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THE STUDY OF STYLE
ESSAYS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
IN HONOUR OF JOSÉ LUIS MARTÍNEZ-DUEÑAS

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FOREWORD

This collection of essays is published as a tribute to Professor José Luis Martínez-Dueñas on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the formation of the research group "Texto y discurso en inglés modern" (HUM-270) ("Text and discourse in Modern English"), which he has led over this period. The essays, written by colleagues and friends, reflect Martínez-Dueñas's varied scholarly interests, including medieval English philology, rhetoric, poetics, stylistics, pragmatics, and translation. The editors and contributors wish to celebrate Martínez-Dueñas's outstanding intellectual career with a book planned as a showcase of the diversity and interdisciplinarity of his research, with a view to stimulating further discussion in these fields.

Prof. Martínez-Dueñas early interest in poetics and stylistics was transmitted to the original research group members through the supervision of most of their PhD dissertations, including Belén Soria's pragmatic analysis of metaphor, José M. Pérez Fernández's stylistic study of Henry Howard's translation of the *Aeneid*, Julián Jiménez Heffernan's analysis of Paul de Man's pragmatics and rhetoric, Rosa Morillas Sánchez's insight into the poetry of Stephen Dobyns, and Miguel A. Martínez-Cabeza's examination of the language and style in the novels of E.M. Forster, later published as *Lengua y estilo en las novelas de E. M. Forster* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1995). The torch was passed on to younger members of the research group, and Rocío G. Sumillera wrote her PhD dissertation on poetic invention in sixteenth-century England, Rafael J. Pascual did his on *Beowulf* focusing on Old English metrics, and most recently Eugenia Esperanza Núñez Nogueroles had her viva on Anglicisms in the Spanish press, all three supervised by Martínez-Dueñas as well.

All in all, Martínez-Dueñas has supervised over fifteen doctoral dissertations, published numerous articles and book chapters, and authored and edited over a dozen books. Two have been the direct result of the papers presented at the research group's annual seminar: *Approaches to the poetics of Derek Walcott* (edited with J.

M. Pérez Fernández; Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001) and *The failed text: Literature and failure* (edited with Rocío G. Sumillera; Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013). Martínez-Dueñas himself focused on stylistics in *Estilística del discurso narrativo: De Yorkshire a Chandrapur* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1991), *La metáfora* (Barcelona: Octaedro, 1993), and *Retórica de la lengua inglesa* (Granada: Comares, 2002).

Martínez-Dueñas has never abandoned his philological background, which he developed intersemiotically in *Función de la representación y la descripción: Lo verbal y lo iconográfico en el retrato inglés* (Granada: Virtual, 1996), historically in *Las fronteras de los ingleses* (Alcalá la Real: Alcalá Grupo Editorial, 2008) and rhetorically in *Antigüedad y tradición en las letras inglesas* (Granada: Alhulia, 2018). His editions and translations also show a curiosity about religious discourse in the *El primer toque de la trompeta contra el monstruoso gobierno de las mujeres: Tratado contra María Tudor y otras reinas de la Edad Moderna*, the first translation into Spanish of John Knox's *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstruous regiment of women* (with Rocío G. Sumillera; Valencia: Tirant lo Blanch, 2016), about history in the translation into Spanish of John Dryden's play *The conquest of Granada by the Spaniards* as *La conquista de Granada por los españoles* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2010), and about wine in *La bodega de un literato*, his translation of George Saintsbury's *Notes on a cellar-book* (Madrid: Abada, 2016).

Even though the members of the research group have pursued their own academic interests during these two and a half decades, Martínez-Dueñas has acted as a convenor of the group in stylistics matters. Through him we learnt about and then joined the Poetics And Linguistics Association (PALA), and together we attended its conferences and met the scholars whose books we had studied during our degree and later used in our own research: Geoffrey Leech, Mick Short, Michael Toolan, and Katie Wales, to name but a few. Our research group was the local organizer of the 1995 PALA Conference in Granada with the invaluable help of Marta Falces Sierra. The relationship with PALA is also evident if we look at the scholars who have been invited to our annual research meetings: Michael Toolan, Charles Forceville, Paul Simpson, Donald Freeman, Michael Burke, and Dan McIntyre, among others. At the 2000 London conference we discovered Rocío Montoro, whose judgment and knowledge we are lucky to have in the research group and in the Department of English at the University of Granada; her involvement and participation in PALA's meetings and publications is of course remarkable.

Literary discourse stylistics and critical discourse analysis continue to be taught at the University of Granada, where new PhD dissertations are in the offing. We now add this collection of essays to the field. So the successful story of stylistics goes on.

The editors

INTRODUCTION

STYLISTICS TWENTY-FIVE YEARS ON: 1994-2019[1]

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The purpose of this chapter is to provide an account of the development of stylistics in the last twenty-five years. A reflection is made on the ways in which stylistics has met significant challenges and criticism during this period and the new directions which are currently being taken. Approaching the development of stylistics through its perceived challenges, the criticism it has raised and the internal debates seems an appropriate way to reappraise the main achievements of the discipline.

INTRODUCTION

The list of publications in stylistics is so long that with only the shortest comment on each published work, the record of the last 25 years would take up this whole book. In addition, such record is published yearly in *Language and Literature*[2], the journal of the Poetics and Linguistics Association. The purpose of this chapter is not even to sample outstanding contributions to the field in this quarter of a century. Instead, a reflection is made on the ways in which stylistics has met significant challenges and criticism during this period and which new directions are currently being taken.

Approaching the development of stylistics through its perceived challenges, the criticism it has raised and the internal debates seems an appropriate way to reappraise the main achievements of the discipline. In basic terms, stylistics can be

[1] Thanks are due to Belén Soria and Rocío Montoro for their insightful comments on a previous version of this chapter.
[2] The latest year available is 2017 (Lugea 2018).

described as the linguistic study of style. At its simplest, style is 'choice'. One may be a dualist and argue that a writer has chosen a particular wording for some content —and discarded other wordings—and develop the analysis of the features of a text by comparing alternatives; or be a monist and claim that the choices of expression are themselves choices of content, so no alternative wordings are possible. For the latter, literary language is different from everyday use and essentially non-paraphrasable. Early stylisticians proceeded by describing verbal choices linguistically and attempting an explanation. Such explanation would eventually require going beyond descriptive linguistics.

Modern stylistics began in the 1960s as a conscious endeavor to bridge the gap between linguistics and literary scholarship. Its inherent interdisciplinary character demanded a clear statement of purpose to establish its identity. With literary studies it shared an interest in the literary phenomenon but unlike the broader issues tackled by literary criticism, early stylisticians struggled to centre criticism on the text. In turn, this undivided attention to the literary text was shared with both Practical Criticism of the type done by Richards and Empson on this side of the Atlantic, and the New Criticism advocated by Brooks, Wellek and Warren on the other. Here the difference lay in the linguistic approach adopted by stylisticians, partly to counterbalance the power of critics in favour of language users and partly to improve the so-called 'claim and quote' procedure. In the view of stylisticians, the gap between the claims of what a text means and the evidence provided in support of such interpretation relied heavily on intuition and illustrated the response of literary critics rather than the understandings of average readers. By providing retrievable correlations between forms, functions and meanings, the analysis would become more objective.

