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Welcome to the autumn 2019 edition of the Bulletin, following the first-ever summer when more candidates sat an A level in Spanish than in French.

Some may wonder why increasing numbers of students are drawn to the language of *sol y playa*, paella, flamenco, Almodóvar, Penelope Cruz, García Márquez, Borges, Lorca, Picasso, Kahlo, tango, salsa, *Despacito*, etc.

We do not...



The eclectic charms of Spanish-language culture are brought together in the [new \(2022\) syllabus for Pre-U Topics and Texts](#), introduced in this edition. To complement this look forward, Sander Berg reflects back on [ten years of teaching Paper 4 Topics](#).

Our eclectic theme is further reflected in contributions ranging from [Neruda's political poems](#) to the racy stories of [María de Zayas](#). We also assess the dynamic relationship between [football and cinema](#) in the Spanish-speaking world and the place of [Dolor y gloria](#) in Almodóvar's repertoire.

On the linguistic front, we offer a new perspective on the familiar layman's question 'is there much difference between [the Spanish of Spain and what they speak in Latin America](#)'?

While the study of Spanish flourishes in the UK, parts of the Spanish-speaking world seem trapped in cyclical mode. The *crispación* on the streets of Barcelona this October was sadly similar to that of October 2017. It makes for a sorry backdrop to the second general election in Spain this year, prompting us to assess whether there is [no word for compromise](#) in Spanish. We also catch up on [developments in Spanish America](#) since our June edition, and celebrate Franco's exhumation with a look at [the role of women in the Spanish Civil War](#). Closer to home, we are grateful for the appreciative response to our reader survey in September. We also welcome Alfredo Benito and Dr Nathaniel Gardner to the editorial board, adding considerable journalistic and academic clout to our offering.

The Bulletin brings together the enthusiasm and expertise of writers at all levels of familiarity with the Spanish-speaking world. We will be welcoming contributions to our next edition by the end of January please. New readers are welcome to join our mailing list by using the contact tab above.

Entre tanto, les deseamos a nuestros lectores estudios fructíferos y felices fiestas.

The BAS editorial team

Pre-U Topics and Texts 2022 syllabus

In the serene traditions of academia, the 2022 Spanish Pre-U syllabus snuck out like a hedgehog in the dark last month and inserted itself into the qualification's website.



Readers may be puzzled that such a creative endeavour as a new syllabus is granted no fanfare on its emergence. They may also be horrified that yet another syllabus has been adopted after we've only just had the first exams based on its predecessor, which still has two summers left to run.

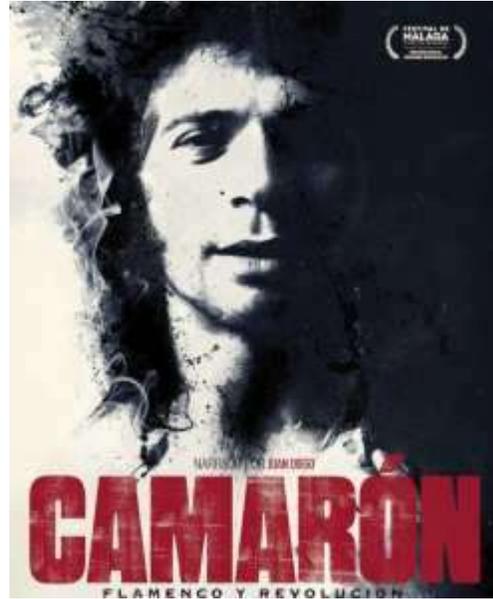
In this article we limit ourselves to an overview. Future editions of the Bulletin will offer expert perspectives on specific 2022 Topics and Texts as schools prepare to teach them from September 2020.

Firstly, a word on the 2019-21 Pre-U Spanish Paper 4 syllabus – held up in Cambridge as a model of innovation while still rooted in the classic triangle of Lorca – García Márquez – Almodóvar. The range and balance of the thing is hard to beat, but after years of service the likes of Borges, Martín Gaité, Lazarillo, *La tía Julia...*, *América Latina: justicia y opresión*, *El cine de Almodóvar*, *La mujer en el mundo hispano*, etc had to be rested to avoid repetition.

Only César Vallejo (first exam 2021), García Márquez's *Del amor y otros demonios* and Cercas' *Soldados de Salamina* survive into the new syllabus in their existing form.

Other authors and texts resurface in new guises. *La villa*, the modern classic of Latin American hope amidst poverty, moves from the Argentina Topic to become a Text. Joaquín Sabina also moves from Topic to Text, in the form of *Nos sobran los motivos* – a collection of 21 lyrics that allows closer analysis of his writing than does the current Topic.

La canción nonetheless remains a Topic option, with a biopic about Violeta Parra and documentaries about Camarón de la Isla and Chavela Vargas grouped under the header *Cantantes icónicos del mundo hispano*. *Camarón* opens up for study the world of flamenco and Spain's gypsy heritage (NB this is not the 2005 Jaime Chávarri biopic; it is the 2018 Netflix documentary by Alexis Morante, subtitle *Flamenco y revolución*).



The excellent Chavela Vargas documentary will additionally tap into the widespread interest in Frida Kahlo. Setters had initially planned to include the feature-length documentary *Víctor Jara: El derecho de vivir en paz*, but it could only be obtained from Chile and is perhaps a little dated in its presentation (time, surely, for a new documentary or biopic about him). *El símbolo y el cuate*, used with the current Serrat/Sabina Topic, was also considered, but with Sabina recruited as a Text it would have created an overlap, meaning the regrettable disappearance of Serrat from the syllabus.

The two great survivors of all thirteen years of Pre-U syllabuses are now grouped together under the heading *Representaciones de la mujer hispana del siglo 20*. They are the Mexican novel *Como agua para chocolate* and Almodóvar's *Todo sobre mi madre*. The coup here is that the third work is *La zapatera prodigiosa*, meaning that Lorca and Almodóvar can feature together in the same question and answer for the first time. The choice of Lorca play allows schools to branch out beyond the well-worn *Trilogía rural* and experiment with something new – or stick to Almodóvar and Esquivel.



