

Introduction

I have been teaching in High Schools for about eight years now, both in the United States and Spain. When I ask myself what is the task of the teacher in general, I remember Derrida's words in the *University Without Condition*: "the profession of the professor is to devote himself to the truth, unconditionally". I am quoting from memory. In that text Derrida is talking about truth in both a theoretical and moral sense, in a theoretic-moral sense, if I remember correctly. At bottom I believe they are indistinguishable. I still remember the faces and names of my first students at my High School in Salt Lake City.

There is something about beginnings that makes them unforgettable, especially when they have to do with your vocation, in my case teaching. I am saying this because this issue of Coolabah is the result of my first experience teaching at University level, in 2008. I owe this first experience to Susand Ballyn. Since then I have been collaborating with the Australian Studies Centre, and it has always been and continues to be a great intellectual and personal experience. Three contributors to this issue, Giada Cacciavilni, Victoria Dimitrova and Pedro Fernández were some of my students in that first class. A teacher who begins is a student of his pupils, he has a lot to learn from them. I have to thank them for bearing with me. So I was also present when Stephanos Stephanides and Gloria Montero came to talk about their work. Susan was back to teaching again, but I continued attending the classes. Stephanos Stephanides mentioned something about Heidegger I can't remember, but I do remember that his words illuminated my mind and I felt elated (in a theoretic-moral sense). I felt I knew more than everybody else about whatever it was he was talking about. Some people have that gift, they "touch" you. I have also met Gloria Montero several times since then. I like the way she calls everybody "darling" and her gypsy look. I always have the feeling that she can see inside things and people. I am also thankful to Susan because that first class I taught at Barcelona University will have a visual outcome with this issue, a "sign" that will always remind me of that beginning.

I would like to thank all the contributors for their work, and also Bill Phillips, Laura López, Kate Russell and María Isabel Seguro. Giada's incisive article analyzes how Katherine Philips, Aphra Behn, and Sylvia Plath subvert the stereotypical role assigned to women in society, especially regarding marriage. My own contribution is on the role of writing in the constitution of culture. Then follows Lachalns Brown and Stephanos Stephanides poetry, translated by Bill Phillips (Catalan), Laura López (Spanish) and Victoria Dimitrova (Bulgarian). Lachaln Brown's and Stephanos Stephanides' contributions were the result of their visit to the Centre d'Estudis Australians in Barcelona, and we are all very grateful to them for their generosity and contribution. Next there comes an extensive interview with Gloria Montero, skilfully carried out by Pedro Fernández, where Gloria Montero talks about his autobiographical novel *All These Wars* and also about his fictional novel *Villa Marini*. Finally, there follow three book reviews: *An Exercise In Google*, by Bill Philips; *Australia and Galicia: Defeating the Tyranny of Distance/Australia e Galicia: vencendo a tiranía do afastamento*, by Kate Russell; and *Joan London, The Good Parents*, by María Isabel Seguro.

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