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*Identities on the Move. Contemporary Representations of New Sexualities and Gender Identities*, edited by Silvia Pilar Castro Borrego and María Isabel Romero Ruiz, represents an invaluable approach to the study of identity representation for a number of reasons.<sup>1</sup> First of all, the research included in this volume has a thoroughly documented theoretical foundation which maintains a poststructuralist perspective around the construction and fluidity of identity as a common framework. Thus, the different contributions in this monograph draw from already canonical approaches by authors such as Foucault, Butler and Kristeva in the field of gender formation, which are at the same time interspersed with perspectives on race (Lorde, Anzaldúa), sexuality (Irigaray, Haraway, Preciado) and migration and colonialism (Bhabha, Spivak, Mignolo). This variety of viewpoints throughout the different proposals however creates a harmonic unit which offers a full range of complementary tools for the study and analysis of identity (re) presentation, with a particular emphasis on gender and sexuality.

As the subtitle attests, the *Contemporary Representations of New Sexualities and Gender Identities* studied by the different authors are proof of the intersectional and post-positivist nature of current identities. As such, all the contributions are committed to overcoming the postmodern idea of identity in an attempt to reach a post-positivist and intersectional perspective on the subject, taking into account the influence of traits such as race, religion, the body itself or migratory movements in the construction of identity. This intersectional perspective provides a richer background for research and makes it possible to go beyond previous studies which, albeit relevant, approached the study of gender and sexual identities from a single axis—see Lancaster and di Leonardo (1997) and Parker, Barbosa and Aggleton (2000). In the words of Castro and Romero, the articles “seek

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to address the topic of new sexualities and gender identities and their representation in postcolonial and contemporary Anglophone literary, historical, and cultural productions from a transnational, transcultural, and anti-essentialist perspective" (2). These studies go beyond the idea of identity as a hermetic construction and recognize the multiple intersectional identity realities which exist in current globalized societies, and this is clearly one of the great contributions of this monograph. Starting from the shared notion of the constructed nature of identity, the different theoretical approaches on race, gender or migration complement each other to offer the reader new points of view on the identities represented in the studied works, while paving the way for new interdisciplinary lines of research in the study of the intersectional nature of identity.

In order to guide the reader, most of the chapters apply their theoretical approaches to the field of literature to provide almost palpable proof of how ideological forces and social and cultural powers shape the representation of identities. However, it must be said that, as an original and important point, the selection of sixteen contributions by the editors offers the reader a tour through the analysis of different and somewhat unconventional topics of analysis in this field of research, such as contemporary art, science fiction in television, the printed media and the human body within international migratory flows. That said, it is difficult to find the rationale behind the order in which the different contributions are presented. However, this heterogeneity becomes one of the monograph's strong points because it provides a comprehensive overview of the formation of identity from different perspectives according to the predominant identity traits in each of the works analyzed.

To begin with, the chapter by Laura Gillman—"Queering Decoloniality: Epistemic Body Politics in Alicia Gaspar de Alba's *Desert Blood*"—focuses on the need to develop an intersectional analysis of queer migration. Starting from the concept of "coloniality" and the study of the powers which create a racial hierarchy in our society, Gillman examines dominant "scale" discourses to interpret the body as a socially constructed product. As an example, she presents a critical reading of the novel by Gaspar de Alba *Desert Blood* (2005) in order to prove how heteropatriarchy and the colonial regime, the social hierarchies of race and economic asymmetries influence the construction of the body of migrant women on the border of the United States and Mexico.

María Isabel Romero Ruiz, for her part, scrutinizes in "Women's Migration, Prostitution and Human Trafficking: Gender and Historical Approaches" a different type of migration, that of human trafficking. The author explains, in the light of the UN protocols, the various types of human trafficking that exist nowadays. It is very interesting to consider the implications on agency and empowerment described by Romero Ruiz with regard to the new forms of slavery from a feminist perspective in which race loses its strength against gender, as well as the processes of objectification and commodification of women's bodies.