Mexican cinema replaces Argentina in Topic 1. The three films include the multi-Oscar winner *Roma*. *La zona* is the better of the other two options – a powerful indictment of gated communities and the corruption of the legal system in modern Mexico.

Topics 3 and 4 compete to fill

the gap left by the *América Latina: justicia y opresión* option. Topic 3 uses works from Mexico, Argentina and Spain to illuminate moral and political corruption in the Spanish-speaking world, with the Mexican entry (*La muerte de Artemio Cruz*) representing the first appearance of boom novelist Carlos Fuentes in the Pre-U syllabus. The Argentine film *La historia oficial*, set at the end of the Dirty War, won the 1986 Oscar for Best Foreign Language Film. *El reino* tackles corruption in Spanish politics: it won seven Goya Awards in 2018.

Topic 4 (*Dictadura y el individuo*) brings together an Argentine film set just before the Dirty War, a Chilean play set just after Pinochet, and a contemporary Spanish documentary. *La muerte y la doncella* is a gripping three-act play that had a successful West End run as *Death and the Maiden*. *Rojo* is a 2018 film set on the classic Argentine fault-line between *civilización y barbarie*: the unsettling narrative is reminiscent of *La villa* in the Texts section, not least with the appearance of the avenging ‘TV detective’ in the denouement. *El silencio de otros* is a moving reminder of the way the Franco dictatorship continues to blight the lives of its surviving victims.



Latin American options dominate the Texts. In addition to *La villa*, new entries include *Pedro Páramo*, Juan Rulfo's 1955 tale of *ánimos en pena* on the Mexican *meseta*, and Laura Restrepo's 1995 *Dulce compañía*, in which a journalist investigates reports of an angel residing in a Bogotá slum – the text playing with the contrast between modern society and a magic realist universe. Suitably enough, Restrepo won the Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz *novela femenina* prize for this work, and it is Sor Juana herself, the Nueva España (ie Mexican) playwright, who provides another new entry into the Texts syllabus with her 17th century feminist comedy *Los empeños de una casa*. (Sor Juana – precursor of Frida Kahlo and Chavela Vargas? Discuss...)

Some of these works need to be ordered from overseas, but all are currently obtainable except *Rojo*, which, as of October 2019, was still playing in cinemas. *Roma* and *Camarón* are available on Netflix.

BAS editors Robin Wallis with Sander Berg

Pre-U and I: reflections on Paper 4

Having written in our June edition about teaching the Paper 4 Texts, Dr Sander Berg here reflects on the Topics.

Last year marked the tenth year of my teaching the Pre-U syllabus and I have always had the good fortune to teach Paper 4, either the topic or the set text and sometimes both.

When the Pre-U first started, I taught the *República española y guerra civil* through Sender's *Réquiem* and *¡Ay Carmela!* I really liked the third title too: Rodoreda's *La plaza del diamante*. In fact, I think it is a better novel than Sender's, but I feared the



pupils might get bogged down. We spent a lot of time studying the period through a variety of films and texts, including Loach's *Land and Freedom*, Ivens's *Spanish Earth*, Cuerda's *La lengua de las mariposas* and songs like *Si me quieres escribir* and *En la plaza de mi pueblo*.

I took a similar approach to *América Latina: justicia y opresión* and used the topic as a springboard to teach pupils about the Conquest of the Americas and then fast-forwarded to the twentieth century and issues surrounding injustice. We watched and analysed the set films *También la lluvia* and *Diarios de motocicleta*, which I supplemented with other texts and films: an entry from Columbus' diary, a chapter from Bartolomé de las Casas's *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*, Montesinos's sermon referred to in *También la lluvia*, an excerpt from Bernal Díaz del Castillo's *Conquest of New Spain*, an entry from Domitila Chúngara's diary *Si me permiten hablar*, passages from Mariátegui's *Siete ensayos*, an extensive summary of Galeano's *Las venas abiertas de América Latina*, an article by Hobsbawm about



Che Guevara as well as newspaper articles about the *Guerra del Agua* in Cochabamba and interviews with the directors Walter Salles and Icíar Bollaín.

Later in the year, we studied the political poems by Neruda, as well as a selection of his love poetry. Since we run a Sixth-Form trip to Cuba, we also watched *Soy Cuba*, that magnificent Soviet propaganda film, as well as Soderbergh's *Che: Part One*, tying in beautifully with the topic.

For a number of years I also taught *El cine de Pedro Almodóvar*. Instead of using the films as a vehicle to discuss Spanish history and politics, I focused much more on forensically dissecting those wonderful works of cinema and discovered that pupils really enjoy this. For nearly all of them, it is the first time they treat a film as if it were a literary text, and you can see the scales falling from their eyes when they spot, for instance, that in *Hable con ella* we see Benigno standing next to his mother's wedding photograph, which has been torn in half so that his father is missing, exactly as we have it in *Todo sobre mi madre*, where Esteban remarks that all his mother's photos are missing exactly what has been missing from his life: his father (*No quise decírselo, pero a mi vida le falta ese mismo trozo*).



One may wonder where I get the time to do all this. The answer lies in how we organise our Spanish teaching. In the Sixth Form, one of the teachers focuses exclusively on language – grammar, reading, discursive essays, listening, vocab tests – while the other teaches the topic in the Lower Sixth and literature in the Upper Sixth.

A good topic, in my mind, is a set of texts and films that coalesce around a theme or a period and provide ample opportunity for exploration, either in breadth, as I have done with the Civil War and Latin America, or in depth, as was the case for Almodóvar. As a teacher I am usually less attracted to very broad topics unless I like the texts enough to focus on each individually and then draw the strands together at the end. I remember doing this in French: we read Colette's *Le blé en herbe*, Romain Gary's *La vie devant soi* and watched *Toto le héros*, all loosely united

by the theme of youth and adolescence. What the lessons lacked in focus, they made up by offering the pupils a broader literary experience. This year I decided to teach *La mujer en el mundo hispano* and have started recycling some old material on the Civil War and will move on to ETA and, if we have time, the Mexican Revolution.

