MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 5, 2007

TO: Participants, NEH Workshop hosted by the Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville

FROM: Russell M. Wyland
NEH Division of Research

SUBJECT: Materials for upcoming workshop

I look forward to joining you for an NEH application writing workshop on January 11. The workshop will be divided in two sessions: a general information session (1:15 - 2:45 pm) and a mock review panel (3:00 - 4:30 p.m.). Materials for the information session will be distributed at the event itself. The two sample applications for use in the mock panel are attached below. I encourage you to review the materials in advance. For reasons of confidentiality, I have omitted the résumés and the letters of recommendation for this exercise. Panel procedures across the NEH are very similar, and the concerns of peer review panelists are remarkably consistent from one program to another. I have chosen to use individual grant applications because they have the virtues of being short enough to allow easy distribution and group evaluation. If you are interested in others programs, please don't be shy about asking.

As you read these applications, please keep in mind that they have been selected for a particular purpose, that is, to give workshop participants a chance to consider different proposals with different approaches. They are not intended to serve as models to be slavishly followed, nor are they intended, by virtue of their subjects, to suggest particular areas of special Endowment interest. Applications for NEH awards are as diverse, in both subject matter and methodology, as the applicants who submit them.

If you want to "play along" with the mock review, you should start by reviewing the published "Evaluation Criteria" for the applications (below). For each application, indicate an initial rating using the fellowships rating scale (also below) and write two or three sentences about the virtues-if any—and shortcomings—if any—you've found. The ratings and comments will be the starting point for our discussion about what does and doesn't "work" in applications.

Again, thank you for your participation. I look forward to the opportunity to visit the Edwardsville, and I am grateful to SIUE and WUSTL for making it happen.
If you have any questions in advance of the workshop, do not hesitate to let me know. My email address is rwyland@neh.gov.

Additional materials
   Evaluation Criteria (below)
   Useful Links and Rating Scale (below)
   Sample applications
Evaluation Criteria

Guidelines

Fellowships are opportunities for individuals to pursue advanced work in the humanities. Applicants may be faculty or staff members of colleges or universities, or of primary or secondary schools, and scholars and writers.

Projects may contribute to scholarly knowledge or to the general public's understanding of the humanities. Recipients might eventually produce scholarly articles, a monograph on a specialized subject, a book on a broad topic, an archaeological site report, a translation, an edition, or other scholarly tools.

Fellowships support projects that can be completed during the tenure of an award or those that are part of a long-term endeavor.

Applicants need not have advanced degrees, but only scholars who have completed their formal academic training are eligible to apply. NEH Fellowships do not support projects to study teaching methods or theories. Neither do they support surveys of courses and programs or the preparation of institutional curricula.

The following criteria are used in evaluating applications for NEH Fellowships:

Evaluators are asked to apply the following criteria in evaluating applications:

1. The intellectual significance of the project to the humanities, including its potential contribution to knowledge and learning.

2. The quality or promise of quality of the applicant's work as an interpreter of the humanities.

3. The quality of the conception, definition, organization, and description of the project.

4. The feasibility of the proposed plan of work and the likelihood that the applicant will complete the project.
Useful Links

http://www.neh.gov - NEH homepage on the Internet
http://www.neh.gov/whoweare/overview.html - overview of the Endowment
http://www.neh.gov/prism/default.htm - sign up to be a NEH reviewer

Rating Scale

E - Excellent
E/VG
VG – Very Good
VG/G
G – Good
G/S
S – Satisfactory
S/N
N – Not Recommended
**Project Title**  
The Woman at the Window: The Moorish-Spanish House and Hispanic Women's Literature

**Grant Period**  
From June 2005 To July 2005

**Field of Project:** Literature

**Description of Project**  
This project explores the connections between the traditional architecture of the Spanish-Moorish house and women's literature in the Spanish-speaking world. I will write two chapters of a book that explores how the particular features of this domestic architecture--such as its barred windows, white walls, and inner courtyards--has suggested a literary rhetoric for women writers. This project is truly interdisciplinary, as it seeks to draw together information from architecture, Islamic studies, literature, Hispanic studies, and gender studies.

