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Renate Haas, ed. *Rewriting Academia: The Development of the Anglicist Women's and Gender Studies of Continental Europe*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2015. (Open Access.) Pp 442. ISBN 978-3-631-66985-3.

This volume, which complements Renate Haas' research on the history of English Studies in Europe (2000/2008),¹ offers an insightful examination of the connection between Women's and Gender Studies and English Studies in the European academic environment. In the introduction, Haas points out that the "academic institutionalization" of Women's and Gender Studies "coincided with the so-called linguistic turn" (11), and "the rise" of this discipline "in Europe ran parallel with the processes of globalization and thus with an enormous boost of English and its international functions" (11), with English both as a *lingua franca* and a *lingua academica* in Europe. Therefore, Haas explains that one of the purposes of this study has been to determine to what extent Rosi Braidotti's 2002 claim that "the terminology and the bulk of the scholarship in Women's [and Gender] Studies have been generated in English-speaking cultures and traditions" (12) might be true. At the same time, for a more in-depth comprehension of the intricate academic milieus in various European countries, Haas asks for a broad definition and understanding of such key terms as Women's and Gender Studies and English Studies in the European context. The four parts of the volume include sixteen national surveys (from Southern, Western and Central, Northern, and South-Eastern and Eastern Europe), which highlight key moments in the history of the Women's Movement in each country and examine the specific political, economic, and cultural contexts that have impacted the development and institutionalization of Women's and Gender Studies in general, and of Anglicist Women's and Gender Studies in particular.

The first part focuses on Southern Europe, with surveys from Portugal, Spain, and Italy. Ana Gabriela Macedo and Margarida Esteves Pereira state that in Portugal the institutionalization of Gender Studies has been a challenging process that achieved "a new institutional visibility"

after 1990 (40), although, in spite of the significant amount of research in several disciplines, such as Law, Economics, Sociology, History and Philosophy, this area is often not considered “an autonomous academic discipline” (44). Furthermore, the fact that in Literary Studies and Linguistics “the major output” comes from English Studies departments points to the productive relationship between English Studies and Women’s and Gender Studies in the Portuguese universities during the last twenty five years (45). Esther Álvarez López, Isabel Carrera Suárez, and Carla Rodríguez González point out the political dimensions of the institutionalization process of Women’s Studies in Spain in the late 1970s and claim that, similar to Portugal, Women’s Studies emerged from “grassroots feminism introduced into universities through the efforts of committed lecturers and researchers” (54). They conclude that the role of Anglicist feminists in Spain has been two-fold: to wield significant “influence in Spanish Women’s Studies” and to strengthen “international networks for Women’s Studies in Spanish universities” (82). In her survey on Italy, Vita Fortunati underscores the role of culture (oral culture and cultural memory) and biography as frequent and relevant research topics in Italian Women’s and Gender Studies, but she also maintains that, in spite of the courses, seminars, graduate programs and significant research projects in this academic area, “there is a great gap between the high level of specialization and originality of the research in Women’s and Gender Studies and its invisibility as an institutionalized discipline” (99).

The second section brings together surveys from France, Belgium, Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, and a very brief essay from Croatia. Florence Binard points out that, in France, like in other Western European countries, at first, Women’s and Gender Studies “developed ‘bottom-up,’ from the Woman’s Liberation movement” (128) of the 1970s, emphasizing the role played by Hélène Cixous during the “institutionalisation of feminist/ feminine studies in France” (115). Binard further argues that “the development of women’s and gender studies in French English studies has benefitted from the latter’s pluridisciplinary nature, but it has relied on individual than institutional goodwill,” noting that the next important step is to make the current and future gender research in French English departments more visible “so that this field be assessed on scientific grounds rather than on (un)acknowledged or (un)conscious biases” (129). Tracing the development of Women’s and

Gender Studies in Belgium, Marysa Demoor states that issues of gender equality became more prominent in the 1970s; academic centers for women's studies started being established in the late 1980s, followed by the research centers at various Belgian universities in the 1990s and by collaborative academic research projects carried out by "the first generation of women fighting for equal opportunities" (137).

Haas offers a comprehensive survey of the history of the Women's Movement in Germany, mentioning the four significant stages of development of Women's and Gender Studies: the first phase started in 1968 (influenced by France and the US), followed by the first professorship in Women's Studies and the publication of several gender-oriented journals in the 1980s, then the "professionalization" of Women's Studies in the early 1990s, and the fourth stage, since 1997, "normalization": "reaching the status of a normal academic discipline" by "introducing separate Women's and Gender Studies programs at undergraduate level and new interdisciplinary research centers" (149). After a detailed analysis of the remarkable social potential displayed by early Anglicist Women's and Gender Studies, Haas concludes with an in-depth examination of the current state of Anglicist Women's and Gender Studies in Germany, pointing to the reasons for their "low visibility" in spite of significant research projects, important publications (scholarly journals, books), and relevant coursework (159). Susanne Hamscha remarks that in Austria, similar to Germany, Women's and Gender Studies as interdisciplinary fields of research developed in the late 1960s, as a result of the second-wave feminism at American universities (171), fostered by English and American Studies departments. She points out that "the last decades [since 1990] have seen a steady growth and institutional acceptance of Women's and Gender Studies" (171), with research centers and academic programs at several universities (179). However, in her opinion, notwithstanding the assiduous contribution to research, publication, and the gender-focused coursework of several individual professors from various Austrian universities, the process of institutionalization of Gender Studies in Austrian English Studies which peaked in the early 2000s, has decreased in the last few years, and it has been "a slow and tedious process" (191) so far. Věra Eliášová, Simona Fojtová, and Martina Horáková claim that in the Czech Republic, similar to other European countries, "the field [of both Women's and Gender

Studies and Anglicist Women's and Gender Studies] is kept alive . . . mostly by women scholars and professors" (212), and they emphasize the crucial roles played by "foreign educational institutions and international collaborations" in developing Anglicist Women's and Gender Studies. The authors conclude that despite gender-oriented courses and research, there is no "systematic tendency to ensure that feminist and gender-based analyses are an integral part of English and American studies" (215)," but they are also optimistic because the gender-related research so far has advanced the development of Gender Studies in general and in English Studies departments.