THE CRITIQUE OF OBJECTIVE STYLISTICS

The stated purpose of stylistics and its place in the field of literary studies had already been called into question in the 1970s but in the mid-1990s it became the subject of a heated debate, in particular when Ron Carter, Paul Simpson, Mick Short, Willie van Peer and Donald Freeman received sharp criticism from Ray Mackay (1996), who targeted the 'mythic' objectivity of the practice as a reaction to the proclaimed goal of stylisticians to 'demystify' literature (Carter 1982:6). The reproach was not new but the uncompromising stance would not be left unanswered. In fact, it was given two responses, one longer from the authors alluded to (Short et al. 1998) and another shorter (Short and van Peer 1999) after a reply by Mackay (1999). A decade earlier, Christian Mair (1984) published his appraisal of the then 'new' stylistics in the journal *Style* posing the dilemma crudely: was the new stylistics a success story or a story of successful self-deception? The short answer

was that it was partly both. But the story was certainly not over and the critic suggested that some promising avenues should be explored in the coming decades.

According to Douthwaite (2000:24), the consolidation of the discipline that could be perceived in the 1980s was coming about in three ways: (i) the stylistic approach was being formalized in works such as Leech and Short (1981), and Fowler (1986); (ii) principles were being applied to practical analysis, for instance in Cummings and Simmons (1983) or Carter and Simpson (1989); and (iii) stylistics was beginning to incorporate other frameworks such as discourse analysis, ethnomethodology and narratology, and extending its scope to non-literary texts.

In the middle of this process, Mair (1985) chose four books to showcase stylistics at the time: Traugott and Pratt's *Linguistics for students of literature* (1980), Leech and Short's *Style in fiction* (1981), Carter's *Language and literature: An introductory reader in stylistics* (1982), and Cummings and Simmons' *The language of literature*: *A stylistic introduction to the study of literature* (1983). All four shared a practical orientation, required little theoretical background, which made them ideal for teaching at undergraduate level, and concentrated on the identification of linguistic features with potential as style markers.

Criticism from scholars such as Bateson, Wellek and most notably Stanley Fish (1980) had targeted the collecting of often irrelevant data, which at best produced arbitrary interpretations and at worst tautological ones, the limited correlations between form and meaning, which constrained reader freedom, the scant attention to the socio-historical context of the text, its author and its audience, and the narrow selection of texts, usually short lyrical poems or excerpts from modernist novels which could be analysed in much the same way, while longer prose works or drama were conspicuously ignored. Further criticism included the linguistic reductionism that short-circuited the connections between form and function by divesting textual phenomena from their contextual factors in the attempt to integrate linguistic and literary categories to produce an independent method.

Mair (1985:130) gave credit to stylisticians for their attempts at making literary studies more precise and objective but distrusted the relevance of linguistic methods to validate intuitions, especially of the statistical type, to produce stylistic insights he questioned. A second misgiving concerned the risk of producing 'premature' semantic interpretations of formal features when one pays little attention to the cultural and historical features of text. These two important weaknesses will be addressed below.

Despite criticism, misgivings and shortcomings, the stylistic enterprise would be successful by connecting morphological, syntactic or phonological features to categories such as point of view, register, discourse situation or genre:

> As long as stylisticians stick to collecting facts on the syntactic level and 'below' […] without relating these fact to textual and sociolinguistic categories […] they will not be

> able to mediate between basically neutral component parts of the linguistic system and the meaning these parts may acquire when they are assembled in a single, concrete text, which can always be located in space and time. (Mair 1980:125-6)

This was precisely the approach presented by Leech and Short (1981), who arranged linguistic categories in terms of style, reversing the usual linguistic structuring from the ground up. There was a promising future ahead as long as the latest developments in linguistics were applied to solving problems of literary theory and explaining literary texts. According to Mair (1985:129) the fruitful framework for stylistics would be found in text-linguistics, pragmatics and sociolinguistics. Two early examples were Fowler's *Linguistics and the novel* (1977), which combined text-linguistics with the structural analysis of narrative as practiced by Barthes or Todorov, and Banfield's *Unspeakable sentences* (1982) which explored the relevance of generative grammar for literary theory.

In turn, Mackay (1996) took issue with the stylisticians' attempts at generating systematic, retrievable analyses, which he considered a futile effort wrongly based on what he called 'the myth of objectivity' and 'the common-sense myth of language'. Mackay (1996:82) set out to demonstrate (i) that under the pretence of objectivity, practical stylistics was as subjective as any other approach (literary criticism seemed to be that approach); (ii) that linguistic models do not suffice to make stylistic analysis explicit and/or retrievable; (iii) that stylistic analysis cannot be approached in a scientific manner; and (iv) that all speakers of English do not share a common core of knowledge of the language that can be appealed to in interpreting literary texts. But rather than demonstrating the above by providing counter-evidence, his arguments were intended to persuade the reader that the linguistic apparatus used in stylistics to improve the objectivity of criticism is not the way to advance knowledge scientifically but 'a case of bolstering a personal response to a literary text with the trappings of a pseudo-scientific methodology' (1996:84). It is hard to see how this could contribute to a constructive debate on critical methodologies or to improve Simpson's analysis of Flann O'Brian's novel *The third policeman* using Laver's sociolinguistic framework.

Short et al.'s (1999) response explained and qualified the related concepts of objectivity, explicitness and falsifiability in stylistics but Mackay's reply (1999) added little to his first article apart from complaints at having been demonized and calumniated. Sadly there were mutual charges of being misrepresented which echoed the notorious polemic between Searle and Derrida and demonstrated the impossibility of debating without a minimal agreement on the very meanings of what one has written. Searle's hamburger example (Searle 1994:641) can be taken as evidence against charge (iv) above, namely the denial of a basic inter-subjectivity of interpretations. Whenever any of us goes to a restaurant and says 'Can I have a hamburger, medium rare with mustard and ketchup, no relish, please?', we are not

brought the said sandwich in a block of concrete or are served a petrified patty from King Tut's times. There is some basic level of understanding so that it is not necessary to make explicit every background presupposition and say 'Can I have a non-petrified hamburger, with ketchup and mustard, no relish and no concrete, please?' One does not need to know pragmatic theory to understand this and to design communication accordingly but the theory of implicature can be very helpful in making that knowledge explicit, debatable, and amenable to improvement. At the same time one has to admit that communication is much more than the exchange of code meanings and that speakers' interpretations have a common core but are far from homogeneous. That tension was aptly explained by Umberto Eco when he argued that the determinations of the text pull in the opposite direction to the indetermination of interpretation. For Eco (1992:25), between the radical reader oriented theory of interpretation and the opposite extreme of the intention of the author (almost impossible to establish and most often irrelevant for textual interpretations) there is an intention of the text. This is the way Eco refers to criteria for limiting interpretation. Although he admits the validity of the 'hermeneutic circle' (i.e., that the text is an object built by interpretation), for him the act of reading is a challenging transaction between the reader's competence and 'the kind of competence that a given text postulates in order to be read in an economic way' (Eco 1992:68). For example, in order to interpret Wordsworth's poetry, one has to keep in mind the state of the English lexical system in the first half of the eighteenth century.