**Project Narrative**

When the Moors settled in Spain in 711, they brought with them concepts of architecture grounded in Islamic concepts of family life and women's roles. These concepts have been called the "aesthetic of the veil," and scholars of Islamic architecture commonly draw parallels between the veil and the design of domestic spaces (see, for example, Petherbridge). Indeed, there are many veiling strategies in the traditional Moorish-Spanish house, such as grillwork over the windows, enclosed balconies, and inward-facing living spaces overlooking interior courtyards. Over the almost eight centuries that the Moors lived in Spain, their domestic architecture gradually lost its connections to Islam, and instead became identified with the cultural heritage of Catholic Spain. (For instance, today in the U.S., we speak of "Spanish style" houses more often than "Moorish style" ones). The identifying features that had once served a Muslim purpose of privacy and veiling lost their ideological meaning and simply became conventional among the Christian population. As Daphne Spain discusses in GENDERED SPACES, "Although space is constructed by social behavior at a particular point in time, its legacy may persist (seemingly as an absolute) to shape the behavior of future generations" (6). Her observation applies very well to the Moorish-Spanish house, which came to symbolize the Christian colonization as it spread from Spain throughout Hispanic America. Today this iconic "colonial style" (as it is known in Latin American Spanish) can be seen from Mexico to Argentina, on the coast of Cuba or in the mountains of Peru.

For the Christian women who live inside these houses, the formerly Islamic aesthetic of the veil lingers on to create gendered spaces that reflect the social roles--and constraints--of the sexes. The strategies of architectural veiling are designed to turn women's behavior inward, toward the interior of the house, away from the street. Inside there is ornamentation (such as brightly colored tiles), a garden (often featuring a fountain), and rooms that open invitingly onto the garden. The exterior of the house, on the other hand, typically has stark white walls bordering directly on the street, walls that reveal little about what is inside. The effect of this exaltation of the interior and downplaying of the exterior is that there is a literal and figurative wall between the domestic realm that is women's socially-designated sphere and the outside world of the public sphere, the designated arena of activity for men. It is only natural, then, that the highly gendered design of the Moorish-Spanish house should influence women's
subjectivities and evoke an architectural rhetoric suited to their material and emotional situation. The Chilean poet Violeta Camerati, for example, employs the features of the Moorish-Spanish house to remember her childhood in "Más allá de la ventana" ["Beyond the Window"; this and all other translations mine] (1984), situating her memories in "la casa blanca de balcones" ["the white house of balconies"]. Similarly, the Mexican poet Ana Belén López, in her poem "Del barandal" ["From the Balcony's Railing"] (2001), conveys her disquiet through the image of a girl leaning on a balcony railing, staring unseeing into the distance, shifting from foot to foot.

These currents of space, gender, and literary rhetoric are most apparent in the potent image of the woman at the window, as she looks outward toward the street, often through wrought-iron bars. The street-side window has come to be a feminized and socially unstable frontier between women's circumscribed private lives and the enticements of freedom in the outside world. The bars over the windows, while often beautifully made, simply emphasize the restrictions that the house--and society--impose on the women within. These intersections of space, gender, and thought can even be seen in the Spanish language itself. For example, the verb "ventanear" [in English, something like "to window"] is given the definition of "when a woman often looks out the window" (PEQUENO LAROUSSE ILUSTRADO). The feminine adjective "ventanera" and the masculine adjective "ventanero" ("windowing") are "said of a woman who windows, or of a man who shamelessly looks at the windows where women are." Here, embedded in the language, is the separating, gendered space of the window, creating a culturally significant set of behaviors. The woman loiters at the window, standing inside the house but looking outward. The man, however, is outside the house brazenly looking in at the woman. The window, then, becomes a highly feminized space, an area staked out by women and eroticized by men.

The extent of this evocative image of the window can be seen in the simple exercise of using "ventana" as a title search keyword in the catalog of a large library such as the one at the University of Texas at Austin (www.lib.utexas.edu). The word turns up in dozens of titles of novels, stories, and poetry. The authors are both male and female, with women predominating in collections of poems. A typical title--containing elements such as "window to the sun/sea/light," "from my window," or "through the window"--implies looking outward from the stance of the window to the public space beyond. Consider, for instance, Raquel Ray's UNA VENTANA A LA VIDA [A WINDOW TO LIFE] (Buenos Aires, 1968) or Patricia Tejeda's VENTANA AL MAR [WINDOW TO THE SEA] (Valparaíso, 1980). On the interior side of the window is confinement; outside the window, there is open space and, figuratively at least, freedom.

