

Manuel Hueso Vasallo – University of Málaga

Abstract:

In her ground-breaking work *Queer Phenomenology* (2006), Sara Ahmed established that “[o]rientations are about the direction we take that puts some things and not others in our reach” (56). Following this trend of thought, this seminar addresses the potential benefits of combining Queer studies and Victorian literature to inspect and study alternative approaches to the ways in which dissident sexualities have been articulated outside of the legal and medical discourses that dominated the later part of the nineteenth century. In the seminar, I will focus on how aesthetic discourse in the literary works of Henry James - and, more specifically, in Roderick Hudson (1875) - can be read, in fact, as an orientation willingly taken by the author to inspect a (queer) reality that was not often within a normative “reach”. By using art, references to both Ancient Greece and the Renaissance, and, in general, an aesthetic sensibility developed from the works of Walter Pater, James manages to re-orientate both himself and his readers towards a set of symbols, stories, and tropes through which to potentially articulate, inspect or discuss their own sexualities in a liberatory way that defies the usually negative implications of contemporary medico-legal discourses.

The seminar will address these re-orientations through both an outline of the theories that support it and by analysing some fragments from James’ later texts that show how they work.

Biography:

Manuel Hueso Vasallo is a PhD candidate at the University of Málaga (Spain). He holds a BA degree in English Studies as well as two MAs degrees: one in English Studies and Culture and another in Teaching and Education. He was an associate lecturer at the University of Málaga from 2018 to 2020, teaching Victorian Literature and North-American History among other subjects. He is currently the depositor of a research grant fully funded by the Spanish ministry of Education and Research.

Works Cited:

Ahmed, Sara. *Queer Phenomenology*. Duke University Press, 2006.