Because we teach the topic in Year 12, and because not all pupils have the required level to deal with more demanding literary texts within the topics, in Spanish (more so than in French) I often feel I must – *a regañadientes* – abandon some of the more interesting choices. A case in point was Rodoreda's *La plaza del diamante*, but I would also have hesitated to read Cela's *La colmena* or Arguedas' *Los ríos profundos* in the Lower Sixth, even though I think they are excellent texts.

Ideally, I study all three titles of the topic, but I have found that pupils often tend to revise for just two titles in the run-up to the exam, and when they have the choice of two films over one film and one text or set of poems, they will all go for that, even the more literary minded pupils. They simply see it as less work. The second year in which I taught *América Latina* with a weaker group I focused on the films, although we read some of Neruda's poems too.

On the whole, the syllabus' range of topics and accompanying texts and films has been good. The lists often contain texts and films with which I am unfamiliar, but to me that is an invitation to read and explore. If there were only evergreens on offer – I am thinking about Lorca, *Réquiem*, *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*, *Las bicicletas son para el verano*, etc. – it would soon start feeling like groundhog day.

One potential issue with less obvious choices is availability, although one can generally source these works through Spain (e.g. the Fnac or Corte Inglés websites – Cambridge can advise).

And finally, there are also some lovely texts and films that I hope will one day be on the syllabus. Examples are Carrasco's *Intemperie* or



films like *Biutiful*, *Machuca* or perhaps a selection of Buñuel's work. That is why I hope there will be many years of Paper 4 and many more excellent and exciting topics to come.

Spanish politics: no word for compromise

Late summer 2019: a government in Madrid falls because the two parties of the Left fail to agree a coalition – but then, no Spanish parties have ever managed to form a coalition at national level. Meanwhile in Catalonia, those who support independence pursue a vision for their region that is irreconcilable with that held by the half of the Catalan population that want to remain part of Spain.



Political theorists hypothesise about why Spanish politics is ‘adversary’, ie exhibiting a sometimes bitter rift in values, in contrast to, say, the British ‘adversarial’ tradition in which differences tend to be part of an opportunistic competition for political advantage. It has long been said that Spaniards’ overwhelming loyalty to their home area diminishes their interest in national cohesion. Some suggest that absolute Catholic values are at play in the long contest between conservative and progressive forces, making compromise difficult.

Recalling mistranslations of ‘compromise’ in language classes, I turn to the Oxford dictionary and find that the Spanish equivalent it offers is *acuerdo*, ‘agreement’, qualified by *mutuo* – surely a tautology (is an agreement ever not mutual?).

Acuerdo has been the appropriate term for the kind of formal, negotiated agreements that produced two outstanding examples of conflict resolution in Latin America: the 2016 *Acuerdo Final para la Terminación del Conflicto y la Construcción de una Paz Estable y Duradera* in Colombia, and the 1987 *Acuerdo de Paz de Esquipulas* that ended the Central America conflict. Did such formal agreements entail compromises, I wonder, or at that level of negotiation is it more a question of trade-offs – the *acuerdo con concesiones recíprocas* that the dictionary offers as the other translation of ‘compromise’?

On this side of the ocean we should not forget that recent Spanish history offers an example of one of the most unexpected and far-reaching political compromises ever achieved. I refer to the transition from dictatorship to democracy between 1975-78, which resulted not in an *Acuerdo* but in a *Constitución*. Much has been said about the debilitating effects of the *pacto del olvido* on which the Transition was based and the awful struggle to obtain information about, let alone justice for, victims of extrajudicial killings in the Civil War or under the dictatorship. But the Transition enabled ensuing generations to build, or rebuild, lives in a progressive democracy in a way that the preceding generation could hardly have dared to imagine.



Travel to Ávila on the *autopista*, passing the great cross of the Valle de los Caídos, and you can see in the cathedral cloister the tomb of the city's favourite son and architect of that Transition, Adolfo Suárez. The inscription reads simply *La concordia fue posible*. *Concordia*: a lyrical word imbued with associations of peace. Perhaps that is the type of 'compromise' now needed in Catalonia and Madrid. Let us choose to believe that the preterite *fue* does not indicate that the time for *concordia* has passed.

BAS editor Robin Wallis

Latin America: cycles of despond

We offer the following round-up in the knowledge that many students prepare speaking topics based on current affairs, and that they and their teachers may not always be in a position to monitor the Latin American news websites across the summer holidays. This is meant as a checklist of what's been going on.



Some might argue that in Argentina the re-election of Cristina Fernández de Kirchner (this time as Vice-President, with her former lackey Aníbal Fernández as President) marks another case of Argentine national self-harm. It may also be seen as a further instance of

the global trend whereby populists with scant respect for the rule of law have prevailed over more conventional candidates (Ms Fernández's seat in the Senate has sheltered her from trial for alleged corruption during her two terms as president).

Others will state that President Macri's defeat was further proof that imposing orthodox ('neo-liberal') economic policies in Argentina is inhumane and bound to fail.

Perhaps the most serious consequence of populist politics this year has been the destruction of large swathes of the Amazon, apparently inspired by the world view of Brazilian President Bolsonaro. Meanwhile Trump, the torchbearer for such populism, has further soured US-Cuba relations by ending the suspension of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act, thereby allowing US citizens to sue companies in Cuba believed to be using properties expropriated after the Revolution.



In Colombia a group of dissident members of the formally demobilised FARC (including its chief peace negotiator Iván Márquez) has announced its return to armed combat. The FARC's political party responded by expelling them. In Venezuela the attempted challenge to Maduro from 'interim president' Juan Guaidó has stagnated, not helped by the dismissal of his main backer in the Trump administration, John Bolton. Guaidó nobly sustains his campaign, but with the country's vast income from petroleum lining the pockets of the security forces, Maduro does not feel threatened.

October saw unrest rippling down the Andes. Ecuador was rocked by street protests led by an alliance of students, indigenous organisations and trades unions. The protests ended after the government agreed to reverse austerity measures and promote a national dialogue on controlling overspending and public debt.