But the view from the window to the larger world is often blocked by wrought iron bars or a carved wood grid. The Spanish word for such grillwork is "celosía," from the same Latin root that gives the word for jealousy, "celos." The term clearly indicates that the original function of the grillwork was not to prevent burglaries but rather to let women see out without being seen "unveiled" themselves. This grillwork veil over the window is often beautiful and ornate; but beautiful or not, it is a system of bars, making the house like a cage or jail. It is not surprising, then, that the architecture that literally puts women behind bars has, from the 1500s to the present, suggested a kinship with the caged or captive bird and evoked a figurative language with special meaning for women. The rhetoric of women as caged or captive birds is evident even in the beginnings of women's literature in Spanish; for example, Florencia Pinar drew a parallel between captive birds and her own unhappiness in her poem, "A unas perdices que le enviaron vivas" ["To Some Partridges Sent to Her Alive"], published in 1511. Over 400 years later, on another continent, the Argentine poet Alfonsina Storni used the same language of cages, birds, and women longing for freedom in her famous poem, "Hombre pequeñito" ["Itty Bitty Man"], published in 1919. Time and space separated Pinar and Storni, but the two poets chose remarkably similar imagery with which to express their ideas.
It is precisely the fact that two writers so separated in space and time should employ similar imagery that makes this study important to our understanding of women's literature in the Spanish-speaking tradition. Naturally, each era has its own concerns, ideas, and styles; even the iconic Moorish-Spanish house has been modified over time to accommodate indoor plumbing, electricity, and garages. Nor has the rhetoric of domestic space been frozen in time; it too has evolved to reflect women's changing conditions. In the nineteenth century, for instance, the emphasis on the caged bird shifted to its song and often its refusal to sing. This development of the captive bird image corresponds to women's most important issues of the 1800s: seeking the right to write (their "voice"); improving their social, legal, and economic status; and working out a companionate relationship with men (the "captors" in the captive bird imagery). By the 1900s, the emphasis had shifted again, this time to images of open cage doors, wings, and flight toward independence and autonomy. Yet, even in the face of architectural and intellectual change, women writers continue to return to the emblems of the window, the captive bird, the veiled view, and the interior garden. Florencia Pinar and Alfonsina Storni were women grounded in their own centuries, and their differences were many--nevertheless, they chose similar imagery to express their condition as women. It is that common language, spanning time and space, that is the subject of this project and this application.

What makes this study original? In Carmen Martín Gaite's DESDE LA VENTANA: ENFOQUE FEMENINO DE LA LITERATURA ESPANOLA [FROM THE WINDOW: FEMININE FOCUS OF SPANISH LITERATURE] (1992), she suggests that the window has special spiritual and rhetorical significance for women writers in Spain. Readers have generally accepted the validity of her observations, but her remarks were included in only a portion of the book, and to date they have not inspired other scholars to develop them systematically. Similarly, while it is not unusual to point out that architecture has special significance for a particular author, most scholars have not expanded the scope of their examination of an individual's work to ask larger questions about women's writing across time and space. This project, then, will enlarge Martín Gaite's focus on windows to encompass the whole house, and it will situate individual authors within a centuries-old tradition. The original findings of this study will be of interest to scholars in several fields: Hispanic literature, gender studies, and architecture. The study is also timely, as believers in Islam and Christianity struggle to understand each other's cultural traditions.

I intend to give at least two conference presentations based on this project, one at the Latin American Studies Association and the other at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (by request of a colleague there). The material linking the image of the caged bird to the Spanish house's barred windows will be written up for publication in two versions: one for a literary journal and one for an architectural journal. However, the project is mainly designed to produce a book, tentatively titled THE WOMAN AT THE WINDOW: THE SPANISH-MOORISH HOUSE AND HISPANIC WOMEN'S LITERATURE.

Book Outline and Time Line: during the regular semester, my work pace is so slowed by teaching and administrative duties that I can expect to complete no more than one chapter every four to five months. However, without those duties in the period supported by the stipend, I can reasonably expect to write two chapters in two months, as well as prepare a prospectus for a press.

Introduction: laying out of general ideas and explanation of methods (November-December 2004).
Chapter 1: The Moorish-Spanish house: its Islamic origins, conventional aspects, Hispanicization, and export to the Americas. Photos of typical houses from various countries. (January-May 2005).
Chapter 2: The woman at the window: the window as gendered space, its impact in various eras on women's subjectivities and writings. Illustrations of paintings and drawings that show women at an open window. (June 2005).

Chapter 3: The captive bird: the image and its development over time in women's writings. Photos of "celosía" from various countries. Write prospectus and submit to press. (July 2005).

Chapter 4: The interior garden: its origins and symbolism, its development over time in women's writings. Photos from various countries. (September-December 2005).

Conclusion: Ceding to new spatial imagery: other architectural traditions challenge the dominance of the Moorish-Spanish house, with corresponding changes in women's literary rhetoric; emphasis on Latina writers in the U.S. Photos from the U.S. (January-March 2006).

Time Period Supported by Summer Stipend: June and July 2005.

