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***Multiple Worlds, Multiple Words***

Essays in Honour of

**Irène Simon**

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**Irène Simon**

Edited by

Hena MAES-JELINEK  
Pierre MICHEL  
Paulette MICHEL-MICHOT

**Université de Liège  
U.D. GERMANIQUE**

English Department  
University of Liège

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## *Foreword*

The publication of a volume of this kind usually marks a special occasion: a retirement or an anniversary. This *estschrift* is simply intended to honour Irène Simon. During a creative academic career that spanned over thirty years, she stimulated and influenced countless students, colleagues, associates and friends, some of whom raise their voices here in tribute and offer her this collection as a token of affection, admiration and respect for a person and a scholar who in her professional and everyday life so happily harmonizes “the clearest head and the sincerest heart.”

The essays collected here are not arranged around a theme or a period, nor do they focus solely on literature; they also include essays on linguistics and the history of ideas. Their great variety reflects the diversity and dimension of Irène Simon’s world, or worlds. The volume honours the many intellectual spheres in which she is equally, and formidably, exceptional.

Although her personal inclination drew her towards the eighteenth century, her international reputation rests on her achievement in all areas of modern English literature. But the vast range of her interests and her scholarly expertise are not confined to English literature only, which she taught throughout her academic career. For a long time she also taught the English language and American literature and always encouraged her students to investigate new fields of research. No wonder then that her students fanned out in all directions and now teach and do research in all the literatures written in English and in the most advanced areas of linguistics. The many vocations she awakened testify to her own intellectual curiosity and open-mindedness; it is owing to her foresight and under her guidance that the University of Liège has been able to develop the whole spectrum of modern English studies in its English Department.

Irène Simon taught at other universities too, mostly abroad. She held the Belgian Chair at the University of London (King’s College) in 1961-62 and the Chaire Francqui at the University of Ghent in 1976-77. She was a Visiting Professor at the Universities of Gronigen, Oslo, Bergen, Nottingham, London (University College), Leeds, Sheffield, Poznan, Cracow, and Caen. She was a Fulbright Research Scholar at the Universities of Indiana (Bloomington) and

California (Berkeley) in 1954. In 1980 she received an honorary degree from the University of Stirling and was awarded the Order of the British Empire.

This skeletal outline of Irène Simon's career hardly does justice to her life and works. She exists in her publications as well: her books and articles prove that deeply perceptive, stimulating statements about literature can be made with vitality, simplicity and sensitivity. Her conception of literature is a humanistic one. She never sees it as dissociated from real life but combines in her approach attentiveness to moral significance—a major feature of the English tradition—and to form. The person and the scholar always go together in her writings, the former's infallible commonsense and finely tuned aesthetic judgment contemplating passing fads with what she likes to refer to as "English pragmatism," the scholar's rigour and erudition never spoiling the charm of the person. To her students and colleagues she was a model of unflagging energy and was always receptive to new experiences and ideas—working with her often became an enlightening process of self-discovery—but they also learned from her that new ideas were never to be accepted for the sole sake of being new and always had to stand the test of verification, intelligibility and good taste.

The editors want to thank all the contributors whose generosity, dedication and graciousness aided considerably in the growth of this *festschrift* from proposal in 1986 to publication. They are indebted, in the University of Liège, to the Direction des Relations extérieures for its contribution to the printing of this volume and to the Centre Informatique de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres for its technical assistance and generous cooperation. In a development that Irène Simon might not have thought of, but which was certainly in line with her constant urging to explore new directions, two of the editors became amateur Gutenbergs to produce the present volume.

Liège, January 1988.

## Irène Simon A Checklist of Publications

### Books

- Dorothy M. Richardson*. Bruxelles, Didier (Série Langues Vivantes, No. 21), 1949, 24 pp.
- Formes du roman anglais de Dickens à Joyce*. Liège, Université de Liège (Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres, Fasc. CXVIII), 1949, 463 pp.
- Les progrès de la critique shakespearienne au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*. Bruxelles, Didier (Série Langues Vivantes, No. 29), 1950, 29 pp.
- Some Problems of Donne Criticism*. Bruxelles, Didier (Série Langues Vivantes, No. 40), 1953, 76 pp.
- The Novels of L.H. Myers*. Bruxelles, Didier (Série Langues Vivantes, No. 46), 1954, 150 pp.
- Bloomsbury and its Critics*. Bruxelles, Didier (Série Langues Vivantes, No. 53), 1958, 35 pp.
- "Pride of Reason" in the Restoration and Earlier Eighteenth Century*. Bruxelles, Didier (Série Langues Vivantes No. 55), 1959, 50 pp.
- Three Restoration Divines: Barrow, South, Tillotson. Selected Sermons*. Vol. I. Paris, Les Belles Lettres (Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres de l'Université de Liège, Fasc. CLXXXI), 1967, 510 pp.
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- "George Eliot and Hendrik Conscience," *Revue des Langues Vivantes*, XXVI, 1960, 386-9.
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## *Tabula Gratulatoria*

