage the participation of all ESSE members, especially those of you who can reasonably afford to come to Turin, because your presence and contributions to the conference will also be a good way of showing solidarity and support to those who will be having a rougher time of it. Turin is certainly a very attractive venue, both from the point of view of history, art and architecture, as well as of the academic content of the conference. The keynote speakers have already been confirmed, as you will be able to see in another section of this issue of *The Messenger*, and I am sure that the programme of seminars and round tables – which is still in the making – will persuade many to attend. Let me assure you that the organisers will do their best to give you advice and information on how to spend less and enjoy your stay in Turin.

Meanwhile we carry on our efforts to strengthen our organisation and incorporate into ESSE colleagues from countries which have no national association of English Studies yet. If everything goes as planned, I expect that the ESSE Board at its August meeting will have the opportunity to screen and eventually accept the membership applications from one or two new national associations. So let me end this column on an optimistic note and in the hope that, despite the present difficulties and future uncertainties, and paraphrasing the poet, so long as we can breathe or eyes can see, so long as Shakespeare's sonnets are read, so long will ESSE live and contribute to the good health of English Studies across Europe.


Editorial Notes, Password

As ever, my thanks to the many contributors to this issue of the *Messenger*. The range of articles, original writing, reports, and announcements remains as diverse as ever, and hopefully of interest, in one way and another, to a majority of the *Messenger*'s readers. Once again, however, it has proven impossible to find room for all of the reviews gleaned so assiduously by the Book Reviews editor, Dr Ton Hoenselaars, in the course of the past year. But they *will*, of course, appear as space permits.

Of immediate and particular pertinence may be the discussion paper on "**The Evaluation of Research**," contributed by the Board of the Italian association, the AIA, especially in light of the publication a few months ago of the controversial **ERIH (European Reference Index for the Humanities) Initial List: Literature (2008)** at <http://www.fti.uab.es/departament/recerca/ERIH_Literature.pdf>. Further views on this topic, however brief, would be welcome for the Autumn 2009 issue of the *Messenger*.

The present issue will again be accessible on the ESSE web-site at <www.essenglish.org> for all recipients of the print version. The password is **johnnycake**.

John A Stotesbury
Joensuu, Finland



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ESSE BURSARY AWARDS for 2009

Five Type A Bursaries to:

1. Lauren Elkin (France, Paris)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *Being and Becoming: Modernist Constructions of Female Identity, 1928-1941* (British literature / women's studies) DESTINATION: Oxford, Bodleian, UK

2. Adán Martín Dueñas (Spain, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *The conceptual architecture of time: atypical construals in English and Spanish* (cognitive linguistics) DESTINATION: Bangor University, UK

3. Sophie Maruéjols (France, Nancy)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *Tennessee Williams's Plastic Theatre on the Screen: Adaptation at the Core of the Creative Process* (American literature and film) DESTINATION: Harry Ransom Centre in Austin, Texas, USA

4. Paula Rodríguez-Puente (Spain, Santiago de Compostela)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *A Corpus-based Study on the Relationship between Phrasal Verbs and the Processes of Grammaticalization, Lexicalization and Idiomatization with Special Reference to Phrasal Verbs with 'Get'* (theoretical linguistics) DESTINATION: Oxford, Bodleian, UK

5. Zeno VERNYK (Czech Republic, Brno)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *The Urban Sphere in the Oeuvre of E. E. Cummings* (American literature) DESTINATION: Houghton Library at Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA

Five Type B Bursaries to:

1. Snezhina Dimitrova (Bulgaria, Sofia, St. Kliment, PhD 1999, Sofia)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *The Languages and Cultures of Contemporary Scotland* (applied linguistics / culture) DESTINATION: Glasgow, Edinburgh, UK

2. Milan Ferencik (Slovakia, Presov, PhD 1999, Presov)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *Politeness in the media (A study into aspects of pragmalinguistic politeness in a radio phone-in)* (applied/sociolinguistics) DESTINATION: English Department, University of Basel, University of Bern, Switzerland

3. Anahit Galstyan (Armenia, Jerevan University, PhD 2002, Jerevan)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *Anglicisms in Eastern and Western Armenian* (applied linguistics, bilingualism) DESTINATION: California, USA

4. Attila Kiss (Hungary, Szeged, PhD 1998, Szeged)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *Proto/Postmodern Anatomies* (literature, the mediality of culture / cultural theory) DESTINATION: London, Warburg Institute, UK

5. Grzegorz Maziarczyk (Poland, Lublin, PhD 2003, Lublin)

TOPIC, PROJECT: *The novel as book: typographic experiments in contemporary English-language fiction* (British literature / literary theory) DESTINATION: 2-3 week study trip to London (BL, Senate House), UK

Unsuccessful candidates are advised to contact the chairperson of the Bursary Committee for more information on their project evaluation.

