CULTURE AND POLITICS IN SPAIN

Dr Fruela Fernández (Lecturer in Spanish Translation at SML) is frequently involved in engagement activities in Spain, as his research explores the intersection between language, culture, and politics in times of crisis.

In 2016, he organised a debate (“¿Qué cultura necesitamos?” / “What culture do we need?”) with generous funding of the Newcastle Institute for Creative Arts Practice. The debate took place at the cultural centre “La Casa Encendida” (http://www.lacasaencendida.es/) in Madrid, and the venue was full, with an estimated attendance was 120 people. During the event, Dr Fernández engaged in an open debate with three practitioners: Silvia Nanclares (cultural activist and writer), Pablo Und Destruktion (musician and actor), and César Rendueles (sociologist and writer). Their discussion focused on the evolution of Spanish crisis in the current period of economic and social crisis, covering issues such as the relationship between culture and political change, the emergence of new cultural spaces, the importance of institutions, and labour conditions for artists. The event is accessible online (https://vimeo.com/188120322).

In 2017, Dr Fernández was invited by a regional branch of the political party Podemos to a debate with philosopher Alberto Santamaría and musician Santiago Auserón on music, popular culture, and politics. The event took place at the cultural centre “La Moraduca” (Santander), and the estimated attendance was 60 people; the debate was rich and vivid, lasting almost three hours thanks to the numerous many questions posed by the audience. It was also recorded and disseminated online (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyUfOKNmiho).
Children under the Nazis – an exhibition with a difference

Dr Beate Müller is a specialist in representations of the Holocaust, particularly with regard to children. In recent years, Beate has curated a couple of smaller poster exhibitions on children under Hitler, which have been shown in the City Library in Newcastle. With the help of a Faculty Impact Fund award, Beate developed a larger exhibition on this subject, which took her to South Africa in June 2017, where she worked with the country's Holocaust and Genocide Foundation, developing an educational schools programme tailored to the exhibition and aimed at the needs of local schoolchildren visiting the Holocaust Centre in Cape Town. In South Africa, the Holocaust is part of the school curriculum, and it is taught in the context of racial discrimination and Apartheid that blighted the country until Nelson Mandela became President in 1994.

The ten pop-up exhibition posters portray the sufferings of Jewish children imprisoned in ghettos and camps, youngsters surviving in hiding and through migration, as well as showing children persecuted because they were Jehovah's witnesses or Sinti, alongside non-Jewish German children who were indoctrinated in the Hitler Youth, fought as child soldiers in Hitler's army, or were evacuated to escape Allied air raids. Extracts from children's testimonies are included in order to illustrate what the young themselves had said about their experiences in the Third Reich.

In Cape Town, the exhibition was used as part of the Holocaust Centre's educational programme for visiting schoolchildren. Over the course of two weeks, almost 300 grade 9 and 11 students from Holy Cross, South Peninsula, and Westerford High Schools learnt about children's lives under the Nazis through this exhibition. The feedback has been very positive. Frequently made comments by the students include that it was "thought provoking", "fascinating", "very interesting", "informative", and "very enjoyable". Teachers praised the interactive peer-guided approach to learning that ensured that students were actively engaged at all times.

The exhibition will be shown in the City Library in Newcastle from 12 February until 11 March 2018, with free guided tours and schools workshops. Schools will be able to borrow the panels for educational purposes.

Another trip to South Africa is planned for the spring of 2018, this time to visit the Holocaust Centres in Johannesburg and Durban.

Beate has also developed a website in order to provide global access to the materials: [http://teaching.ncl.ac.uk/childrenunderthenazis/](http://teaching.ncl.ac.uk/childrenunderthenazis/)
Gender, ethnicity and education in Peru

Dr Patricia Oliart is working on an impact case study based on her previous research cycle on the education system in Peru. She recently received ESRC-IAA funding that she will use to conduct workshops with school teachers in Arequipa and Lima. During the workshops Patricia will present her research on gender and education and listen to teachers’ experiences in the classroom to discuss the relevance of including critical gender and ethnicity perspectives in the education system. The current context in Peru is one of conservative opposition to the introduction of matters related to sexuality, gender equity and identity in the curriculum. Conservative Catholic and Christian groups are campaigning to repeal the new curriculum. Patricia’s workshops will be followed by other events organised by the Peruvian Society for Research in Education (SIEP), Patricia’s Peruvian partner organisation for this project.