Raymond ALEXIS, Université de Liège (Hon.)  
Edgar ANDRÉ, Ecole d'Interprètes Internationaux, Mons  
Viviane BESSEM, Grâce-Hollogne  
Gina BET, Ougrée  
Emile BETZ, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
Nadine BIGNOS-BELLEFLAMME, ECCSA (Liège)  
René BLAISE, Ecole Normale de l'Etat (Virton)  
Arthur BODSON, Recteur, Université de Liège  
Armand BOILEAU, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
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Malcolm BRADBURY, University of East Anglia  
Huguette BRENLY, Metzert  
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Denis J. CONLON, UFSIA (Antwerp)  
Tony COOPMAN, Leuven  
Rudy COPPIETERS, Provinciale Hogeschool voor Vertalers en Tolken, Gent  
Agnès CORBISIER, Lillois  
B. CORHAY-LEDENT, Cambridge  
Fernand CORIN, Université Catholique de Louvain  
Jean-Louis CUPERS, Facultés Universitaires St. Louis, Bruxelles; HEC, Liège  
Pierre DANCHIN, Université de Nancy (Emer.)  
Simone DAVID-CONSTANT, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
Solange DAYRAS, Université Paris-Nord  
Gilbert DEBUSSCHER, Université Libre de Bruxelles, Vrije Universiteit Brussel  
Dorothy DEFLANDRE, Former Executive Director of the Commission for Educational Exchange between the United States, Belgium and Luxembourg

Marie-Claire DEFOSSÉ-HENRY, Esneux  
 Fernand G. DEKEGELEER, Institut Supérieur de l'Etat de Traducteurs et d'Interprètes, Bruxelles  
 Jeanne DELBAERE, Université Libre de Bruxelles  
 Paul DELBOUILLE, Université de Liège  
 Robert DEMOULIN, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
 René DEROLEZ, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent (Emer.)  
 M. DERWA, Liège  
 Claude DESAMA, Université de Liège  
 Jean-Marie D'HEUR, Université de Liège  
 Jean DIERICKX, Université Libre de Bruxelles (Emer.)  
 Juliette DOR, Université de Liège  
 Ronald DRAPER, University of Aberdeen  
 Sandra DUMONCEAU, Gosselies  
 Joris DUYSCHAEVER, Universitaire Instelling Antwerpen  
 Micheline EDWARDS, Sittingbourne  
 Robert ELLRODT, Sorbonne Nouvelle  
 Yvette ELOI, Rocourt  
 Maurice ENGELBORGH, Facultés Universitaires St. Louis, Bruxelles  
 Willi ERZGRÄBER, Universität Freiburg  
 Etienne EVRARD, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
 Jean FINCK, Université de Liège  
 Marie-Claire FLAMÉE, Université de Liège  
 Thierry FONTENELLE, Université de Liège  
 F. A. FRAIPONT, Tilff  
 A. M. GARCET-PARIS, Bruxelles  
 Jacqueline GENET, Université de Caen  
 Albert GÉRARD, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
 Louis GILLET, Doyen, Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres, Université de Liège  
 Paul GOCHET, Université de Liège  
 Herbert GRABES, Justus-Liebig-Universität, Giessen  
 Suzanne HAGEMANN-AUGARDE, Spa  
 Louise HAGIAGE, Paris

Ch. HYART, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
 Patricia JACOBS, Meyerode  
 Arlette JACQUEMOTTE, Alleur-Xhendremael  
 A. Norman JEFFARES, University of Stirling (Emer.)  
 Jean-François KAISIN, Alleur  
 Michel KEFER, Université de Liège  
 René KERF, Institut Supérieur de l'Etat de Traducteurs et d'Interprètes, Bruxelles  
 I. J. KIRBY, Université de Lausanne  
 Jules LABARBE, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
 Léon LACROIX, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
 Guy LAPREVOTTE, Université de Strasbourg  
 Marlyse LAROCHE-KOHLER, Ecole Normale de l'Etat, Arlon-Virton  
 Roger LEJOSNE, Université d'Amiens  
 Marie-Claude LÉONARD, Mons  
 Robert LEROY, Université de Liège  
 Hélène LÉTARGEZ, Institut Supérieur de l'Etat de Traducteurs et d'Interprètes, Bruxelles  
 Suzanne LINSMAUX-ORBAN, Nivelles  
 Hena MAES-JELINEK, Université de Liège  
 Lilian MAGY, Beaufays  
 Alan MCLEOD, Rider College, U.S.A.  
 Paule et Paul MERTENS, Université de Liège  
 Jean MERTENS, Institut Supérieur Industriel Huy, Gembloux, Verviers  
 Pierre MICHEL, Université de Liège  
 Paulette MICHEL-MICHOT, Université de Liège  
 Sylvère MONOD, Sorbonne Nouvelle (Emer.)  
 Joseph MOORS, Université de Liège (Emer.)  
 David R. MORRIS, Ecole d'Interprètes Internationaux, Mons  
 André MOTTE, Université de Liège  
 Jean NIEULANDT, Institut Supérieur de l'Etat de Traducteurs et d'Interprètes, Bruxelles  
 Jacques C.J. NIHOUL, Université de Liège