Over one million people protesting in Santiago de Chile

Riots in Santiago de Chile, initially sparked by a hike in metro fares, expanded into a more widespread howl of anguish against inequality and injustice. After declaring a state of emergency and a curfew to contain the violence, President Piñera went on television to apologise for his and previous governments' *falta de visión* and to promise change.

Meanwhile in Peru a row between Parliament and the President led to each suspending the other. The solution? An early election. It couldn't happen here...

BAS editor Robin Wallis

Women in The Spanish Civil War

By Clodia Khullar, a Sixth Form student at Westminster School.

Following the fall of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship in 1930 and the establishment of the Second Republic the following year, the future of women in Spain looked positive. During El Bienio Socialista (1931-33) women's rights were extended to include divorce, access to higher education, maternity leave, civil marriage and the vote. This progress was rescinded by the Franco regime, which promoted traditional family-orientated roles for women, in accordance with the doctrines of the Catholic church.

The Civil War was a time of transition between these two models. Women's status changed in two major ways during the conflict: on the one hand there was a loss of female autonomy and power, which continued during the ensuing thirty-six years of Franco's dictatorship.



On the other hand, the War was also a time for women to show their true potential and make a palpable contribution to society, both on the Republican and Nationalist sides. Leading opposition groups, fighting on the front line, running the home as single mothers all meant that the image of women changed dramatically.



On the frontline women took on combat roles in large numbers for the first time in any western war. Women and children were also used by the army on both sides as bargaining chips to gain support internationally. Women would be lured out of their houses and their cries would be used as evidence of civilians under siege. Rape was so common that often women did not know the identity of their children's fathers.

On the one hand, the Spanish Civil War was a pivotal moment for women globally, as never before had their work on the frontline and within their communities been so desperately valued. Mujeres Libres was an

anarchist organisation that aimed to empower working-class women. It was initiated by Lucia Sanchez Saornil and Mercedes Composada who both felt disillusioned by the way in which women were treated by more mainstream socialist groups such as the CNT. Education was viewed as a key aspect of this, as they believed that educated women would be less likely to turn to prostitution. By 1936, Mujeres Libres had formed a unified network of anarchist activists and were ready to fight: they had even constructed a day-care service for mothers who supported the cause.

Some of the most inspirational women from the Civil War period came from the Republican camp, who, despite being on the losing side of the battle, still persisted in their struggle against Fascism. Las Trece Rosas were thirteen women executed at the hands of the Fascist regime for their membership of the Juventud Socialista Unida (United Socialist Youth). Though the war was at its end, the women were arrested and murdered without trial, dying as martyrs for their cause.



As well as building up resistance, ordinary women turned to prostitution as a way of making ends meet. Many had been left alone when their menfolk went to the frontline, leaving them for the first time to provide for their whole family. As explained by Mirta Núñez in her book *Mujeres Caídas*, the desperation that led to prostitution did not end with the war. Women were forced into sex work after the war as well, as a way to rebuild their lives. At the same time, prostitutes were harshly condemned, due equally to the staunchly Catholic views of the dictatorship and the increasing fear of sexually transmitted diseases.

Republican female prisoners often faced worse conditions than their male counterparts. Women were frequently raped by prison officers, their children taken from them and put into care or left to live on the streets. Nursing mothers had to deal with unsanitary conditions and even rats, leading to the deaths of ten to fifteen infants a day.

In summary, in other countries, such as England and France, women were rewarded for their enormous efforts during wartime. In Spain the opposite occurred: women lost rights and status in the wake of the conflict, only to regain them from the end of the dictatorship in 1975.

Estudiando Neruda: injusticia y opresión en la poesía del maestro chileno

Reportaje de Natalie Adie, Eliza Dean y Ruby Laming, estudiantes del Sixth Form de Fettes College.

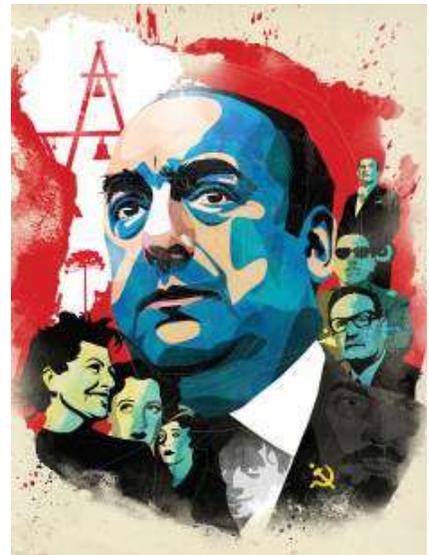


Lo que sigue explica nuestro entendimiento de los temas de la poesía y las creencias políticas de Pablo Neruda, el poeta chileno y ganador del Premio Nobel, después de hacer un estudio de sus obras escogidas en el currículo de Pre-U (Paper 4 – Justicia y Opresión en América Latina).

Neruda era valiente y decía la verdad. Su poesía habló a todas las generaciones e inspiró a otros por su contenido político. Por ejemplo, cuando era estudiante escribió en el periódico *Clarida* condenando el poco dinero que los trabajadores recibían.

Durante la Guerra Civil Española, Neruda publicó *Explico algunas cosas*, una obra inspirada en la muerte de su amigo Lorca y los horrores de la guerra. Neruda era comunista y en 1945 fue elegido senador del partido, pero en 1948 tuvo que esconderse porque el dictador Videla lo estaba cazando por sus críticas contra su gobierno.

Durante su exilio se publicó *Canto General*, una historia cuasi bíblica de América Latina. Más tarde regresó a su país natal como héroe, pero en 1973 un golpe militar se apoderó del país y Neruda murió poco después, algunos dicen de un corazón roto por ver que el círculo de la injusticia no se paraba.



Neruda hizo su obra para la gente común, y sus puntos de vista siempre eran negativos cuando estaba describiendo a los poderosos. Es posible argumentar que Neruda explotaba su reputación para criticar a las políticas del gobierno y usaba sus obras como propaganda, y para alentar a la gente para que se defendiera.