The chapter by Cynthia Lytle—"Representations of Transnational and Sexual Violence in Zoë Wicomb's *The One that Got Away*"—reviews the loss of identity of

the African continent through the essentialist representations which have been offered through history. To do so, she analyzes the collection of stories by the South African author Zoë Wicomb *The One that Got Away* (2009) and the hypersexualized image which has traditionally been ascribed to this territory, in contrast with the purity of the body of the white woman seen from a colonial perspective. As Lytle explains, this work becomes a denunciation of the transnational violence of the West against Africa, and it attempts to destroy the black/white and male/female binaries enforced by the prevailing heteropatriarchal narratives.

Starting from the concepts of “defilement” and “abjection” proposed by Julia Kristeva ([1980] 1982), María Elena Jaime de Pablos focuses on the construction of a traumatic identity caused by sexual abuse against minors in Edna O’Brien’s *Down by the River* (1997), a work in which the religious component is a determining factor in the identity formation of the characters. After an in-depth review of the work and its contextualization within the literary constellation of Irish women, Jaime de Pablos uses Judith Butler’s perspective on hate speech to analyze the identity formation of the main character in the novel, while at the same time it offers an interesting description of the traumatic consequences of incest on identity and a woman’s body based on several examples from O’Brien’s book.

Logie Barrow’s contribution in the next chapter—“Ascribe, Divide—and Rule?: Intellectual Liminality among Ethnic, Class, Gender and Many Others”—outlines the ways in which epistemology interacts with two crucial elements in the shaping of identities: intelligence and class. With an enlightening perspective on the use of mechanisms of control in fields such as education and medicine to conform identities from an early age, the author draws the reader’s attention to the elements within the neoliberal narrative of power which are embedded in our society and lead to a constant tension between elitist and democratic epistemologies.

The proposal by Eduardo Barros Grela invites the reader to reconsider the ideas of identity and body through the analysis of the biopic documentary on artist Bob Flanagan. The author starts “Sex, Pain, and Sickness: Performance of Identity through Spaces and Bodies” by considering Flanagan’s works on the sick body and pain as post-human rewritings which deconstruct and question the limits of gender and the fluctuation of identity as a response to the gender hierarchy which has been imposed on current societies. Thus pain becomes, according to Barros Grela’s original approach, an agency-empowered tool to rebel against one’s own body and to modify it in an incessant process of identification.

The body as a place from which identity may be brought into question is also studied by Rocío Carrasco Carrasco in “Interrogating the Posthuman in US Science Fiction Films.” She starts from the term “post-human” through an original application of Donna Haraway’s cyborg theory (1991) in order to examine how body and identity are formed in science fiction films, and to analyze the interests behind the genetic and technological modification of the body. Through a series of detailed film examples,

Carrasco Carrasco concludes that the representations analyzed reproduce dominant structures of power, and fail to transgress traditional gender roles, although they have enough potential to do so.

A comparative analysis of Jane Austen's *Jane Eyre* (1847) and Jean Rhys's *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966) is the basis of the research for the next two chapters. The first, by Lucía García Magaldi, looks in depth at the gender and sex relationships among different characters in the two novels. She proposes a solid theoretical framework based on Bob Connell's around power, production, emotional and symbolic relationships in an attempt to understand the racial and gender intersectionality of the characters. For her part, María José Coperías Aguilar in "Lust and Sexuality in Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Rhys's *Antoinette Mason*" carries out a literary analysis on the formation of gender and sexuality in both works from a post-colonial perspective and finds both commonalities and asymmetries between different female characters, mostly relating to the sexualization of the non-white body.

The piece of research by Silvia Pilar Castro Borrego—"I Am a Black Lesbian, and I Am Your Sister": Audre Lorde's Theorizing Difference as Weapon for Survival and Change"—is an interesting contribution to the study of gender and sexuality within the intersectional approach of this anthology. The author critically reexamines the theoretical production of Audre Lorde around black lesbian women, highlighting the double oppression against this group described by Lorde, but also interpreting this minoritized dualism as a generating principle which makes it possible to approach a fluid identity through the questioning of the white, heteronormative and heteropatriarchal premises imposed upon the current society.