Armand NIVELLE, Université de Liège (Emer.); Universität des Saarlandes  
 Jacques NOËL, Université de Liège

Mary A. O'CONNOR, University of California, Davis (Hon.)  
 J. ORBAN-ENGLEBERT, Liège

Christine PAGNOULLE, Université de Liège  
 Annette PAGNOULLE-GÉRARD, Heusy-Verviers  
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Jean QUENON, Université de Liège  
 Sir Randolph QUIRK, The British Academy

A. ROUSSELLE, Angleur  
 Anna RUTHERFORD, University of Aarhus  
 Mathieu RUTTEN, Université de Liège (†)

Camille SCHMIT, Angleur  
 Jean SCHOONBROODT, Liège  
 Willem SCHRICKX, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent (Emer.)  
 Herman SERVOTTE, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven  
 Kristian SMIDT, University of Oslo (Emer.)  
 Bertil SUNDBY, University of Bergen, Norway  
 James SUTHERLAND, University of London (University College) (Emer.)

Yvette THEATE-PIERRE, St.-Séverin  
 Claude THIRY, Université de Liège  
 Jean TROMME, Embourg  
 F.C. TRUFFAUT, Liège  
 Madeleine TYSENS, Université de Liège

M.-J. UBBIALI, IPEPS Seraing

Antonin VAN ELSLANDER, Gent  
 J. P. VAN NOPPEN, Université Libre de Bruxelles  
 Jacques VAN ROEY, Université Catholique de Louvain  
 J. P. VANDER MOTTEN, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent  
 Michel VANDERSMISSEN, Rocourt

Kristiaan VERSLUYS, Rijksuniversiteit te Gent  
 Joseph VROMANS, Université de Liège  
 Paul WATHELET, Université de Liège  
 Horst WEINSTOCK, Technische Hochschule, Aachen  
 Dina & Jean WEISGERBER, Université Libre de Bruxelles  
 C. H. WHISTLER, Eastry, Kent  
 R. W. ZANDVOORT, Universiteit Groningen (Emer.)

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 UNIVERSITÉ DE CAEN, Département d'anglais  
 UNIVERSITAIRE INSTELLING ANTWERPEN  
 UNIVERSITÄT FREIBURG  
 UNIVERSITÄT MÜNCHEN  
 UNIVERSITÄT MÜNSTER, Englisches Seminar  
 UNIVERSITÉ DE LIÈGE, Philologie Germanique  
 THE UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE  
 THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, Berkeley

## Contributors

A. Norman JEFFARES was Jury Professor of English literature at the University of Adelaide, Professor at the University of Leeds and the University of Stirling from which he retired in 1987. He was the founding chairman of the Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies. He founded *ARIEL (A Review of International English Literature)*, *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* and the *York Notes Series*. He has published extensively on Anglo-Irish literature, particularly on W.B. Yeats: *W.B. Yeats, Man and Poet* (1949); *In Excited Reverie* (1965); *A Commentary on the Collected Poems of W.B. Yeats* (1968); *W.B. Yeats, The Critical Heritage* (ed., 1977). He has also edited *Restoration Comedy* (4 vols., The Folio Press, 1974). He now writes mainly poetry and has published two collections *Brought up in Dublin* and *Brought up to Leave*. *An Irish Childhood* came out recently and he is now working on a new biography of Yeats. He is president of P.E.N. Scotland and Chairman of Arts and Letters in the Royal Society of Edinburgh.

Malcolm BRADBURY is Professor of American Studies at the University of East Anglia. He is also a novelist who has written *Eating People is Wrong*, *Stepping Westward*, *Who Do You Think You are?* (short stories), *The History Man* and *Rates of Exchange*. His critical works include *The Social Context of English Literature, Possibilities, Essays on the State of the Novel, Modernism* (ed.), *The Novel Today* (ed.), *The Contemporary English Novel* (ed.), *The Modern American Novel* and the recent *No, Not Bloombury*.

Fernand CORIN is Professor of modern English literature at the Université Catholique de Louvain. He has published articles on English and American literature.