But instead of the allegedly unverifiable, irretrievable and at the end of the day subjective stylistic analyses, Mackay favoured the alternative of 'a broader, more coherent procedure for the enterprise or stylistics' (1996:82) aimed at 'persuad[ing] readers that the features identified as significant by the stylistician are well worth paying attention to' (1996:92). Given that Mackay adopts Fish's subjectivist view, the identification of significant features by the critic should be as good as any reader's so eventually the basis, means and effectiveness of such 'persuasion' seem to depend totally on the critic's rhetorical skills—and one could add 'authority'. In order that the interpreter's freedom would not slide into interpretive debauchery, Mackay brings in Fish's 'disciplining rules', by means of which critics direct readers to the appropriate meanings given the institutional context (Fish 1979:120).

So after all, there are 'appropriate' and in consequence 'inappropriate' meanings and interpretation. Here we come full circle since the stated purpose of stylistics which Mackay seems to abhor was precisely 'to provide a procedure for demystifying literary texts […] mak[ing] our own interpretations […] in a relatively objective manner' (Carter 1982:6). Such procedure, or rather 'procedures', are derived from linguistics, be it descriptive, cognitive, sociopragmatic or corpus-based. Although the objectivity of linguistic analysis may be called into question, the attempt of the stylistic practice to be guided by independent specifications of

linguistic forms sets the cards on the table for others to see, discuss, and perhaps make amendments.

Bringing in the Searle-Derrida debate is particularly appropriate because the crux of the matter is the interpretation of 'objectivity'. Stylisticians' central claim is that linguistic procedures and models improve the objectivity of their analyses, always understood in relative terms and given the systematic, retrievable and falsifiable character of interpretations. But even if there was any initial self-deception regarding objectivity, it did not last. As Short has insisted, 'No analysis is objective in the sense that it is true for all time' (Short 1996:358, Short et al. 1998:41). Mackay (1999:61) reads 'objective' as 'that it is true for all time' (which after the theory of relativity may only be a statement about God) and then concludes that not being true for all time equals not being true at all. For what is worth, in analytic philosophy it is not a problem if the distinctions made and concepts analysed have no rigorous boundaries. In fact, the application of 'more or less' is rarely seen as an objection.

FISH'S TERRIBLE THINGS ABOUT STYLISTICS

Stanley Fish's main argument against linguistic stylistics was that the relationship between the identification of formal patterns and their interpretation was arbitrary; later he claimed that the formal patterns are themselves interpretive so admittedly there are formal patterns but they are as changing as interpretation (1979:144). When Fish formulated his criticism, he was targeting late 1960s and early 1970s stylistics, such as Ohmann's analysis of Faulkner using generative grammar (Ohmann 1969), Milic's computerized scrutiny of Jonathan Swift (Millic 1966), and especially Halliday's analysis of Golding's *The inheritors* (Halliday 1971). It is relevant to go back to the very beginning of stylistics and the 'terrible things' Fish said about it because the very same criticism was repeated—perhaps with less force—in the late 1990s. It took quite some time to get a detailed, reasoned and balanced answer but when Michael Toolan published *The stylistics of fiction* (1990), things had changed in linguistics and—not simply as a direct result—also in stylistics. Toolan's response to the criticism started by acknowledging the community of interests of all the students of style, whether from a literary or a linguistic perspective, in nineteeth- and twentieth-century philology. Approaches, subdisciplines and agendas multiplied, each of them with their own turning points. Toolan accepted Fish's denial of the simple and fixed relationship established by early stylisticians between forms and meanings but these mappings were already being questioned by linguistics in the 1980s. Harris's integrational linguistics (1981, 1987) challenged the code model of communication, by which the speaker conveys their thoughts along the linguistic channel to the hearer, who in turn decodes the

words to retrieve the speaker's thoughts. This decontextualized and mechanistic view was at the heart of early stylistics and made it possible to adopt an objective method which eventually proved lacking in the consideration of contextual factors, be they situational, experiential, emotional or social, which—according to integrationalists and many others—make meanings context-bound, individual-bound and provisional (Toolan 1996:123).

Admittedly, 'a stylistic reading is, in part, an artefact shaped by the adopted model and theory' (Toolan 1996:125) but there is no alternative way since there is no essential or timeless reading of a literary work (cf. Mackay's unsustainable claim). Fish appeals to the notion of 'interpretive community' to justify a particular interpretation but such community remains undefined: where its members are, how it is formed and changed. In turn, Toolan's criticism of Fish is that 'affective stylistics' becomes the interpretation of interpretation, the description of the interpretative competence of a community with the awful prospect of an infinite regress (1996:126). The way to get off the Fish hook is not renouncing the study of the language features of a text but giving up the notion that such study can supersede interpretation. When Fish offers an alternative Edenic interpretation to Halliday's Darwinian view of *The inheritors* based on an analysis of transitivity and agency, both scholars are drawing upon interpretations accepted by the western liberal humanist academic communities. The difference between them, and between stylistics and much literary criticism, lies in the stylisticians' assumption that morphosyntactic features often carry meanings (not *the* meaning) and that such features seem more explicit and less ambiguous than the appeal to accepted readings of interpretive communities.

Linguistic formalism made possible what Fish called the 'self-fulfilling prophecies' of stylitics, namely that the focus on certain formal features was made the true source of the intended interpretation. Alternatively, reader-response criticism was presented as a rewriting of texts (by readers) on the basis of shared interpretative conventions. But without a detailed account of interpretative communities, how they change or how new ones come into existence, the theory remains fuzzy and amenable to the same criticism as the Saussurean idealized community sharing a common language. In a nutshell, the focus of stylistics on linguistic patterns is an interpretative act in itself which should not stop one doing stylistics unless (a) that interpretation is incoherent or groundless, or (b) a more coherent interpretation is presented, or rather both. On the other hand, according to Fish, criticism should not aim at deciding between interpretations by testing 'disinterested' evidence but

> to establish by political and persuasive means (they are the same thing) the set of interpretive assumptions from the vantage of which the evidence (and the facts, and the intentions and everything else) will hereafter be specifiable. (Fish 1980:16)

So basically the focus of interpretation is the interpreting act itself and since the reader/critic will be describing their take on interpretive assumptions, criticism will do what Fish objects to in stylistics: creating its object of description. Put simply, these are the critical and stylistic options for students and scholars to choose from.

CRITICISM FROM INSIDE THE FIELD

There have been some squabbles among stylisticians too. Keith Green denounced the meagre results of the relevance-theoretic stylistic approach as part of the broadest failure of literary pragmatics due to its being 'too ambitious and too narrow' (Green 1997: 133). According to Green, relevance should be kept as a meta-theory of communication but its application to the analysis of literary texts has produced little results. His critique took MacMahon's discussion of Browning's 'My Last Duchess' as a case in point (MacMahon 1996). Pilkington, MacMahon and Clark's response (Pilkington et al. 1997) doubled the length of Green's 'Notes and discussion' article although apparently they did not find any arguments in it they could engage with. After the usual claim of misrepresentation of the theory by Green, they expounded the misreadings of relevance and more importantly the role of relevance theory in literary criticism, which is not to offer (new) interpretations of literary works but rather to 'offer explanations of existing readings in cognitive pragmatic terms […] to address questions about the nature of literary communication and the relationship between the literary and the non-literary' (Pilkington et al. 1996:141).