David Walton's "The Inside and Outside of Gendered Space: Gender Migration and *Little Britain* from Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* to Beatriz Preciado's *Testo Yonqui*" starts from a comprehensive view of Butler's theory of performative gender and analyzes the subversive variants in different body modifications in characters from TV show *Little Britain* (2003-2006). More specifically, the author sets out to overcome, through an innovative approach, the double inversion of gender in Butler's argument towards double gender performance when features from both genders are present in the portrayal of a character. Also, he reconsiders the body modifications described in Preciado's book *Testo Yonqui* (2008) as a migration which makes it possible to withstand the normalization of gender and to erect new subjectivities.

Butler's theory of performative gender through repetition is also the theoretical framework used by Kate Joseph and Antje Schuhmann to examine the heteropatriarchal bias underlying in the representation of black female football players in the South African press as an Other which does not portray the hegemonic features of femininity. The authors denounce, through a series of examples related to Equatorial Guinea women's soccer team, the relations of race established in the country's sport press between the image of white women and femininity and the representations of black women as examples of butchness.

The next three chapters also delve into the intersections of race and the sex/gender binomial. In “Black Feminist Theatrical Responses to Homophobia,” Inmaculada Pineda Hernández analyzes theatrical representations of the relationship between AIDS and homosexuality in contemporary African American communities in Pearl Cleage’s *Blues for an Alabama Sky* (1995) and Cheryl L. West’s *Before It Hits Home* (1990) through a review of the structural homophobia which the black homosexual community still suffers within the black community at large. Angelita Reyes’s “An Epic Migration: African American Women, Representation, Mis/Guided Identities, and Kathryn Stockett’s *The Help*” outlines a comprehensive work on the transcultural representation of black women in the 2011 film in an attempt to analyze their role in the work, the influence of slavery on their representation and the different perspectives from which the novel and its film version have been received, and also the relevance of these figures in the fight to achieve equal rights in the US. Concepción Parrondo Carretero’s contribution offers an interdisciplinary reading of Susan Straight’s *I Been in Sorrow’s Kitchen and Licked Out All the Pots* (1992) to examine the evolution of the identity of its main character. She combines a post-positivist approach to the construction of identity with gender and race perspectives in order to elucidate the complexities derived from the exercise of power.

Finally, Mariam Bazi concludes with a profound contribution on migrant Muslim women: “Muslim Women in the Third Space: Negotiating Diaspora, Sexuality, and Identity from a Feminist Postcolonial Perspective.” Following Homi K. Bhabha’s concepts of “hybridity,” “diaspora” and “third space” (1994) and the orientalist and colonial discourse applied in the West to the Muslim stereotypes, the author deals with the identity of Muslim women in the diaspora, with their experience between both cultures, with their representation in the international community and with the changes in Islamic feminism which must take place in the new multicultural societies. The author denounces the categorization to which Muslim women are subject as a sexually exotic Other from both a colonial and a patriarchal perspective.

In general terms, this book is an important contribution to the study of identity formation, mainly due to the predominantly intersectional point of view of each piece of research. Through a wide selection of case studies, the different chapters explore the conflicting nature of identity with approaches which integrate innovative perspectives and the traditional post-structural theoretical basis of these studies. In this regard, the different proposals adopt intersectionality as a starting point to understand identity in the current world, and this is clearly the main contribution of this monograph to its field of research. Perhaps the extent of the research and the wish to deal with so many of the determining factors that shape current identities are responsible to some extent for the fact that the racial and colonial perspectives are not discussed in sufficient depth to thoroughly analyze their influence on identity. However, the theoretical frameworks that are developed here outline new research trends and represent a starting point for new lines of study on the analysis of current

intersectional identities on different media. It is, ultimately, a solid and rigorous volume which contributes to the development of Gender and Sexuality Studies.

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