The photo below shows girls in Sarconta, Abancay, by Rosa Villafuerte

The Spirit in the Mass--David Bomberg

This talk by Prof. Guy Austin is about the painter David Bomberg. It will address Bomberg’s concept of "The Spirit in the Mass", a crucial element of his painting and his teaching which is evident not just in his own work but in that of the students he taught at Borough Polytechnic from 1945 to 1953. Dismissed at the time by Pop Artists and realists alike, the "Spirit in the Mass" is finally being recognised as an important contribution to British painting in the mid and late twentieth century. Bomberg’s idea has been succinctly described (by Jamie Anderson) as aiming "to ignore superfluous detail and capture the pure essence of a subject".

This talk will consider examples of this trend in Bomberg’s work and also in work by perhaps his most famous student, Frank Auerbach, who explained the intuitive, gestural power of Bomberg’s idea as follows: "you begin to imply a sense of mass on the paper or canvas simply because you felt it."
Translating Cultures and Indigenous Languages in Peru

Prof. Rosaleen Howard has been awarded an AHRC Follow-on-Funding award to develop impact out of some of the findings of her previous project on translating and interpreting between Spanish and indigenous languages, among indigenous people Peru. She will work as Co-I with Raquel de Pedro (PI) of Stirling University and Luis Andrade (ECR) of the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru in Lima. The project runs from January 2018 for one year. In the previous project Rosaleen and the team researched Peruvian State-sponsored training of indigenous translators and interpreters to work in public service settings (e.g. justice and health). A finding from that research was that many indigenous people who have not followed the state training and are not, therefore, registered professionals, undertake language-brokering activities to serve communication needs in the rural communities. The new project will look particularly at the women who get involved in such ‘ad hoc’ interpreting activity. Their fellow women in the countryside are those with the most need, for indigenous women are more likely than men to lack the understanding of Spanish needed to engage with outside agents (eg. health, environmental, and development workers). In collaboration with project partners, the NGO Servicios Educativos Rurales (SER), Rosaleen will help facilitate a range of public engagement activities with the female ‘social translators’ as they are known. The exact nature of the activities will be determined in consultation with all the parties involved, and will respond to their views and priorities. Our ideas at present consist in facilitating the production of a photographic display with accompanying oral testimonies, and collaborating with a Peruvian theatre company to bring about the production of a play in various languages that depicts the issue of language rights for indigenous people, and how the social translators help to tackle it. Rosaleen will be travelling to Peru for various periods this year to work on the project.

Crossings—Poetry Translation Festival

The AHRC-funded PoetTrio Project into poetry translation (PI, Professor Francis R. Jones), was awarded a grant from the Faculty Impact Fund to support participation and co-curation of a translation day at the Newcastle Poetry Festival in May 2018, which has the theme 'Crossings'. The day, to be held at the Sage Theatre, is being co-organised with the NCLA and The Poetry Book Society and will feature a public-facing poetry translation workshop, three panels, a reading and the presentation of a new work of art inspired by the PoetTrio project’s research at an evening drinks reception, by the director of the NCLA, Sinéad Morrissey.

Research, Impact and the UK Parliament

On 12 December 2017, Dr Damien Hall went to a half-day workshop on Research, Impact and the UK Parliament—the North East edition of a show that is touring the country at the moment. The aim is to tell academics how they can engage with the UK Parliament, in two senses: finding out what is happening in Parliament, and giving Parliament the benefit of their expertise, to guide inquiries and legislation. It started with a brief introduction to how laws are made in the UK: the difference between the Civil Service, Government and Parliament. Most of the day was then on different roles of Parliament, who keep a check on the Government. One can sign up for weekly e-mail updates from the House of Commons or Lords by going to the webpage of a Committee that interests you and signing up there, or by clicking on „email alerts” on the top of the relevant page, see http://www.parliament.uk/.