An important merit of 'relevance stylistics' is that it offers a way out of the impossible dilemma of choosing between the fixation of the code, as Jakobson did, and the variability of interpretation that Harris advocated decades later. Nowadays no stylistician takes meaning and interpretation as a mere function of the code, but doing without the code in favour of total inferencing ignores the role of linguistic meaning in the determination of propositional content, which is the input of further inferences in the interpretation of verbal utterances. Relevance theory reconciles interpretive fixation and variability and explains the (relatively) different interpretations of different readers or the varying interpretations of the same reader across time in terms of variations in encyclopaedic knowledge and assumptions. Poetic effects in particular are defined in terms of weak implicatures (Pilkington et al. 1997:142-3). This may not be without difficulties, notably how communicators produce and identify 'ostensive' stimuli, but relevance theory has developed a framework and procedure for studying the cognitive dimension of the textual experience which has been added to the stylistics tool-kit and whose merits should be given recognition.

Toolan (1998) gives credit to the 'code + inferencing' model of relevance theory for maintaining and rehabilitating the code model although, following Harris, he does not uphold the model. He argued his case in detail in *Total speech* (1996a) and remains sceptical of the contribution of relevance theory to stylistics.

21ST CENTURY STYLISTICS

By the 1990s, stylistics was consolidated as a practice based on three principles widely accepted: (a) to produce proper evidence and argumentation for one's views and to take counter-evidence into account when making interpretative claims; (b) to make claims which are falsifiable; and (c) to be explicit and open about one's claims and the evidence for them (Short et al. 1998:46). By then, stylisticians were well aware that a narrow linguistic focus on texts would impair a description which called for an account of gender, class and ideology. Likewise, the initial aspiration to demystify literary text and empower readers and learners with a relatively simple tool-kit (Wales 2014) was not abandoned but much specialized strands developed.

Almost two decades into the 21st century there continue to be updated introductions for undergraduates such as Simpson's *Stylistics. A resource book for students* (2nd ed. 2014), or Jeffries and McIntyre's *Stylistics* (2010). These two examples of 'pedagogical stylistics' are introductory but by no means overlapping. While Simpson's book requires no previous knowledge and focuses on 'doing stylistics' by applying well known categories such as transitivity, point of view or speech and thought presentation, Jeffries and McIntyre (2010) deal extensively with questions of discourse functions and interaction, and cognitive aspects of text comprehension (schema theory, cognitive metaphor), and text processing (text world theory and contextual frame theory). Pedagogical stylistics exploits the potential of stylistic analysis to enable students to better understand literature, and also the potential of literary texts to develop language learning. In this increasingly complex field, Nørgaard, Montoro and Busse's *Key terms in stylistics* (2010) can be a useful roadmap for undergraduates to know about key branches, terms and texts, and 'who is who' in stylistics.

Due to its focus on practice, pedagogical stylistics is perforce simplified in its theoretical underpinnings and to some extent mechanistic in the interpretation of formal features so this kind of analysis will certainly tell nothing new to literary critics but will allow students to describe literary texts precisely. To my mind the evolution of 'specialised' stylistics has pursued to overcome its detected shortcomings in three areas: by developing ways to account for context—including the reader—by exploring approaches to deal with other textualities—film, comics, choral music—and by adopting methods to obtain and process large amounts of data.

The 'cognitive turn' led stylistics to concentrate on the process of reading literary texts using models from cognitive linguistics, cognitive psychology and artificial intelligence. The mental component was brought into the equation of form, function and interpretation in several ways. According to schema theory, textual meaning is negotiated with the reader's background knowledge using bottom-up (stimulus driven process) and top-down (conceptually driven process) frameworks. Cognitive metaphor theory provides an explanation of the part of the cognitive architecture of speakers that results from the systematic mapping from one distant domain to another, the target domain. Conceptual metaphor theorists explain how these systematic metaphorical conceptualizations frame interpretation. In turn, blending theory explains how writers/readers fuse two scenarios together to create new meaning effects. Text world theory is another cognitive-linguistic model of discourse processing which frames communication within a situational context, the 'discourse world', and a conceptual domain of understanding constructed by the text producer and receiver, the 'text world'. Cognitive stylistics also aims to explain what readers do in order to make sense of literary narrative. In a recent publication, Toolan (2016) analyses the process involved in the processing of narrative fiction by combining corpus stylistics applied to lexical patterning, text world theory and narrative comprehension.

Moreover context has been explored in stylistics in an attempt to make interpretation valid both from the synchronic and the diachronic point of view. This is a crucial point in the explanation of ad hoc concept construction when non-conventional uses of words (e.g. novel metaphor) are made and how this ad hoc conceptualizations affect interpretation in literary and non-literary texts. For example, in the volume edited by Cave and Wilson (2018) pragmatic explanations are provided to address the effects of non-conventional uses in literary texts, and Keating and Soria (2019) provide an explanation of metaphorical ad hoc conceptualization in populist discourse in Europe.

Context is also essential in historical stylistics, which aims at explaining how historical texts mean. This branch of stylistics has benefitted greatly from the digitization of many historical texts, from corpus linguistic methods and from findings in historical pragmatics (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2010). The theory of foregrounding is put to the test since the study of a linguistic phenomenon in historical texts requires a particularly complex reconstruction of contexts and genres taking into account the added variability in the correlations between forms and functions seen diachronically. A book-length example of historical stylistics can be found in Patrick Studer's *Historical corpus stylistics* (2008), which attempts a definition and analysis of newspaper style in the context of Early Modern news discourse covering areas such as sociostylistics dimensions, foregrounding in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-century news headlines and discourse, or situational aspects of the news context.

The combination of corpus linguistics and stylistics experienced a decisive turn with the release of Wordsmith 1.0 in 1996. Now in its version 7 (Scott 2016), the tool has become a reliable aid to process the stylistic features of texts, genres, characters or authors. Corpus stylistics has given new life to foregrounding theory and phenomena since deviation can only be demonstrated effectively against a norm. And another hurdle for stylistic analyses—how to deal with very long texts—has been overcome by the possibility of analysing large amounts of data. One has to be careful when considering norms of use since large corpora (e.g., the British National Corpus, BNC) combine text samples from different periods, registers, spoken and written. On the other hand, specialized corpora such as those offered by the Oxford Text Archive (e.g., Early English Books Online, Eighteenth Century Collections Online, or the Evans Early American Imprint Collection) are increasingly available. A necessary, complex and time-consuming task previous to the analysis is the annotation of the corpus but authors are developing automated taggers (De Felice and Moreton 2019). Corpus stylistics has not given up on the analysist's intuitions accepting that statistics do not produce insights by themselves. That is why most studies combine qualitative with quantitative analyses. McIntyre and Walker's *Corpus stylistics: A practical introduction* (2019) offers valuable guidance on how to use corpus software, such as AntConc, Wmatrix, and the BNC interface, together with case studies to demonstrate how to use corpus tools to study the style of discourse presentation in Early Modern English or the self-presentational style of the UK Green Party. Corpus stylistics may tell something new and discover features unnoticed by readers or critics and Rocío Montoro's chapter in this volume is a good demonstration.