Previous Experience with a Summer Stipend: In 1991, I was fortunate to receive an NEH Summer Stipend; that experience was so positive that I was able to accomplish more than I had described in the application. That summer's work structured the research I conducted in Argentina in 1992 and gave me uninterrupted time to work out the overall analysis posited in my book on ARGENTINE WOMEN WRITERS 1860-1910. (The Stipend is acknowledged in the book). This current project is at a more advanced stage than that one, and, more importantly, I am a more experienced writer at this stage of my career. Therefore, I am confident that the project will be carried out as described here.

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Lecuona, Diego. LA VIVIENDA DE CRIOLLOS Y EXTRANJEROS EN EL SIGLO...
  Torre Fica, Iñaki. "La mujer ventanera' en la poesía de Carmen Martín Gaite." ESPECULO. www.ucm.es/info/especulo/numero19/ventana.html
THE LIMITS OF "CULTURE": ETHNIC PORTRAITS IN ROMAN ART

Issues of identity have been a focal point in classical studies for over a decade, bringing together such diverse topics as the Second Sophistic literary movement in Greece, material culture in Gaul, and architectural space in Pompeii. Yet scholars discussing cultural and ethnic identity in the Roman Empire have so far ignored one obvious site of its expression: the portrait. Such avoidance may stem from the topic's putative connotations of racial determinism--links between physiognomy and ethnicity stir ugly memories of modern behavior. Yet the Romans did not share these sentiments; indeed, one of the aims of my study is to demonstrate how ancient portrait sitters used ethnic markers to promote their own notions of ancestry, nativism, and independence. In Roman portraits, physiognomy constitutes an important facet of the ethnicity that Patrick Geary has defined as a political construct.

The ethnic portrait was a by-product of the cultural transformation conventionally termed Romanization. Unlike the Greeks, who divided the world into "us" versus "them," the Romans practiced a policy of inclusion. By speaking Latin, adhering to Roman law and religion, and adopting Roman social behaviors, a barbarian could become Romanized--that is, civilized. What used to be viewed simplistically as a seamless transformation from conquest to acculturation is now seen as a far more complicated process, however. In the wake of post-colonial theory, historians now recognize that the categories "native" and "Roman" embrace a range of definitions; likewise they see Romanization as a dialectic in which cultural exchange goes both ways and myriad aspects of indigenous culture survive intact. Daily life for a person of the provincial elite--a category embracing tribal chiefs and client kings as well as leading citizens--entailed complex negotiations: on the one hand, a provincial had to ingratiate himself with the ruling powers of Rome, while on the other, he strove to maintain authority in his local community.

As public statements of self-identity, ethnic portraits play out this negotiation in a direct and highly visual mode. My study centers on an analysis of portraits which I interpret as rejecting the convention of depiction cast in metropolitan Rome--the so-called "period face," or "Zeitgesicht"--in favor of an imagery steeped in ethnic markers. Defining ethnicity as "a sense of peoplehood arising from shared blood, history, territory, language and customs" (Jones), I will argue that these portraits aimed to convey the portrait sitter's "blood," "language," and "customs." Facial features, hair, dress, gesture, and pose were all employed to project an image that could resonate with dual audiences of both local and Roman. Although the subject's own appearance may often have helped dictate the imagery, my study begins with the notion that the look of a Roman portrait reflects its culture's ideology as much as its sitter's physiognomy.

Deciphering ethnic portraits' visual cues requires understanding two related representational genres: depictions of barbarians and of "ethne", or geographic and tribal personifications. A staple of Roman triumphal monuments such as arches and columns, the barbarian could be presented sympathetically--in the process becoming all the worthier as an opponent--but was always cast in a stereotypical mode: his hair was wild and unkempt because he lacked "cultus" or culture, while his emotion-filled face displayed his lack of "dignitas", or dignity. Cleaned up and feminized, barbarians also lived on in the tradition of the ethnic personification. At times nearly encyclopedic in their coverage--the Julio-Claudian Sebasteion
in Aphrodisias displayed personifications of some 70 conquered peoples--the "ethne" introduced viewers to the diversity of empire and diluted the strangeness of Rome's "other." Inevitably the genres of personifications and barbarian images would color ethnic portrait imagery; after all, the provincial elite commissioning these portraits was sometimes but a generation or two removed from the barbarians of triumphal art.