Antes de leer los poemas, hablábamos del contexto de cada uno para darnos una idea de qué trataba. Así aprendíamos en qué época escribía Neruda y qué eventos significativos ocurrieron durante ese tiempo. Cuando nos acercábamos a cada poema, identificábamos enlaces entre otros poemas y traducíamos las frases y palabras difíciles. Relacionábamos los poemas con la vida de Neruda y sus motivaciones, como la injusticia y sus creencias políticas. También, tratábamos de encontrar el propósito de los poemas; por ejemplo, Neruda frecuentemente llamaba a sus lectores a la acción.

La estrategia de discusión en grupo fue esencial para obtener el mejor entendimiento posible. En clase, tuvimos la oportunidad de discutir y elaborar los puntos clave del poema y agregamos alguna información importante que descubrimos a través de la colaboración. Estas discusiones sucedieron en español e inglés.

Para desarrollar un banco de respuestas, respondíamos a algunas preguntas sobre cada poema usando los puntos que habíamos hecho antes. Las respuestas eran de entre 150 y 250 palabras y normalmente nuestra profesora calificaba las respuestas antes de devolverlas. Ejemplos de las preguntas serían, “¿De quién es *El retrato en la roca*?” y “¿Cómo manipula Neruda el lenguaje para demostrar su disgusto con los políticos corruptos?”. Después de responder, nos hacía preguntas más amplias que comparaban todos los poemas o una idea que aparece en muchos de los poemas para que practicáramos el estilo de redacción apropiado para el examen.

*De combate en combate tu esperanza
se convirtió en precisas herramientas:
la solitaria lucha se hizo rama, el llanto
inútil se agrupó en partido.*

Fray Bartolomé de las Casas; Los Libertadores; Canto General

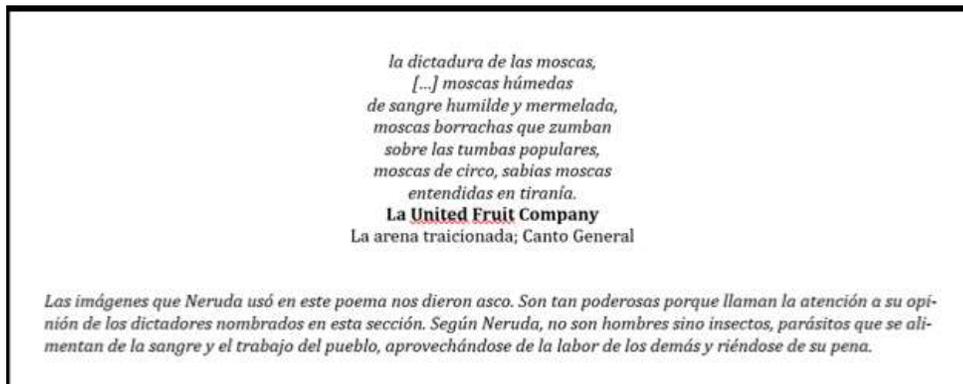
Este poema nos presentó un ejemplo poderoso de la solidaridad, un tema integral de la obra de Neruda. A pesar de haber vivido en otra época, Bartolomé se ha convertido en un símbolo de la lucha eterna contra la injusticia que todavía afecta a los trabajadores en el siglo XX. El mensaje queda claro: el individuo es vulnerable, pero los que se juntan tendrán el poder.

Después de haber estudiado las obras de Neruda, no hace falta decir que entendemos mejor el contexto en el que escribía su poesía. Nos interesó descubrir el mundo que presentó, a pesar de las dificultades y la opresión que él caracteriza a lo largo de sus poemas. Así ganamos una apreciación más profunda de la cultura latinoamericana.

Sin embargo, se podría decir que estos poemas solo nos dan una breve descripción de los muchos problemas por los que Neruda hizo campaña durante toda su vida.

El currículo los usa como manera de acercarse al tema de la injusticia y la opresión en Latinoamérica, y no incluye poemas más alegres (por ejemplo, las odas). La lucha que presenta Neruda tampoco es específica de las culturas latinoamericanas debido al clima político mundial en esa época.

Además, encontramos que una cualidad notable de la poesía de Neruda es su pertinencia al mundo de hoy, aunque *Canto General* fuera escrito entre 1938 y su publicación en 1950. Hay que tener en cuenta que, al ver la situación actual del mundo en la que el cambio climático presenta un riesgo enorme al futuro de nuestro planeta, las grandes compañías y los gobiernos del mundo tienen mucho poder que algunos explotan al continuar produciendo y utilizando materiales contaminantes. El problema ha alcanzado tales proporciones que está solo en sus manos la responsabilidad de reducir las emisiones de carbono y el consumo de plástico para que no veamos el fin del mundo en el año previsto por la ONU, 2030.

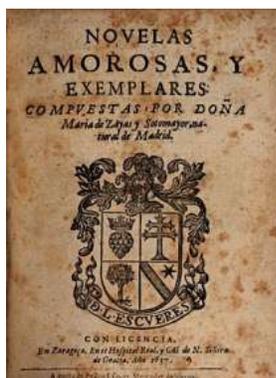


Nos lleva a pensar que esta situación refleja la que Neruda subraya en sus poemas, cuando describe la explotación del gobierno y de las grandes empresas hacia la gente común en poemas como *La United Fruit Company* y *Reciben órdenes contra Chile*, en los que destaca la impotencia de la gente ante problemas de una escala tan grande. Gracias al enfoque integral que tomamos en nuestras clases del análisis de todos los poemas en detalle, hemos desarrollado una comprensión más completa de los poemas de Neruda que debemos estudiar para el examen de Pre-U y su relación con el tema de la opresión en Latinoamérica.

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/pablo-neruda-a-selection-of-poetry-studies-for-the-spanish-pre-u-11910760>

María de Zayas, the Golden Age's best kept secret

When I was thinking about doing a PhD in Spanish literature, I knew I wanted to study the Golden Age but was also looking for something a little different. I wanted to stay away from towering giants like Cervantes, Calderón de la Barca, Lope de Vega, Quevedo, and so on. Not because I don't like them – I think they are wonderful – but because I found the idea of reading up on them simply overwhelming. And I had no idea what I could possibly contribute. As it happened, my *directora de tesis* was an art historian who worked on Juan de Pareja, an Afro-Spanish Golden Age painter. I thought I might do something similar but in literature, and found an Afro-Spanish writer and professor at the university of Granada – in sixteenth-century in Spain: how cool is that? – called Juan Latino. Unfortunately for me, as his name suggests, he wrote in Latin. Still, I was intrigued and I read a study about Black Africans in Renaissance Europe.