Multimodality can be seen as second generation social semiotics and as such provides a framework for the stylistic analysis of multimedia texts (Kress 2009). Multimodal stylistics can be applied to the analysis of (only) printed texts by explaining how typography, colour, layout, covers and visuals mean but its full potential is exploited in the analysis of multimedia text communication and meaning making processes. Multimodal analysis allows stylistic analysis to explore other media such as film (Bateman and Schmidt 2012) and other narratives and textualities including vlogs (Pihlaja 2019), multimodal metaphor (Forceville 2008) and hypertext fiction (Trimarco 2014).

The chapters of this volume reflect and illustrate key concerns of the stylistic theory and practice mentioned above. While certain stylistic trends in Old English literature are explored by Leonard Neidorf (Chapter 1) and Rafael J. Pascual (Chapter 2), both of whom focus on *Beowulf* in their case studies, Rocío G. Sumillera (Chapter 3) approaches style from the perspective of Translation Studies by focusing on the translation choices of Prof. Martínez-Dueñas' notable rendering of John Dryden's play *The conquest of Granada by the Spaniards*. Style in the

eighteenth century is then considered in the chapters by Julián Jiménez Heffernan (Chapter 4) and María Elena Rodríguez Martín (Chapter 5), who respectively consider Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748) and Jane Austen's epistolary novella *Lady Susan* (written c. 1794, published in 1871). If the former specifically deals with the contribution of negative prefixation towards an enhancement of the moral indeterminacy and opacity of the meaning of the text, the latter, by considering the 2016 film adaptation of Austen's work *Love and friendship* (directed by W. Stillman) reflects on the language of film adaptations, particularly from the perspective of multimodal stylistics and multimodal narrative theory. Michael Toolan's study (Chapter 6) of the setting made by early twentieth century composer Gerald Finzi of some seventeenth-century poems by Richard Crashaw (free translations of poetry by Thomas Aquinas) cuts across periods and approaches in his combination of multimodality, iconicity and word painting. The analysis of style in works of fiction produced in the twentieth century is the goal of the chapters by Mercedes Díaz Dueñas (Chapter 7) and Rocío Montoro (Chapter 8), both of which use stylistic analysis to bring to the fore how specific stylistic features are linguistically constructed. In the case of Díaz Dueñas, these are the use of speech and thought presentation for the concealment and disclosure of secrets in Alice Munro's production, and in the case of Montoro a corpus stylistics analysis is developed to investigate the train trope as a structuring element in A. J. Waines's *Girl on a train* (2013) and Paula Hawkins's *The girl on the train* (2015). The volume closes with two studies which do not resort to the study of literature for the discussion of style: Esther Romero and Belén Soria's discussion of fictional context and the challenge that the interpretation of fictional discourse entails for Relevance Theory (Chapter 9), and Eugenia Esperanza Núñez Nogueroles' review of the concept of pragmatic borrowing of anglicisms in Spanish (Chapter 10).

With one exception, the essays in this volume make subtle points about the style of very different literary works in English of different historical periods on the empirical basis furnished by rigorous linguistic analysis, or provide an explanation of the processes involved in arriving at certain intended interpretive effects. Michael Toolan and Rocío Montoro represent two generations of scholars fully committed to the stylistics enterprise. Rocío G. Sumillera and Julián Jiménez Heffernan are two prominent figures of Early Modern English studies in Spain, and both are widely read and cited. Esther Romero and Belén Soria have a long trajectory of high-impact publications on pragmatics, often focusing on relevant topics in stylistics: novel metaphor and fiction. Leonard Neidorf, professor of English at Nanjing University, and Rafael J. Pascual, Lecturer in Old English at Magdalen College, Oxford, have produced some of the most stimulating and read medieval English scholarship of recent times.

CONCLUSION

Stylistics' early shortcomings regarding interpretation and contextualization were soon detected and led to the necessary account of context which extended the linguistic focus to social, cognitive, pragmatic, critical, and historical elaborations. However, still at the turn of the 21st century there seemed to remain the unfinished business of engaging more substantially with other disciplines and scholars. The charge, which can be interpreted as bad marketing or self-centredness, came as a shock when Roy Harris began a plenary talk at the Poetics and Linguistics Association conference in London in 2000 by asking 'When will stylistics grow up?' And it was shocking because after more than three decades of linguistic stylistics, the argument was that the discipline had no distinct identity and always depended on developments in other areas. Stylistics needs linguistics and literature but the reverse is not the case (Hall 2010:501). I doubt that anyone criticizes the reliance of medical diagnosis on nuclear medicine despite the independence of the latter from the former. The point at issue should be the opposite: how to combine knowledge and work in related fields to achieve better results. And if this is the case in stylistics and literary study, scholars should be exploiting the synergies instead of lamenting for instance that students make insightful claims about power, gender and race in texts but seem unable to refer them to textual features. Likewise it is an anachronism that literary scholars scrutinize texts as if WordSmith did not exist. On the other hand it is also true that academic disciplines evolve toward specialisation and fragmentation, and interdisciplinarity sounds good until someone begins to talk about teaching other departments' courses or, even worse, when academic authorities begin to talk about merging departments.

There are three ambitious collective works which provide the state of the art in stylistics that should be a must-read in literature departments: *The Cambridge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Peter Stockwell and Sara Whiteley (2014), *The Routledge handbook of stylistics*, edited by Michael Burke (2014), and *The Bloomsbury companion to stylistics,* edited by Violeta Sotirova (2015). As can be seen in them, stylistics has not given up its central concern with literary works, its linguistic ways into texts nor its empirical stance but the initial caution not to tread into context is long forgotten and now analyses stem from or point toward cognitive, cultural and historical issues. Contextualisation, understood dynamically, has become imperative. The range of texts and the interpretive frameworks have diversified and specialized but retain the strong interdisciplinary approach that stylistics was born with. As an answer to the late Roy Harris, the proof of the coming of age and vitality of stylistics is out there for scholars of other disciplines to see and read. The contents of the recent *Rethinking language, text and context* (2019) are an excellent demonstration: disnarration in La La Land, corpus analysis of popular fiction and historical migrant letters, the lexical construction of Brexit,

indeterminacy in Michael Haneke's *Caché*, reader manipulation in Agatha Christie's detective fiction, paralinguistic features in Winnie-the-Pooh, overhearing in Austen, positioning the viewer in YouTube, recontextualisation of scientific research, semiotic representations of women in positions of power or indexical discourse in the film *I, Daniel Blake*.