ESSE-10 Conference

Università di Torino, Italy
24-28 August 2010

The 10th international conference of the European Society for the Study of English will take place at the University of Turin, Italy, 24-28 August 2010.

There will be a number of distinguished plenary speakers, covering the range of academic interests of ESSE members. We can now announce the following speakers:

Catherine Belsey, Research Professor in English at the University of Wales, Swansea

Maurizio Gotti, Professor of English Language and Translation, University of Bergamo

Timothy Webb, Emeritus Professor of English at the University of Bristol

Further details concerning these speakers can be found, together with other relevant information, on the conference home-page at **<www.unito.it/esse2010>**.

Please note the following dates related to the conference:

Registration opens on 1 March 2010. Standard registration deadline: 1 June 2010

Application deadline for fee-waivers and for low-budget accommodation (special address to be posted on the site): 1 May 2010

Pre-paid accommodation in Halls of Residence and low-budget residence on a first-come, first-served basis

Deadlines for reservations and confirmation of rooms in Halls of Residence: 1 July 2010

THE EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF ENGLISH STUDIES

CALL FOR PAPERS

CALL FOR TOPICS

THE EDITORS WELCOME CONTRIBUTIONS FOR VOLUME 15 & TOPICS FOR VOLUME 16

EJES continues its highly successful policy of commissioning theme-based issues, whose topics are, as far as possible, suggested by the guest editors themselves. The general editors seek to ensure that issues are varied and broad in scope; that they focus on topical issues in and across the disciplines embraced by English Studies in Europe; and that they showcase cutting-edge research from a range of academic traditions. The journal manifests its 'European' character not by restricting access to scholars working in Europe, but by publishing peer-reviewed research of international quality on the topic in hand from a range of disciplinary viewpoints, thereby promoting interdisciplinary discussion on matters of cultural and intellectual concern across the fields of English Studies in Europe and beyond.

EJES is read by a large and ever-widening international scholarly public, both in paper and, most of all, in electronic form – at <<http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/13825577.asp>>. Besides individual and library subscriptions, issues are also available, with a year's delay, to subscribing institutions via the EBSCO service.

EJES was rated by the European Science Foundation's initial Reference Index for the Humanities as category 'B' – that is to say 'with a good reputation among researchers of the field in different countries'; with the help of contributors, editors and readers, it aspires to recognition in the future as having 'a very strong reputation' (category 'A').

CONTRIBUTIONS & TOPICS

Proposals are welcome both for contributions to commissioned topics and for new topics to be commissioned. In the first place, calls for papers for new **issues** on '**Matter and Material Culture**', '**Medievalism**', and '**The Esoteric in Post/Modernism**', to be published in 2011, are announced below. Likewise, suggestions for **topics** are invited for **volume 16** (to be published in 2012). The editors are particularly interested in topics that address emergent fields and novel themes; topics concerned with particular periods or periodisation as such; as well as proposals addressing cross-disciplinary issues of research paradigms and methodologies in English Studies. In all cases, guest editors are encouraged to craft their proposal to embrace as broad a range as possible of disciplines in English Studies.

Please send your suggestions for 2012 to the general editors before 13 November 2009.

The general editors are happy to explore possible ideas with colleagues who are interested in developing proposals for special issues. Issues may be guest edited by one individual or by two or three (ideally from different locations in Europe) as the proponents wish. Full support is provided by the general editors throughout the process of assembling an issue. Please ensure that your proposal demonstrates how it advances the ambitions of the journal for a distinctive 'European' approach to English Studies. For further details regarding the journal's Aims and Scopes and its Editorial Policy, visit the [ESSE website](#), or feel free to contact any of the general editors.

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(Editorial, *EJES* 1.1)



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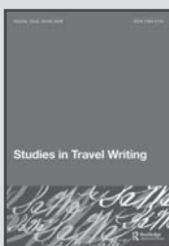
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Potential contributors and guest editors should note that, in order to ensure fairness in the selection of articles and to guarantee the quality of the material published by the journal, proposals for submissions are subject to peer review, as are the final version of submitted articles.

