

**Abstracts**

## WRITING THE LIFE OF THE TEXT: THE CASE OF W. B. YEATS

Warwick Gould

Using authors' and publishers' archives textual biography can trace multitudinous textual lives, afterlives and new lives in real incarnations. Those latter categories are whole subjects in themselves, and for other occasions: my examples in this paper are confined to the lives of certain texts during the lifetime of W. B. Yeats. My point of departure is Yeats's well-known textual restlessness. He endlessly revised his work, and I was once inclined to see this as others had seen it, as evidence of a Darwinian process of aesthetic self-criticism, within the narrow focus of the work—the word, the line, the poem. At the core of such textual instability is authorial intention itself: in Yeats's case the destabilising dream of finality, perfectionism, a collected works, an *oeuvre*, which he openly wanted from 1895 onwards. What might be labelled as the life of the text would lie beyond edited forms of it, in the history of books, in publishers' archives such as Macmillan's and in research collections of life documents and MSS. Every serious reader of Yeats engages at some level with that life of the text, which is why I am trying to write it. I find this process permits an intimate and sustainable recuperation of that concept so derided a few years ago: intention, a recoverable, mutating, demonstrable intention not foreclosed at, or by, the publication of the text. My argument, then, is a plea for the application of book historical methods to the construction of inner lives. It involves an accommodation of literary genetics and publishing history to single author bibliography.

**Key words:** Yeats, authors'/publishers' archives, textual biography, *oeuvre*, rewriting/revision, textual instability, authorial intention, literary genetics, publishing history, author bibliography.

**THE CANON PRO AND CONTRA: 'THE CANON IS DEAD —LONG LIVE PICK AND MIX'**

Herbert Grabes

The chief argument against the traditional canon is, of course, that it has been a vehicle for national superiority. Yet it is indubitably the case that the creation of a canon of English literature over the centuries is indeed closely bound up with the formation of British national identity. What was produced in this way was largely “an entirely gentlemanly artefact” (to use Lillian S. Robinson’s phrase for the blatant neglect of women authors), as has been amply demonstrated by feminist scholars in recent decades. Quite apart from this, however, the traditional British versions of the canon of English literature are astonishingly broad and are much less in need of an “opening up” than many of the more belligerent “canon busters” claim.

Without denying that any canon-making implies competition and value-statements that create hierarchies, it is argued that the formation of literary canons is indispensable in order to keep the literature of the past within cultural and collective memory (not forgetting, too, that the past begins yesterday). Only those acquainted with a fair amount of our literary heritage, after all, will have a chance to individually “pick-and-mix” —and thus to subvert the canonical order that has been their starting-point. This also means that the canon is not a sanctuary but an ongoing project— and one that we relinquish at our collective peril.

**Key words:** Canon, literature, national identity, cultural memory.

**EUROPA IN WONDERLAND: GOBLIN MARKET OR SAPPHO'S GYMNASIUM?**

Ekaterini Douka Kabitoglou

Europa, the ‘godmother’ of Europe, operates as a hostess and ‘instructor’ in the diachronic journey over the European pedagogic landscape that is attempted in this presentation, initiating us into an adventure in the educational wonderland which begins at the *topos* of her ‘adopted’ country: Greece. Taking for granted that for the Greeks education was based on a profound relationship between two people, one young and the other mature, who was at once model, guide and initiator, and moreover that it adopted a cult of the Muses seeking wisdom through an aesthetic and ‘erotic’ approach to life, Sappho and Socrates are introduced as paradigms of the Greek system of schooling. Socrates’ educational ‘opponents’, the Sophists, are seen as the founders of utilitarianism, forerunners of the modern commercialism of education.

Christina Rossetti’s poem *Goblin Market* is used (because of its multi-layered title suggesting the triumph of a ‘commodity’ morality) as the bridge to carry us to the

present condition of the European university. Tracing the steps that have led to the formation of the European Higher Education Area, the presentation highlights the gradual transformation of education from a public 'good' to a marketable 'product'. Attending to voices of dissent (expressed by members of ESSE) and setting the whole problem in a larger philosophical context, we can hear a Socratic echo in Heidegger, Gadamer, and Derrida who profess the 'questioning' attitude as the only form of knowledge. Hoping that 'memory' may reveal forgotten signs from the past to guide us through the schizoid split tormenting today's academy, we return with Olga Broumas to "Sappho's Gymnasium" lest that 'maternal' presence may give/be the answer.

**Key words:** Education, eros, Greece, question, university.

### **THE LANGUAGE OF FILM: CORPORA AND STATISTICS IN THE SEARCH FOR AUTHENTICITY. *NOTTING HILL* (1998) —A CASE STUDY**

Christopher John Taylor

While it is well known that film scripts generally fall short of capturing the varied and subtle characteristics of spontaneous dialogue, it is less clear exactly how and to what extent such language fails to 'ring true'. Extensive investigation into the components of both spontaneous talk and film discourse over a wide range of film and television material have proved a solid basis on which to extend research in this field. With the aid of corpus linguistics and the assistance of statistics experts, some interesting phenomena have been uncovered relating directly and indirectly to the original aims of the research.

For example, comparisons of British and American film and TV scripts with spoken language corpora such as those within the Bank of English project and the San Diego spoken language corpus, have already provided material to prove the hypotheses about the lack of authenticity in film material. But observing the changes that take place between an original script and the transcription of the final version of a film text is more illuminating, as are the statistical analyses that show how particular language features occur in clusters and bundles (Biber et al 2004), and how combinations of word and word groups seem primed (Hoey 2004) for different film genres. This paper therefore sets out to illustrate the methodology employed in this particular study of film language, explain the results obtained and present the serendipitous findings that the research threw up, with particular reference to the film *Notting Hill*.

**Key words:** Film, text analysis, translation, subtitling, corpora.