It should be clear by now that the story of stylistics is not one of self-deception but one of self-awareness and honest reflection on theoretical frameworks and analytical procedures that has allowed stylisticians to come to terms with criticism and meet the challenges of ever-changing meaning-making practices and textualities.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE *BEOWULF* POET AND DANIEL OF WINCHESTER: Conversion strategies and the appositive style

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In tribute to Professor José Luis Martínez-Dueñas' scholarly contributions to the study of literary style, this essay identifies a historical analogue to the appositive style of Beowulf *in the writings of Bishop Daniel of Winchester, a churchman who flourished during the eighth century. It uses Daniel's writings to intervene in a longstanding debate over the plausibility of the* Beowulf *poet's appositive techniques.*

Beowulf and the appositive style, written by the recently deceased Fred C. Robinson (1930-2016), occupies a position close to the top on many scholars' lists of the most influential *Beowulf* monographs. Hundreds of books have been devoted to the interpretation of *Beowulf* and the elucidation of its artistry, but few books have made the poem appear so profoundly brilliant in terms of both style and theme. Following J. R. R. Tolkien, Robinson maintains that *Beowulf* focuses on 'the contrast between the time and milieu of the poet and the time and milieu of the characters in his poem' (Robinson 1985:6; Tolkien 1936). The pagan characters are represented as heroic, virtuous, and admirable, but their worldview is shown to be tragically limited on account of their ignorance of the Christian revelation granted to the poet and his audience. The poet elicits a combination of admiration and regret from his audience by placing the pagan past and the Christian present into a relationship of apposition, which facilitates comparison without drawing explicit conclusions. According to Robinson, the style and theme of *Beowulf* are intricately connected:

> …the poet attempts to build a place in his people's collective memory for their lost ancestors. This lofty and challenging theme requires for its expression an appositive style,

> a style more suggestive than assertive, more oblique than direct. A poet who, in a deeply Christian age, wants to acknowledge his heroes' damnation while insisting on their dignity must find and exercise in his listeners' minds the powers of inference and the ability to entertain two simultaneous points of view that are necessary for the resolution of poignant cultural tensions. (Robinson 1985:13-14)

Manifestations of the appositive style include the use of words with apposed meanings (e.g., *god*, which signifies either 'a pagan god' or 'the Christian God'), the digressive contrast of characters (e.g., Sigemund and Heremod), and the structural juxtaposition of broader themes (e.g., youth and age). Robinson also discerns subtler appositions at work. When the protagonist states that posthumous reputation is best for a man in view of life's transience (ll. 1384-89), his pagan worldview enters into a state of appositive contrast with the narrator's Christian perspective. The poet offers no comment on Beowulf's remark, but earlier references to eternal salvation (ll. 175-88) indicate that he does not share the hero's point of view. Yet by placing this speech directly before Beowulf's courageous struggle with Grendel's mother, the poet 'force[s] us to admire the men of old no matter how deeply we regret their theological predicament' (Robinson 1985:23).

Robinson's book has been well reviewed and widely cited.[1] Matti Rissanen speaks for many in declaring it 'one of the most important statements in the field of *Beowulf* interpretation written in recent years' (Rissanen 1987:363). The reaction to Robinson's book, however, has not been entirely positive. Several critics have impugned the validity of his interpretation by alleging that it is too subtle and sophisticated to be historically plausible. Joyce Hill, in an otherwise admiring review, finds Robinson to be 'in places too subtle' (Hill 1986:530). Similarly, John Tucker's favorable review concedes that a weakness of the book is its assumption that the *Beowulf* poet was 'blessed with an audience responsive to ambiguities of Empsonian complexity' (Tucker 1988:253). Robinson's interpretation has been subjected to detailed methodological critiques from John M. Hill (1995:50-52) and James Cahill (2008), but the fiercest criticism it drew was from the distinguished literary critic Edward B. Irving, Jr., whose *A Reading of Beowulf* (1968) ranks alongside *Beowulf and the appositive style* in any estimation of the most influential monographs on the poem. Irving considers Robinson's book 'misguided and unsuccessful' because it is premised upon 'a way of reading inherent in the Latin exegetical tradition', which is alien to oral-derived literature such as *Beowulf* (Irving 1997:187-188). Vernacular literature of this sort relies on direct rather than oblique expression: 'what a poet talks about and gives full attention to well over 95 percent of the time is what he or she is interested in and what the poem is chiefly about';

[1] See, for example, Seymour (1985). Robinson's arguments have been supported and extended by Taylor (1990) and, most recently, by Kightley (2016).

consequently, *Beowulf* is for Irving 'an admiring account of heroic action', not a philosophical poem that apposes pagan and Christian perspectives (1997:189).

The disagreement between Robinson and Irving recapitulates, in many respects, the disagreement between Tolkien, whose interpretation laid the foundation for Robinson's, and Kenneth Sisam, one of his principal detractors. Tolkien contended that *Beowulf* is not a simple folktale about monster fights, but a learned poet's poignant and symbolical meditation on a world that is 'heathen, noble, and hopeless' (1936:118). His reading acquired many adherents and was elaborated in much subsequent criticism, but Sisam firmly dissented in *The Structure of Beowulf*.[2] The essence of Sisam's critique is the allegation that readings like Tolkien's are anachronistic and require more sophistication from an Anglo-Saxon audience than can reasonably be expected. Sisam's speculations concerning the composition of the poem's audience inform his critique:

> We may suppose that the listeners would be the kind of people who appear in Heorot: the king, his family, counselors and officials…perhaps distinguished visitors or hostages… But the main audience would be the king's bodyguard…These men were not chosen mainly for intellectual qualities. They should not be thought of as learned in legendary history or theology, and quick to interpret any difficulty of expression or allusion. Bold rather than delicate effects would suit them best. (Sisam 1965:9)

Sisam reads *Beowulf* as literature of entertainment, a serial in three installments, composed for a relatively unsophisticated audience. He maintains that the *Beowulf* poet would not have attempted to get points across subtly and, like Irving, urges critics to attend to the stated rather than the unstated: 'I have supposed that the matters to which the poet gave most space or emphasis are those which he thought it most important to convey; that this kind of poetry depended on expression, not on silence, dark hints, or subtle irony' (Sisam 1965:60). Discussing the problems presented by the treatment of Christianity and paganism in the poem, Sisam discourages overly elaborate solutions: 'great difficulties stand in the way of all explanations that make the poet a deep thinker, attempting themes and ways of conveying them that might be tried on a select body of readers in a more advanced age' (Sisam 1965:77).