And there she was, in a footnote somewhere, hidden away in a throw-away remark about inter-race sexploitation. It said that this happens in one of the novellas of a certain María de Zayas y Sotomayor. It did not say which novella. So, I bought her first collection, the *Novelas amorosas y ejemplares*, first published in 1637, and began to read. The episode in question occurs in the fourth tale, in which Fadrique follows Beatriz to a stable where she brings some food to Antonio, a stable boy who is dying from sexual exhaustion. He berates her wanton behaviour – her “viciosa condición” and “viciosos apetitos” – and urges her to leave him alone and find herself a husband.



By the time I got to this story, I was hooked. Zayas has a way of drawing the reader in. In the very first novella, for example, a girl called Jacinta dreams of a handsome stranger, whom she meets in a dark forest (very Freudian). His face is hidden by a slip of his mantle, and when she lifts it up, she is stabbed in the heart and wakes up screaming. A few days later she meets the man from her dreams and gives herself over to him body and soul. Another story starts with a gentleman walking down the streets of Valladolid one cold winter's night. All of the sudden a door flies open and a large white bundle is tossed onto the street. He walks up to the squirming bundle, opens it and finds a naked woman, who proceeds to tell her story, which involves her murdering her brother-in-law, who had crept into her bed and made love to her pretending to be her husband.

Another woman likewise takes revenge on her treacherous lover and his bisexual girlfriend by stabbing them to death in their bed.

Zayas' tales not only contain female revenge stories but also abound in cross-dressing, rape and wife-murder or uxoricide, to give it its posh name. In addition, there are references to gay sex and lesbian desire. In one story, a boy called Esteban dresses up as Estefanía and for a whole year courts his beloved Laurela as a woman, throwing jealous hissy-fits and everything.

The aspect of the novellas that intrigued me most, but about which had been written the least (most scholarship understandably focuses on gender issues), was the supernatural. In twelve out of her twenty novellas something happens that can be classified as miraculous, marvellous (not the same thing, btw) or fantastic in the sense of uncanny, giving you the heebie jeebies.



In one story, a man is so in love with the beautiful Inés that he enlists the help of a Moorish necromancer (magician), who fashions a waxen statuette. By lighting a candle on its head, Inés will be inexorably drawn to her suitor (rapist) so he can have his wicked way with her, which is what happens for about a month. Until one night her brother catches her sleepwalking in the street, follows her, learns what has been going on and walls her up. Then there is the episode of the man who enters a basement to gain access to the house of four lascivious Portuguese sisters. He hears a voice telling him not to proceed. When he stumbles around, he finds an iron hook sticking out of the sand. He pulls on it only to find the detached head of a fresh corpse. In yet another story, a young man is on his way to his beloved, whom he courts in secret, and is likewise warned by a disembodied voice. When he enters her room, the windows inexplicably crash open and her dead body is illuminated by an unnatural light, while the blood is still flowing from her wounds even though she has been dead for nine hours.

And that is what I ended up doing my PhD on: the supernatural in María de Zayas. But who was this María de Zayas y Sotomayor? And how did she get away with these stories? The truth is, we don't know much about her. All we know for certain is that she was born in 1590 in Madrid and was active in literary circles in the same city and possibly also in Barcelona. In all likelihood she spent her late teens and early twenties in Naples, where her father worked for the Viceroy (Naples was ruled by the Spanish crown in those days).

Her novellas were very successful and she sold many copies. There were also pirated editions of her tales. Her work was adapted by foreign writers, among them the Frenchman Scarron, and sometimes passed off as having been written by Cervantes. She wrote one play that we know of, some poetry and two collections of novellas: one published in 1637, the other, much darker in tone, in 1647.

After that she disappears from the records without a trace. In the time she was writing her oeuvre, the novella was an enormously popular genre. Like many others, Zayas recycled old plots – in this sense she was no different from Shakespeare, for example – but invariably complicated them and made them more sensationalist, often adding a supernatural element. She also made her stories fit her outspoken feminist agenda. And we know she was a feminist because in her prologue she makes a point of saying that women are just as able as men, if not

more so. All they need are good teachers and books. And she rails against injustices and violence perpetrated on women.

But how did she get away with these racy stories? The answer is twofold, I think. One, the Inquisition was only interested in matters concerning the Catholic Faith, and so long as you did not doubt the Immaculate Conception or the Divinity of Christ or some such, you were relatively safe. The Holy Office was also remarkably lenient when it came to magic and witchcraft, much more so than its reputation would suggest; they largely saw it as superstition and something fraudsters engaged in.

The second part of the explanation lies in the title of the collection. These stories were meant to be exemplary, to offer a lesson on morality, even if that was probably just a hackneyed excuse. Moreover, Zayas plays a clever game with her readers. For every story in which witchcraft is supposedly true, there is another in which it is a hoax. And although most women are innocent victims, there are also some evil ones. In a literary trompe-l'oeil we never know where we stand, or Zayas for that matter. That makes her work very Baroque.

After her death, she was still read but no longer admired by other writers. Her sensationalist stories had become a kind of early modern pulp fiction and were published without the feminist passages. It was not until the end of the twentieth century that she was rediscovered. And about time too! There are some translations out there, so maybe it is time you discovered this hidden treasure of the Golden Age too.

BAS editor Dr Sander Berg

Almodóvar: Dolor y gloria (2)

Further to Alicia Bedoya's [review of *Dolor y gloria*](#) in our June edition, BAS editor Robin Wallis reflects on what the film tells us about Almodóvar.

Students of Almodóvar will find in *Dolor y gloria* an answer to the question that has dogged his *aficionados* for the past decade: why did he stop producing masterpieces?

At one level, *Dolor y gloria* answers this by being (to judge from the critical reception) the closest to a masterpiece that the director has produced since *Volver* in 2006.