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Forthcoming issues

2009

13.1: *Travelling Concepts*, eds Birgit Neumann & Frederik Tygstrup

13.2: *Intercultural Negotiations*, ed. Ian MacKenzie

13.3: *The Rhetoric of National Character*, eds Ton Hoenselaars and Joep Leerssen

2010

14.1: *Beyond Trauma: The Uses of the Past in XXI-Century Europe*, eds Jacek Gutorow, Jerzy Jarniewicz & David Kennedy

14.2: *Crime Narratives: Crossing Cultures and Disciplines*, eds Maurizio Ascari & Heather Worthington

14.3: *Cultural Histories*, eds François Poirier & Logie Barrow

CALL FOR PAPERS

***European Journal of English Studies* Vol. 15**

MATTER AND MATERIAL CULTURE

Guest Editors: Maurizio Calbi & Marilena Parlati

Cultural materialism has been adding much to our knowledge and understanding of the ways in which culture is informed by and conformed to and with matter, and so have the numerous analyses

and histories of material culture from fields as varied as sociology, anthropology, museum studies, consumer studies, and so forth.

On a different plane, matter has recently been the focus, among others, of Bill Brown's 'thing theory', according to which 'things' come into being when and where ordinary, narrative, or aesthetic objects stop functioning properly and thus become visible and obtrusive. Meanwhile, considerations of material and corporeal remainders of different kinds, from a variety of theoretical perspectives, have also emerged into the cultural landscape of our late modernity.

We encourage contributions from scholars working in this wide arena of cultural, literary and scientific discourses, and who are engaging with, developing, or, at times, challenging a 'material turn' or 'turn to matter' in their various fields of research. We invite papers that explore the discursive construction of matter, the circulation of objects and the 'social life' of things (cf. Appadurai), but also, from a different angle, things and the Thing(s) which may help us read matter beyond the paradigms of empiricism. We are interested in re-opening the question of the 'matter' of materialism.

The fertile interplay and mutual interpellation between materiality as ineradicable opacity and the 'spectral dimension' which can be seen (most notably in Derrida) as affecting matter could, in our view, be a fruitful site for a cultural debate open to specialists in the study of Anglophone literature, language, media and culture. Contributions are invited on a range of topics concerning matter and material culture, which might include, but are not restricted to:

- . the 'materiality' of material culture
- . the materialism of consumer culture
- . systems, collections, and the display of material culture
- . the poetics of the material fragment
- . thing theory and its applications/applicability
- . transience and durability
- . waste/land(s), garbage, residues
- . ecocriticism
- . ghostly matters/bodies that matter
- . objects and abjection

Detailed proposals (500-1,000 words) for articles of c. 5-6,000 words, as well as all inquiries regarding this issue, should be sent to both guest editors: Maurizio Calbi at <mcalbi@unisa.it> and Marilena Parlati at <m.parlati@unical.it>. The deadline for proposals is 13 November 2009, with delivery of completed essays by 31 March 2010. The issue will appear in 2011.

CALL FOR PAPERS

European Journal of English Studies Vol. 15

MEDIEVALISM

Guest Editors: Andrew James Johnson & Ute Berns

Ever since the Middle Ages was invented in the Renaissance it has served specific cultural purposes, most importantly: to function as the temporal Other against which Modernity could define itself. All too often, the Middle Ages was simply cast as the opposite of everything that Modernity liked about itself – or else: disliked about itself. The alterity of the Middle Ages was thus erased in favour of a simplistic binary dependent on the idea of a revolutionary break that divided

the Renaissance, and even more so Modernity, from its medieval Other. Locked in an ineluctable space of temporal Otherness the Middle Ages was declared to be irrelevant to the concerns of the modern world. Unfortunately, medievalists frequently colluded in this process of marginalisation, claiming for their period an alterity so complete as to preclude dialogue and exchange.

Both medievalists and non-medievalists have increasingly come to realise how detrimental this approach is not only to an understanding of the Middle Ages but also to that of Modernity. Thus they have begun to embark on a variety of different projects. For instance, they turn their attention to the cultural mechanisms that have helped to establish the binary between the medieval and the modern. They seek to untangle the dense jungle of concepts of the medieval – Umberto Eco identifies ten different versions of the Middle Ages – and thus to learn more about Modernity's desire for a radical construct of a different past. Others trace the forms in which the Middle Ages has been used to resist this simple binary and is employed for the purpose of establishing a more complex relationship to the past. In the course of investigations such as these, scholars devote a lot of energy to describing and analysing the cultural forms and political uses that the engagement with the Middle Ages has assumed over the last five centuries or so. Topics range from Wagnerian opera to Fantasy literature, from the Gothic novel to computer games, and from historical romance to real-life enactments of 'medieval' life and history. The subject this line of scholarship investigates is now generally known under the term of 'medievalism' and generates an ever-increasing field of research.