At the heart of these disagreements is a question of historical aesthetics: is it reasonable to believe that the *Beowulf* poet expected his audience to discern subtle, unstated themes and perceive the operation of implicit, appositive contrasts? Or would the poet have restricted the expression of ideas to direct and unambiguous statements? This is a difficult question to answer conclusively, since there is no extant *ars poetica* from the Anglo-Saxon period to detail the rhetorical strategies

[2] For discussion of Tolkien's influence on subsequent criticism, see Short (1980) and Shippey (2016).

that someone like the *Beowulf* poet might have employed. Scholars are thus left for the most part to their own conflicting impressions of the poet's subtlety and the audience's ability to perceive the complex artistry that has been discerned in modern criticism. The purpose of the present article is to intervene in the ongoing debates about the aesthetics of *Beowulf* by calling attention to one piece of medieval evidence that bears directly on the issues at hand. A letter from Bishop Daniel of Winchester (d. 745) to St. Boniface (c. 675-754) concerning the methods for converting Germanic pagans is interpreted below as an unrecognized historical analogue to the appositive style of *Beowulf*. In this letter, Daniel encourages Boniface to contrast paganism and Christianity by using rhetorical strategies that closely resemble the appositive techniques that Robinson thought to be operational in *Beowulf*. The letter shines a most revealing light on the intellectual demands that an orator in the eighth century could place on an unlettered audience absorbing vernacular learning at the speed of recitation. Recognition of this document's implications firmly elevates the historical plausibility of Robinson's reading of *Beowulf*.[3]

Although relatively little is known of Daniel, there are several indications that he was a prominent figure in Anglo-Saxon intellectual life during the first half of the eighth century. He served as Bishop of Winchester and Bishop of the West Saxons for almost four decades (c. 705-44) and was held in high esteem by both Bede and Boniface. In the preface to his *Ecclesiastical history of the English people*, Bede states that Daniel supplied him with some of his sources: 'Daniel, the esteemed bishop of the West Saxons who still survives, communicated to me in writing something of the history of the church of his own kingdom, as well as of the neighbouring kingdoms of Sussex and the Isle of Wight'.[4] Later on, when Bede lists Daniel and Aldhelm as pioneers of the southern church, he presents the two men as intellectual peers: 'Both were fully instructed in ecclesiastical matters and in the knowledge of the Scriptures'.[5] The writings that Daniel sent to Bede have not survived, but three epistles from Daniel to Boniface are preserved in the collected correspondence of Boniface and Lull. The first epistle is a general letter of introduction, which exhorts the kings and clerics of Europe to receive Boniface hospitably; the second epistle offers advice concerning the conversion of pagans; and the third epistle addresses questions that Boniface had posed regarding the necessity of interacting with impious churchmen. Each of these letters indicates that

[3] The present article, it should be noted, is not the first to relate the content of *Beowulf* to the conversion of Germanic pagans. For a fascinating reading of the poem in the context of the continental mission, see Benson (1967). For the most recent word on the topic, see Hill (2014).

[4] 'Danihel reverentissimus Occidentalium Saxonum episcopus, qui nunc usque superest, nonnulla mihi de historia ecclesiastica prouinciae ipsius, simul et proxima illi Australium Saxonum, necnon et Uectae insulae litteris mandata declaravit' (Colgrave and Mynors 1969:5-5).

[5] 'ambo et in rebus ecclesiasticis et in scientia scripturarum sufficienter instructi' (Colgrave and Mynors 1969:514-15).

Boniface considered Daniel a trusted superior to whom he could turn for spiritual advice and material support. The second letter is the one that claims our attention in the present context.

It is unclear whether the advice contained in this letter was generated in response to particular queries from Boniface or conceived without solicitation when Daniel became aware that his colleague had set about converting Germanic pagans on the continent. If a letter from Boniface requested the advice about conversion that Daniel supplied, it is regrettable that it no longer survives. The introductory portion of Daniel's letter does not address what prompted it and simply commends Boniface for his arduous undertaking:

> I rejoice, beloved brother and fellow priest, that you are deserving of the highest prize of virtue. You have approached the hitherto stony and barren hearts of the pagans, trusting in the plenitude of your faith, and have labored untiringly with the plowshare of gospel preaching, striving by your daily toil to change them into fertile fields. (Emerton 2000:26)[6]

Daniel, though suffering from illness, expresses a wish to join Boniface vicariously, aid his efforts, and thereby merit a portion of the spiritual reward that the continental mission will generate. Boniface will earn the highest prize, but 'a part of the second prize shall be given, not unfittingly, to those who support so pious and useful a work with what help they can give' (Emerton 2000:26).[7] The support that Daniel lent Boniface during the course of his mission appears to have taken many forms. In one letter, Boniface asks Daniel to send him 'the book of the Prophets…in which the six Prophets are contained in one volume in clear letters written in full' (Emerton 2000:94).[8] The book had been owned by Abbot Winbert, his former teacher, and Boniface wants this particular book because of his failing eyesight. He explains: 'I cannot read well writing which is small and filled with abbreviations' (Emerton 2000:94).[9] Daniel presumably supplied this book along with other goods and personnel from the West Saxon lands where Boniface was raised and educated. In the second letter, however, the aid rendered is of a more philosophical character. Daniel here promises to share with his colleague some

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[6] The original Latin text, cited from Tangl (1916:38), reads as follows: 'Quamvis, mi frater consacerdosque carissime, te primam virtutum promereri gaudeam palmam, qui saxea steriliaque actenus gentilium corda fidei magnitudine fretus fiducialiter adgrediendo vomere evangelice predicationis infatigabiliter subigens in glebas fertiles cotidiano labore convertere niteris'.

[7] 'tamen secundę portio palmę non incongruę ipsis etiam prestabitur, qui tam pio, tam salubri operi congratulando quibus valent subsidiis favent eorumque indigentiam conpetentibus amminiculis supplent' (Tangl 1916:38-39).

[8] 'librum prophetarum…ubi sex prophete in uno corpore claris et absolutis litteris scripti repperientur' (Tangl 1916:131).

[9] 'caligantibus oculis minutas litteras ac connexas clare discere non possum' (Tangl 1916:131).

conversion strategies to enable him to 'most readily overcome the resistance of those uncivilized people' (Emerton 2000:26).[10]

The central argument of Daniel's letter is that it is best to proceed indirectly when discussing theological matters with pagans. The missionary should not rush to denounce the falsity of pagan beliefs and assert the veracity of Christian knowledge. A blunt and heavy-handed approach serves only to anger and alienate potential converts. The more effective course is to work indirectly and engage pagan interlocutors in a manner that permits their gradual recognition of the superiority of the Christian religion. Daniel advises Boniface: 'Do not begin by arguing with them about the origin of their gods, false as those are, but let them affirm that some of them were begotten by others through the intercourse of male with female' (Emerton 2000:26).[11] Boniface should refrain from telling the pagans that their gods are false, and should instead let their own admissions 'prove that gods and goddesses born after the manner of men are men and not gods and, since they did not exist before, must have had a beginning' (Emerton 2000:26).[12] After questioning the pagans about the origins of their gods, Daniel recommends questioning them about the origin of the world and then the origin of the universe. The purpose of this line of inquiry is to render the inconsistency and explanatory inadequacy of paganism apparent to its adherents. 'Certainly they can find no place where begotten gods could dwell before the universe was made,' Daniel writes; he goes on to clarify this point and assure Boniface that pagans can comprehend it: 'I mean by 'universe' not merely this visible earth and sky, but the whole vast extent of space, and *this the heathen too can imagine in their thoughts*' (my italics; Emerton 2000:26).[13] Such speculation about the mental capacities of pagans is quite interesting in view of Robinson's claim that the *Beowulf* poet sought to depict the epistemological limitations of the pagan worldview.