Dolor y gloria provides an additional answer in its narrative, in which its director-protagonist is shown at a creative dead-end because of assorted physical ailments, mixed in with drug abuse and relationship problems.



The film's protagonist Salvador Mallo is not Pedro Almodóvar. But scriptwriter/director Almodóvar has made Mallo in his own image, and imbued him with many aspects of his own life story – among them the physical ailments of recent years (brought to life in the most visually striking sequence of the film).



The *autoficción* element of the script is dealt with head on when, with delightful irony, Mallo's elderly mother takes him aback with a dismissive remark about *la autoficción*. It is also addressed implicitly in the closing shot (spoiler alert rest of this paragraph), when we discover that the scenes played out between Mallo in his childhood and his mother are in fact part of a film that Mallo is now directing – thereby subverting the notion that they are representations of Almodóvar's own childhood.

Almodóvar debunked an autobiographical reading of this film in his press interviews around its launch. His comments were reminiscent of Vargas Llosa's prologue to *La tía Julia y el escribidor*, which refers to the use of a *collage autobiográfico* for the plot, and concludes that *el género novelesco no ha nacido para contar verdades, que éstas, al pasar a la ficción, se vuelven siempre mentiras*.

For *novelesco read cinematográfico* and we find Almodóvar taking a similar approach. However, unlike Vargas Llosa with *La tía Julia...*, in *Dolor y gloria* Almodóvar is approaching the end of his career: there is a sense of him unburdening himself of issues not fully tackled in his previous work (not least his sexuality).



The UK launch involved the most high-profile publicity for any Almodóvar work of this decade. He was interviewed (picturesquely flanked by Banderas and Cruz) in slots of up to 5 minutes on prime-time BBC and ITV news programmes – an accolade that no other artist in any Pre-U syllabus is likely to be accorded. His *devotos* will feel that their

faith has been justified by such *gloria*, despite the *dolor* of the long wait.

El fútbol y el cine: un parentesco íntimo

The powerpoint presentation which you can access through the *La pelota no se mancha* link below was given originally at the University of Salamanca at the kind invitation of Professor Guillermo Mira Delli-Zotti. In it, I explore some of the surprising similarities between the growth of football and the growth of cinema in



the modern world, including when they were born (end of the nineteenth century), their exponential growth in the twentieth century, their association with modernity, their similar industrial model as well as their use of 'soft power', their mutual interpenetration (via the filmic replay, for example), their status as a simulacrum, their creation of 'pundit armies', their lucrative success, the fierce competition between employers (film directors/football managers) and employees (actors/football players) and creation of a 'star system', and their ability to adapt to different cultural contexts and produce different discourses (French New Wave cinema vs. Hollywood, and the organisation-based German football model versus the skilful 'criollo' football played in Latin America).

Whether you are a fan of football or cinema, or neither, or both, I hope you will find some insights and/or entertainment in what follows.

BAS editor Stephen Hart

[HART LA PELOTA NO SE MANCHA](#)

El español de América

Coloquialmente llamamos ‘español de América’ a la lengua que se utiliza en el continente americano. Sin embargo, muchas veces nos referimos a este como si se tratara de una única variante que se opone al de España. Por ejemplo, en las películas se puede optar por español europeo o español ‘latino’. Pero ¿podemos hablar de dos únicas variantes?

Lo primero que hay que comprender es que el español no se habla igual en todo el mundo e incluso difiere dentro de un mismo país. En otras palabras, no hay un solo español, sino muchos. Esto no quiere decir que no puedas entender a alguien que habla un dialecto distinto del tuyo, pero puede que haya partes de su discurso que resulten confusas e incluso incomprensibles. ¿Por qué ocurre esto?



Un poco de historia

El español ha sufrido cambios a lo largo de la historia tanto en España como en América. De hecho, cuando el español se llevó a América, en el siglo XVI, ya había abundantes rasgos distintivos en el peninsular, debido a la coexistencia con otros pueblos y lenguas. Algo similar pasaría en América.

Las distintas variedades del español hablado en América serían el resultado del contacto con las sociedades de la zona antillana. En esta zona abundaban los mercaderes y soldados andaluces y, debido a este contacto, el español de América presenta rasgos fónicos propios de Andalucía, entre los cuales el seseo es el más significativo.



El español se tuvo que ir adaptando a cada territorio, condicionado por los anteriores habitantes de esa zona, y es por esto por lo que cada variante presenta principalmente un léxico diferente. Los indígenas añadieron a la lengua unidades léxicas que se tomaron como patrimoniales y forman parte de la norma trasplantada desde las islas.

A continuación exploraré brevemente algunos rasgos fonéticos y semánticos, para que se pueda comprender mejor la complejidad de las diferentes variedades de español habladas en América.

Rasgos fonéticos

En la fonética, hay rasgos que, aunque no son exclusivos de América, allí adquirieron otra dimensión y por eso es necesario reconocerlos:

El seseo:

Entre los más destacables está el seseo, ya que afecta a todos los países, sectores, clases sociales... Este consiste, de una manera simplificada, en la pronunciación de 's' para las grafías 'ce', 'ci', 'za', 'zo', 'zu'. De ahí que, solamente en algunas zonas de España se sitúe la minoría que todavía pronuncia 'gracias'.

Algunas curiosidades del seseo:

- Resulta bastante curioso cómo en algunos países como El Salvador o Costa Rica, hay hablantes que alteran el uso de s y z en su pronunciación.
- Además, cuando la 's' aparece en posición intervocálica se aspira en Cuba y en Santo Domingo. Es decir, en lugar de decir: "nosotros", dirían algo similar a "nohotros".

El yeísmo:

Cuando explico en clase a los alumnos de primero que 'y' y 'll' se pronuncian igual, obtengo las mismas reacciones que cuando yo era pequeña: ¿y por qué se escriben diferente?

Para la mayoría de estudiantes de español, este es uno de los grandes desconocidos. Al igual que en las variantes de la península, el yeísmo está totalmente extendido en América. La distinción entre 'y' y 'll' en España es nula (salvo en algunos pueblos de Castilla, principalmente), pero en Hispanoamérica se conserva, por ejemplo, en las tierras altas de Colombia, Chile, Argentina y Perú.