This issue of the *European Journal of English Studies* invites medievalists and non-medievalists alike to submit papers concerning all aspects of constructions of the medieval in Anglophone discourses and cultures.

Detailed proposals (500-1,000 words) for articles of c. 5-6,000 words, as well as all inquiries regarding this issue, should be sent to both guest editors: Andrew James Johnson at <ajjohnst@zedat.fu-berlin.de> and Ute Berns at <Ute.Berns@anglistik.uni-giessen.de>. The deadline for proposals is 13 November 2009, with delivery of completed essays by 31 March 2010. The issue will appear in 2011.

CALL FOR PAPERS

European Journal of English Studies Vol. 15

THE ESOTERIC IN POST/MODERNISM

Guest Editors: Pia Brînzeu & György E. Szönyi

Although the rise of Modernism and the avantgarde proclaimed a break with the past, in many decisive aspects the past continued to inscribe itself in the heart of what at the same time seemed so new and unprecedented. One of the powerful resources present behind and within many modernist gestures was what nowadays is called 'the Western esoteric tradition(s)', some-times also conceived of as 'the occult'. Suffice it to mention its more or less acknowledged traces in the hermetic art of such leading Modernists as Marcel Duchamp and Wassily Kandinsky, the automatic writing of the Surrealists, and the poetics and poetry of W. B. Yeats (in collaboration with Georgie Hyde-Lees), Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot.

While this interest in the esoteric/occult reached back to Hellenistic Antiquity and to the magi of

the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, so central to Modernity, has in truth always been accompanied by a counterculture which, in different periods with different motivations, has nurtured a holistic search for the unification of the human, the natural and the divine. Thus, as the upsurge in Spiritualism in Anglo-American culture towards the end of the nineteenth century drew on 'the Ancient Theology' and on Eastern mysticism imported via the cultural transmitters of the Victorian Empire, parallel with this the new physical sciences – electricity, magnetism, radioactivity – and the emerging social sciences such as anthropology (Edward B. Tylor, Sir George Frazer) and psychology (William James, William McDougall, Carl Jung) provided discursive and conceptual resources for a symbiosis of a craving for belief and a desire for scientific verification. This was most notably the case with the Society for Psychical Research, founded in London in 1882 but soon to become an international network of scientists, philosophers, psychologists and artists. Recent research by Axel Owen and Marina Warner has shown how intricately both the fascination with the 'primitive' and 'exotic' and this high-minded scholarship connected with popular trends in late Victorian culture, from mass spiritist séances and 'freak shows' to the mystical and sensationalist aspects of new media of photography and the cinema.

The lure of the esoteric/occult has remained alive through the twentieth and into the twenty-first century and has gained new impetus from the 'new Traditionalism' (René Guénon, Julius Evola) and the New Age movement of the 1970s, since when it has continued to increase. As Marina Warner remarks: 'The return of religious thinking – and intense conflict – has been one of the strongest surprises of the twenty-first century, and it has brought with it a return to supernatural writings.' It seems that a number of British artists have been affected by resurgent interest in the esoteric/occult, or at least have been playing with the uncanny features of this trend. For example, the novels of Malcolm Lowry, John Fowles, Peter Ackroyd, and Marina Warner herself; the paintings and films of Kenneth Anger and Derek Jarman; and a range of phenomena in popular culture: apocalyptic films, vampire narratives, ghost romances and tales of voodoo in various media, occult computer games, esoteric therapeutics, sexual magic, and so on.

This issue of the *European Journal of English Studies* is dedicated to an examination of the relations between Western esoteric traditions and cultural innovations at the two last *fins-de-siècles*, between occult phenomena regarded as timeless and the drives of modernism and postmodernism. Contributions are welcome in relation to any aspect of the cultures and discourses of the esoteric/occult in modernism and/or postmodernism.

Detailed proposals (500-1,000 words) for articles of c. 5-6,000 words, as well as all inquiries regarding this issue, should be sent to both guest editors: Pia Brinzeu at <piabrinzeu@yahoo.com> and György E. Szönyi at <geszonyi@lit.u-szeged.hu>. The deadline for proposals is 13 November 2009, with delivery of completed essays by 31 March 2010. The issue will appear in 2011.