Daniel provides Boniface with a series of more specific questions that will confound pagan interlocutors. The finite and mortal character of the pagan gods is a particular weakness that should be confronted: 'Ask your opponents who governed the world before the gods were born, who was the ruler? How could they bring under their dominion or subject to their law a universe that had always existed

[10] 'quo magis advertas, secundum meum sensum qua potissimum ratione obstinationem agrestium convincere promptus queas' (Tangle 1916:39).
[11] 'Neque enim contraria eis de ipsorum quamvis falsorum deorum genealogia astruere debes, [sed] secundum eorum opinionem quoslibet ab aliis generatos per conplexum mariti ac femine concede eos asserere' (Tangl 1916:39).
[12] 'ut saltim modo hominum natos deos ac deas homines potius, non deos fuisse et cepisse, qui ante non erant, probes' (Tangl 1916:39).
[13] 'Cum procul dubio ante constitutionem saeculi nullatenus genitis diis inveniunt subsistendi vel habitandi locum; mundum enim non hanc visibilem tantum cęlum et terram, sed cuncta etiam extenta locorum spatia, quę ipsi quoque pagani suis imaginare cogitationibus possunt, dico' (Tangle 1916:39).

before them?' (Emerton 2000:27).[14] Pagans will face similar problems when forced to address questions that pertain to the evident reliance of their gods upon human methods of procreation: 'And whence, or from whom or when, was the first god or goddess set up or begotten? Now, do they imagine that gods and goddesses still go on begetting others?' (Emerton 2000:27).[15] If so, then there would be an infinite number of deities, and it would be both difficult and perilous to decide which ones merit worship. But if the gods no longer reproduce, when and why did they stop? Such questions render the ad hoc and incoherent character of pagan religion painfully apparent. Its inadequacy becomes even more apparent in light of the ease with which Christianity provides answers to these questions. Daniel acknowledges, however, that intellectual considerations might prove ineffective on those who worship pagan gods for the purported material benefits. For these believers, Boniface should alert his prospective converts to the material prosperity of the Christians and 'let them tell in what respect the heathen are better off than Christians' (Emerton 2000:27).[16] This line of inquiry leads to the realization that there is little profit in worshipping the pagan gods, since the Christians, 'who are turning almost the whole earth away from their worship', possess far greater wealth and richer lands (Emerton 2000:27).[17]

After equipping Boniface with an array of questions that expose the intellectual and material inferiority of paganism, Daniel distills his method of conversion into a basic principle that is to be extended to other topics in the missionaries' discussions with pagans. He writes:

> These and many similar things, which it would take long to enumerate, you ought to put before them, not offensively or so as to anger them, but calmly and with great moderation. At intervals you should compare their superstitions with our Christian doctrines, touching upon them from the flank, as it were, so that the pagans, thrown into confusion rather than angered, may be ashamed of their absurd ideas and may understand that their infamous ceremonies and fables are well known to us.[18]

It is striking how closely Daniel's method recalls Robinson's description of the appositive style, 'a style more suggestive than assertive, more oblique than direct'

[14] 'tamen altercantes interroga, quis ante natos deos mundo imperaret, quis regeret? Quomodo autem suo subdere dominatui vel sui iuris facere mundum ante se semper subsistentem potuerunt?' (Tangl 1916:39).
[15] 'Unde autem vel a quo vel quando substitutus aut genitus primus deus vel dea fuerat? Utrum autem adhuc generare deos deasque alios aliasque suspicantur?' (Tangl 1916:39).
[16] 'Si pro temporali, in quo iam feliciores pagani christianis sunt, dicant' (Tangl 1916:40).
[17] 'christianis totum pene orbem ab eorum cultura avertentibus' (Tangl 1916:40).
[18] 'Haec et his simila multa alia, quae nunc enumerare longum est, non quasi insultando vel inritando eos, sed placide ac magna obicere moderatione debes. Et per intervalla nostris, id est christianis, huiuscemodi conparandae sunt dogmatibus superstitiones et quasi e latere tangendę, quatenus magis confusę quam exasperate pagani erubescant pro tam absurdis opinionibus et ne nos latere ipsorum nefarios ritus ac fabulas estimant' (Tangl 1916:40).

(Robinson 1985:13). Daniel encourages Boniface to do what Robinson believes the *Beowulf* poet to have done: indirectly compare pagan and Christian perspectives through the apposition of their values and beliefs. This strategy, it must be noted, is not designed for the persuasion of an educated, Latinate audience. To the contrary, Daniel recommends it for use on 'uncivilized people', more specifically, the continental Germanic peoples with whom Boniface must have communicated in his own variety of the English vernacular, which remained mutually intelligible with other West Germanic dialects (see Moulton 1988). Daniel's confidence in the intellectual capacities of Germanic pagans is quite revealing. His certainty that uneducated rustics would be able to comprehend ideas expressed with subtlety gives literary critics some reason to believe that the audience of *Beowulf* might have been able to apprehend themes in the poem that are not directly expressed. Robinson's reading of *Beowulf* as a poem that persistently and implicitly contrasts paganism and Christianity seems more historically tenable in view of Daniel's recommendation for missionaries to do precisely that.

Recognition of the historical analogue to the appositive style in Daniel's letter does not lead to the validation of every aspect of Robinson's argumentation—indeed, some of the detailed criticisms leveled at his book remain unshaken[19]— but the general mode of reading he developed for the interpretation of *Beowulf* appears considerably more plausible. The belief expressed by Irving and Sisam, among others, that poetry like *Beowulf* requires direct expression of its themes appears, in turn, to be mistaken. The oblique methods that Daniel advocates undermine Sisam's assertion that 'bold rather than delicate effects' would have been necessary for a poet addressing an audience full of men 'who were not chosen mainly for intellectual qualities' (Sisam 1965:9). The charge of anachronism leveled at the reading of *Beowulf* developed in the Tolkien-Robinson tradition—for conceiving of a poet 'attempting themes and ways of conveying them that might be tried on a select body of readers in a more advanced age' (Sisam 1965:77)—might reasonably be leveled instead at the critics of this tradition. For we must bear in mind that in cultures where the vast majority of literature and learning is transmitted orally, the abilities of auditors to comprehend subtleties at the speed of recitation can vastly exceed those possessed by auditors in a predominantly literate culture.[20] If modern scholars discern the appositive contrast of pagan and Christian worldviews while reading the text of *Beowulf*, it is not unreasonable to suppose that members of the

[19] In addition to the writings of John M. Hill and James Cahill, mentioned above, there are important criticisms of Robinson (and Sisam and Irving) in Cavill (2004). A particularly doubtful element of Robinson's argument is its assumption that the *Beowulf* poet considered Germanic pagans to be unequivocally damned. Certain phrases suggest that the poet at least entertained the possibility of their salvation, if not argued for it outright. See Hill (2014) and Russom (2010).

[20] For the classic statement on this subject, see Ong (2002) and Schaefer (1992). For an argument that Anglo-Saxon audiences were sensitive to minute matters of diction, see Russom (1978).

poem's original audience might have perceived the same thing while absorbing it aurally.

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