Rasgos semánticos

El léxico es el nivel lingüístico más permeable de la lengua, pues es en el léxico donde se producen mayores influencias de una lengua sobre otra. De hecho, el léxico es lo que hace más evidentes las diferentes variedades lingüísticas.

Cuando el español llegó a América, experimentó una serie de cambios para adaptarse a la nueva realidad y se fue alejando de la variante peninsular.

Al acomodarse a la nueva realidad, en ocasiones tomaron una palabra ya existente en español y la adaptaron a un objeto similar del nuevo mundo, por ejemplo, un 'gallinazo' era un ave similar a la gallina pero de mayor tamaño. Otro de los rasgos léxicos del español de América es el uso de palabras arcaicas, como 'lindo' con el concepto de 'bueno'.

Sin embargo, los mayores cambios con respecto al peninsular y entre las distintas variedades estuvieron causados por la influencia de las lenguas indígenas:

- Del **arahuaco**: canoa, barbacoa, cacique, caoba, huracán, hamaca, maíz...
- Del **caribe**: butaca, caimán, caribe, curare, loro, manatí, piragua...

Con palabras regionales como: areita, bohío, cutara...

- **Nahuas**: cacahuete, cacao, chicle, chocolate, tiza...
Las regionales son: guachinaga, achiote, otle, papalote, jacal, ejote...

- **Quechua**: canche, puma, papa, coca...
Las palabras regionales propias son: cocha, puna, chocio, guaca, guagua, porongo...



Otras lenguas también tuvieron un fuerte impacto en el léxico de la zona, algo que lo distancia cada vez más del peninsular:

- **Afronegrismos**: banana, bembe, bongo, jandinga, quilombo, ñame...
- **Lusismos**: bosto, pálpito, garúa, fariña, bichoco, changador...

- **Italianismos:** bacán, chao, pasticho...

Si hablamos de léxico, es imperativo mencionar **los anglicismos**, puesto que presentan diferentes zonas de influencia y dos vías de presentación: los ojos, mediante la lectura, y los oídos, mediante los sonidos. Hay dos grandes tipos de anglicismos: los préstamos y los calcos.

Los *préstamos* se dan en distintos grados de aclimatación, los préstamos crudos pasan tal cual a la lengua (con la grafía inglesa), y otros pueden estar más o menos adaptados a la lengua, dando lugar incluso a familias léxicas:

Bife, account, chance, jumper, baby, barbacoa, broder, laundry/londri, lonche (lunch), guachimán (watchman), bisne (business), bicha (bitch)...

Los *calcos* son palabras que parten de la formación inglesa pero utilizan palabras del español.

Altoparlante (loud speaker), abanico eléctrico (electric fan), andado (walker), aplicación (application), argumento (argument), caracteres (characters)...

Hoy en día, el español peninsular difiere del americano y esta diferencia está fuertemente marcada por la gran presencia actual del inglés en el habla hispana. Aunque en su origen las distintas lenguas indígenas y los afronegrismos marcaron más fuertemente el español de las zonas, la presencia de estos es bastante pequeña ahora. Sin embargo, se encuentra en las palabras básicas de cada variedad de español.

DIFERENCIAS DE VOCABULARIO EN ESPAÑOL					
Argentina	Chile	México	Venezuela	España	Uruguay
Picadito	Picoteo	Beñana, antelito	Patapalo	Todo (de cosas)	Picada
Lavadero	Lavadero	Lavamanos	Lavamanos	Lavabo	Pileta
Pancho	Hol dog	Hol dog	Pera caliente	Pancho caliente	Pancho
Concheta	Culca	Pesa	Silva	Fija	Cheto
La reconocida de la boca	Pachaj	Chingada masal	Coño de la madre	Mando Me caga en todo	La puta madre que me pagó
Chaucho	Pancho verde	Bote	Vanilo	Judo verde	Chaucho
Bimbocho, bibe	Cadón	Chonan, caonon, pancho	Paridieta, blumar	Bruga	Santochas, fanga
gitalar	¡Alar!	¡Bueno!	¡Alar!	¡Dico!	gitalar
Colectiva	Mora, bus, lebre	Camión	Buseta, canito	Autobús	Omnibus
Estar sin un mango	Estar pata	Estar sin un cuarto	Estar en la luna	Estar sin blanca	Estar en plata
Chango, changuita	Pololo, pololito	Ternero, trabajo, ternero	Rebucado, figa	Trozo, tropezado	Trocado, zafra

En la semántica, hay algunas palabras que están extendidas por las variedades americanas y se oponen al término peninsular como dinero/plata, patata/papa, móvil/celular, ordenador/computadora, contaminación/polución, fresa/frutilla, tirar/botar. Es también curioso como otras aunque existan en ambos, cambian su significado; por ejemplo, si en un restaurante pides una tortilla en España no tendrá nada que ver con la que puedes pedir en México. Algunos ejemplos donde hay mayor variedad léxica se

pueden encontrar a continuación:

- Camiseta, pololo, playera..
- Jean, vaquero, tejano, blue jeans...

- Falda, pollera, saya, enagua, mediofondo...
- Panties, blúmer, bombacha, braga, calzón, panti, pantaleta...
- Automóvil, coche, carro o autocar

Consideraciones finales

Al igual que el español peninsular es variado, en América, cada variedad agrupa sus propias características que lo asimilan y diferencian de otras. Nuestros queridos amigos de ‘qué difícil es hablar el español’ ya reconocen esa gran diversidad de América, así que si no has visto el vídeo lo recomiendo y dejo aquí abajo.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eyGFz-zljHE>

No podemos entender el español de América como una sola variante, al igual que tampoco podemos referirnos al de España como uno. Cuando escuchas a un colombiano, argentino, cubano o mexicano, si no supieras español, te parecería que hablan diferentes lenguas, porque realmente suenan diferente. Entonces saquémoslos de esa casilla de ‘español de América’, y refirámonos a estos como ‘españoles de América’.

Belén Alonso