The third part comprises surveys from Sweden, Finland, and Lithuania. Mia Liinason remarks that the institutionalization of gender research in Sweden has been considered a success, as various academic disciplines (social sciences, medicine, and technology) have created "sustainable gender research environments" (233). Nevertheless, the situation of gender research in the language sciences (established during the 1970s) seems similar to Austria, as it was "strong, popular, vibrant and independent" in the early 2000s but decreased at the end of the 2000s (234). Gender Studies in Finland, like in Sweden, "is a highly institutionalized field of academic inquiry," according to Elina Valovirta and Joel Kuorti. They claim that Women's and Gender Studies were established in the universities in the 1980s and 1990s; in the 2000s, "the status of a major subject was granted" (248); still, there is a discrepancy between the abundance of research projects, activities, and programs in Gender Studies at national level and the situation of Gender Studies "within English Studies," although there has been a strong interest in feminist analysis, women's writing and gender at the most important Finnish universities (254). Marija Aušrinė Pavilionienė underscores the roles played by the Lithuanian Association of University Women, restored in 1991, and the Women's Studies Centre established at Vilnius University in 1992 as key organizations that furthered the development and institutionalization of Women's and Gender Studies, noting the academic progress made both in Women's and Gender Studies and in the coursework of English departments (with a particular focus on women's writing).

The last section includes national surveys from Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Armenia. Aleksandra Izgarjan and Dubravka Djurić

maintain that, as a result of “the antiwar and anti-regime activities” in the early 1990s, women’s studies and women’s activism shaped each other and also “the Serbian political scene” (322), but they also remark that in the early 2000s the focus started being placed again on education with a view to making “gender studies part of the universities and their curricula,” as the examples of the research centers at the universities of Novi Sad and Belgrade demonstrate (322). Regarding Women’s and Gender Studies in Romania, Ana-Karina Schneider and Corina Selejan start with an insightful historical survey of important women who left a noteworthy legacy for contemporary Romanian women. After highlighting significant moments in the activity of key women/ educators who have shaped both the history of English Studies and the contemporary process of institutionalization of Women’s and Gender Studies in Romania, Schneider and Selejan point to the gender-related activity at different Romanian universities (even if not in autonomous centers for Gender Studies), emphasizing the impressive legacy of scholarly publications, as well as the significant research activities within the existing Gender Studies centers, and underscoring the seminal activity of dedicated women academics, who, against all odds, have contributed to the shaping of Anglicist Women’s and Gender Studies in this country. Further south, Milena Katsarska points out that Gender Studies have developed as an academic field in Bulgaria especially in the past two decades, underscoring the positive impact that Gender Studies had on English departments and noting that the curriculum in English Studies “reflect[s] the wider institutionalization of Gender Studies in the country” both at undergraduate and graduate levels (383). Finally, Seda Gasparian and Gayane Muradian state that in Armenia the inclusion of various gender courses at university level were the result of dedicated faculty members or of the activity of women’s centers. Still, as Anglicist Women’s and Gender Studies are not very visible yet, in spite of dedicated interest, the authors hope that the Centre for Gender and Leadership Studies at Yerevan State University (set up with the help of USAID/ Armenia and Arizona State University in 2013), will help Gender Studies programs to “develop into a fully institutionalized discipline in all university fields, including English Studies” (399).

As Haas explains in the conclusion to the volume, one of the intentions of this study was “to give greater visibility to the Continental

achievements for the enrichment of international exchange” by illustrating “the impressive variety of Continental Women’s and Gender Studies in general and in English Studies in particular” (405). In this context, she mentions the current academic conditions in the European universities in terms of “the academic establishment of women” (411) as one of the factors that has hindered but perhaps also encouraged the institutionalization of Women’s and Gender Studies, but she also highlights the significant roles played by the European Union during the institutionalization process (by funding research projects and creating supporting academic and educational programs), as well as the impact of academic associations such as ESSE (The European Society for the Study of English) and EAAS (The European Association for American Studies) in the development of Anglicist Women’s and Gender Studies.

By examining critically the specific contexts and the historical, political and cultural circumstances of their countries, the authors of each survey have offered a nuanced analysis that brings out the diversity and the challenges, but also the unfaltering dedication of past and present women academics in the process of developing and institutionalizing an important academic field. The volume underscores the significant steps and phases undergone so far during the process of institutionalizing Anglicist Women’s and Gender Studies in Europe, but it also signals to new points of departure and opens future avenues of research, perhaps for the new generation of scholars, eager to maximize the valuable work done in the university until now and to continue the process of institutionalization of Anglicist Women’s and Gender Studies in order to bring about significant changes at local and global level, particularly regarding the changing status, roles, and responsibilities of women in the new millennium.

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Note:

¹ *European English Studies: Contributions towards the History of a Discipline*. Ed. Balz Engler and Renate Haas. Leicester: The English Association, for ESSE. Vol. I (2000). Vol. II (2008).