

Research interest

My research interest is based essentially –besides my articles— on seven books: **a)** one scholarly book (second one forthcoming), **b)** four books of creative writing, **c)** one staged play, **d)** one book of translation. In order to bring to fruition all of these published works, I have had to spend a considerable amount of time in the archives of Spanish libraries (National Library, National Periodicals Library, Garcia Lorca Foundation Archives, María Zambrano Foundation Archives) and Chilean libraries (National Library, University of Chile Library, Archives of the National Congress, and Neruda Foundation Archives), researching –my creative writing is based also in research —and reading through numerous documents and literary texts.

a) Scholarly co-edited book: *Pablo Neruda: Yo respondo con mi obra (1930-1959)*, published by Salamanca University Press, 2004, one of the most prestigious presses in our profession. [The second volume, titled *Pablo Neruda: Al pueblo con mi acción y mi poesía (conferencias, discursos, cartas, declaraciones, entrevistas, 1960-1973)* is forthcoming, and will be published also by the Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca.] *Yo respondo con mi obra...* is an annotated edition (with an extended number of explanatory notes about the texts and the social context in which they were written), and preceded by a long introduction. In this introduction I analyze Neruda's poetic and political evolution. This book is the result of numerous years of discovery and recovery of an important number of unknown and lost texts written by Pablo Neruda and never before published in book form; not even in the *Complete Works*, a two volume work by the distinguished Nerudean scholar Prof. Hernán Loyola. In fact, my coeditor and I provided the famous editor of these volumes with very important pieces for his publication. I received recognition from the Neruda Foundation and from the most important literary agency in the Hispanic World, Carmen Balcells' Literary Agency. For the University of Salamanca Press and its reviewers, the manuscript was considered an important contribution to the studies of the 1971 Nobel laureate poet, and they decided to publish the book. At present, my co-researcher and I are finishing a second volume of Neruda's writings (1960-1973) to be sent to the same publishing house in November 2016. This second volume is another collection of unknown texts that were lost in old newspapers and journals in Latin America and Spain. I believe that the volume already published and the one forthcoming constitute an important and major contribution to Nerudean studies.

b) Four books of creative writing:

b.1. *La Colonia del Retiro (memorias cursis de un niñobien)*, Endymion Press, Madrid, 2015, is a collection of vignettes about a snobbish upper middle class neighborhood during the early post-Spanish Civil War years in Madrid. This book is the story of the coming of age of an adolescent living in a well-defined *idyllic* territory called La Colonia that, little by little, becomes less limited. As the main character-narrator grows, he pushes the boundaries of his territory and discovers the transgressions made by some peculiar people. This discovery pushes him to trespass beyond the established borders and limited territory and become part of the group of transgressors. In this *idyllic* territory, parents become transgressors in their own hidden adult space and, at the same time, while representing the official system, monitor the emerging adolescent transgressors. This book is based in my research on Spanish history during the dictatorial government (1939-1975) led by the Nazi sympathizers. The main goal of this book is

to present how a repressive society negatively influences young people to become rebels, or a type of social kamikazes lost in that repressive society.

b.2. *Philippics (Letters from Las Batuecas)*, Huerga y Fierro Press, Madrid, 2005.

Technically speaking this book belongs to the epistolary genre, and is a product of my research on four epistolary books from the eighteenth century because it was then when this genre gained popularity: Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*, Cadalso's *Moroccan letters*, Voltaire's *Philosophical Letters or Letters Regarding the English Nation*, and Moratin's *Epistles*. This book is a collection of letters written by an unknown writer visiting an imaginary place called Las Batuecas (which in Spanish refers to a poor and underdeveloped territory). This traveler-writer sends letters to a variety of addressees: from family members to friends to important public figures, describing to them what s/he sees in Las Batuecas and how this *unique* space relates with his/her own native country (an alert reader will easily "discover" where Las Batuecas are located, and where the letters are sent to). But my book adds a novelty to the epistolary genre. The title *Philippics* comes not from the eighteenth century writers, but from the IV century BC orator Demosthenes who wrote another type of epistolary genre from which my book took the name: *Philippics*, public political speeches advising the Athenian people of the danger that Philip the II of Macedon, the tyrant, represented against Athens democracy. In my book my intent was to apply the irony and wit of the four eighteenth century writers and also Demosthenes' political denunciation. This literary-technical gadget helped me to create a discourse against the tendency towards tyrant worshipping against present day democracies. Considering the general political turmoil at our present time (2016) this book, published in 2005, has some kind of prophetic power.

b.3. *Nefertiti's Nose and Other Poems*, Huerga y Fierro Press, Madrid, 2000, is a collection of *shortsonnets*. Let me briefly explain the theory behind this book --not exempt of irony, which has been, as I said above, an important presence in my writing. When I started this project years ago, my two main goals for the creation of this book--which does not mean that I have been successful at achieving them-- were: a) *A deconstruction of the lyrical adjective*. Art, we know, is the great bank of subjectiveness. This is so because art, in its essence at least since the 1800's, is the triumph of the individual versus mass production. In the case of literature, or more specifically, poetry, it is the triumph of the idiolect versus adulterated language. What I tried in this poetic experiment was to eliminate subjectivity by *deconstructing* the lyrical adjective, which led me sometimes to the creation of either neologic adjectives or to the recovery of forgotten ones. The sextant in this long literary journey was Góngora's *Soledades* (1613). b) *A diversified dimension of time and space*. How, you will ask, to diversify *time* and *space*, two entities that are fused per se. If we exist, it is because we are *here* (space) and *now* (time). How, then, to modify Einstein's un-modifiable time as the fourth dimension? (In the separate Research document in this dossier there are some answers to these questions.) The only thing I can add now is that I feel very proud saying that I am the creator of a new poetic genre, even though it took me 10 years as Ovid recommended. I can proudly say, again --probably for my disgrace: the beautiful Nefertiti's nose becomes a noseless Katrina-- that there are no *shortsonnets* but mine.

b.4. *Accidents and Other Resources*, Libertarias Press, Madrid, 1990. The title of this book takes us to a dilemma: is the accident a resource or do the resources provoke the accidents? What I tried in this book was to project how the dark paraphernalia of things (senseless objects, technology, vigilant cameras, mass media, video games, you name it) has become the law and is in control of human lives. By using such a manipulating, alienating and very sophisticated technique, such a law produces resources not to eliminate accidents but to provoke them. In this

book I investigate the accidental law –or legal accident— that at the same time imposes freedom and prohibition so that citizens can always, at any time, be exposed for conviction. The “poetic I” of this book moves/crawls/sinks/stands up to finally denounce --in a strange exorcism-- that the only permitted existential liberty at the present time is the one codified in poetry. At the same time, this “poetic I” alerts to the reader that the motto *ars gratia artis* or, in our case, *poetry for poetry’s sake*, is wrong. Poetry is just a resource: a tool that provokes accidents.

c) One staged play: *The Blue Eustachian Tube, a Lorquian Farce in 1992 Scenes*. This play, as the title insinuates, is a farce of the (in)famous Quincentenary Celebration (1992) of the Spanish Conquest of the Americas. This project was made possible thanks to the subvention of the National Endowment for the Arts (\$20,000), Texas Commission for the Arts (\$3,300) and DiverseWorks of Houston (\$3,000). I have included the description and the documentation of this play in the separate Research document in this dossier.