Given the Empire's size and artistic diversity, ethnic portraiture inevitably took many forms. My study will focus on the imagery of three major locales--the Latin West, Greek East, and Egypt--which typically are split into separate regional studies. My study will meld individual examination of each area with synthetic treatment of the whole phenomenon. One important portrait group comes from Gaul, where a number of heads have hair arranged in the same thick, pointed clumps seen in the Capitoline Museum's famed Dying Gaul. The hair on both statues confirms ancient writers' descriptions of Gauls: were it painted, we would see the coarse, red hair ("rutilae comae") mentioned by Tacitus and other Roman ethnographers. In my view such hair serves as a deliberate expression of the subjects' Gallic ethnicity; although the portraits may adopt the Roman conventions of white marble and a bust format, they betray their social hybridity in this notable trait. Recent work by Greg Woolf provides a useful model for understanding the cultural straddling conveyed in the Gallic portraits, and close study of the names inscribed on tombstones found along the northern frontier will demonstrate the powerful role of nomenclature in maintaining ethnic identity. Sculptural finds from Spain and the Danube provinces will complete this section of the study.

Provocative recent thinking on cultural identity in the Greek East suggests some new ways to look at Roman portraits from Greece, Asia Minor, and North Africa. Derived from the same culture that witnessed the rise of the Second Sophistic, the formation of the Panhellenion, and a near-obsession with genealogy, certain images emphasize features with clear ethnic connotations. From "Roimetalkes" in the Athens National Museum to the tomb reliefs belonging to Gaius Iulius Antiochus Epiphanes Philopappus, many portraits proudly espoused the centuries-long heritage of their subjects, at a time when Hellas' influence on the world stage had declined. A long history of representation--not to mention the continuing strength of classicism--provided a panoply of iconographic and stylistic reference points to Greek ethnicity. Because of their connotations of prestige, in fact, selected Greek features such as the beard crossed over to become part of the metropolitan Roman mainstream.

Roman Egypt offers a particularly rich trove of material for the exploration of ethnic identity. Thanks to the survival of numerous papyri as well as funerary imagery (painted masks, cartonnage cases, etc.) the province permits a more sophisticated demographic analysis than does any other part of the Empire. In Egypt it was not unusual for portrait subjects to see themselves as both Roman and Egyptian--sometimes even Greek, Roman, and Egyptian. Double portraits often convey this double identity, as of course does the mix of Roman fashions (in hair, jewelry, and costume) with Egyptian funerary practice. Paradoxically, the higher up on the social scale--that is, the more Roman--a portrait subject was, the more Egyptian was his funerary equipment.

Various styles of metropolitan Roman portraiture also figure in this study, primarily for their contrast value. In keeping with Rome's own view of itself as a vast melting pot--a place described in the not-necessarily complimentary words of Juvenal as where "the Tiber has been joined by the Orontes"--assimilation was the dominant portrait mode for the newcomer from the provinces. Indeed many Roman emperors of the second and third centuries mask their provincial origins by adhering closely to existing metropolitan portrait norms. Likewise portraits from nearby Ostia--a port city synonymous with cosmopolitanism--lack an overtly ethnic message. In the metropolitan portraiture, we see confirmation of Nicholas Purcell's claim that Rome had "culture without ethnicity." The contrast between metropolitan images and those
from the provinces with regard to ethnicity—a dichotomy that this study will underscore—
reminds us that there is no single, empire-wide definition of "Roman." My study will expose
and dissect the multiple variables—historical, geographic, social, and political—that shaped the
artistic presentation of identity in the Roman world.

For several years I have been researching various aspects of this subject and presenting
public talks on some of the highlights; I now plan to publish my findings as a book. Individual
chapters will investigate the following topics: 1) current theoretical approaches to ethnicity, with
attention to post-colonial approaches to "the other" as depicted by European artists during the
time of the French and British Empires as a model for this study; 2) images of barbarians and of
"ethne" as iconographic and theoretical backdrop for ethnic portraiture; the ethnographic
tradition in literature, including Ammianus Marcellinus, Polemo, and Tacitus; 3-5) individual
chapters devoted to the ethnic portraiture of specific provincial locales: Gaul and the Latin
West; the Greek East, Roman Egypt; 6) ethnicity (and its absence) in the portraiture of Rome
and Ostia. The chapters devoted specifically to portraits will employ a wealth of epigraphic and
historical material as a corrective for any subjective bias in terming a particular feature "ethnic."

As I have already completed much of the primary research for this project, my work plan
during the tenure of an NEH fellowship would entail approximately four months for research
into secondary sources on nomenclature, demographics, and history, and the remaining eight
months to make substantial headway on the writing. (I read all of the foreign languages
necessary for this study: ancient Greek, Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, and German.) Local
university libraries will provide the necessary research materials. With its interdisciplinary
approach, this book will appeal to a wide audience of classicists, historians, archaeologists, and
art historians.

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**Project Bibliography**

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