Pierre DANCHIN (b. 1918) became agrégé d'anglais in 1943, docteur ès lettres in 1956 and taught at the Lycée de Besançon from 1943 to 1947. He was also a British Council Scholar at Leeds University in 1945-46. He was then Professor of English and head of department at Algiers University (1947-1950), Professor of English and head of department at the University of Nancy II (1950-72) as well as President of the University (1971-73). He became Professor Emeritus in 1984. His publications include *Francis Thompson: la vie et l'oeuvre d'un poète* (Paris, Nizet, 1959); *Francis Thompson, Poèmes choisis* (Aubier, 1961); *The Prologues and Epilogues of the Restoration, 1660-1700, A Tentative Checklist* (Nancy, 1978); *Idem, A Complete Edition*, 7 vols.; vols. 1-4, 1981 and 1984; vols. 5, 6 and 7 to appear in 1988.

Jeanne DELBAERE-GARANT is Professor of English literature at the Free University of Brussels. She is a former student of Irène Simon under whose supervision

she wrote her doctoral dissertation on *Henry James and the Vision of France* (1970). Her main field is the novel. She has published extensively on twentieth-century English, New Zealand and Canadian writers. Her other books include *Bird, Hawk, Bogie: Essays on Janet Frame* (1978) and *The Secret Agent: A Critical Commentary* (1981).

René L.M. DEROLEZ is Emeritus Professor of the University of Ghent. He has studied at Harvard and Ghent, where he started his academic career in 1948 and was Professor of English and Old Germanic Languages from 1959 to 1986. He was Visiting Professor at the University of Geneva in 1974 and the University of Bern in 1987, and he held the Francqui Chair at the University of Liège in 1975. He is a member of the Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren and Schone Kunsten van België; Corresponding Fellow of the British Academy; member and former President of the Koninklijke Zuidnederlandse Maatschappij voor Taalen Letterkunde en Geschiedenis, of the Belgische Kring voor Linguïstiek and of the International Society of Anglo-Saxonists. He was Convener of the International Conference on Anglo-Saxon Glossography (1986) and of the Colloquium *Ars Grammatica* (1987). He is former associate editor and editor of *Studia Germanica Gandensia*, and of *English Studies* (1969-79). He is the author of books and articles on runology, Old and Middle English, Germanic religion.

Jean DIERICKX: Emeritus Professor, Université Libre de Bruxelles. Formerly with the department of English language. PhD 1959 with a doctoral dissertation on "The Theatre of T.S. Eliot" (shortened French version published 1960). Later contributions on English grammar and general linguistics (co-editor of two volumes and author of several papers); translation studies (several papers) and varieties of English (two volumes on the English of journalism and several papers). Other papers on various subjects. Also interested in the problems of the diffusion of science to the general public, and former president of l' "Extension de l'Université" (Board of extra-mural studies).

Juliette DOR. Senior Lecturer at the University of Liège. English historical linguistics: *Forms and Meanings of the Verb Contained in MS. Bodley 34* (Paris, AMAES, 1982). Etymological problems; AB language; ME dialects. Sociolinguistic approach to the introduction of French in medieval England (Norman Conquest, Katherine Group, 14th century). Comparative study of the Welsh, French and English versions of Arthurian romances. Essays on *The Land of Cockayne*, *The Proverbs of Hendyng* and Chaucer. French translations of OE and ME texts (ed. *Ecriture 79, Pages de littérature anglaise médiévale offertes à Mlle S. d'Ardenne*, Liège, 1981; *The Land of Cockayne*, Hendyng) and of Chaucer (*Les Contes de Cantorbéry, 1ère partie*, Gand, 1977, *2ème partie*, Louvain/Paris, 1986). Historical and theoretical translation problems. International Secretary of the New Chaucer Society, Chairman of Le Cercle Belge de Linguistique.

Ronald P. DRAPER. Regius Chalmers Professor of English and Head of the Department of English Language and Literature, University of Aberdeen. His publications include *D.H. Lawrence* (Twayne, 1964); *D.H. Lawrence, The Critical Heritage* (ed.) (Routledge, 1970); *Hardy, The Tragic Novels* (ed.) (Macmillan, 1975); *George Eliot: "The Mill on the Floss" and "Silas Marner"* (ed.) (Macmillan, 1978); *Tragedy: Developments in Criticism* (ed.) (Macmillan, 1980);

*Lyric Tragedy* (Macmillan, 1985); *"The Winter's Tale": Text and Performance* (Macmillan, 1985); *D.H. Lawrence: "Sons and Lovers"* (Macmillan, 1986); *Hardy: Three Pastoral Novels* (ed.) (Macmillan, 1987).

Robert ELLRODT (b. 1922) taught at the universities of Poitiers, Algiers and Toulouse before becoming Professor at the Sorbonne in 1961. In 1966 he joined the new University of Nice and was Dean of the Faculty of Letters. He returned to the Sorbonne Nouvelle (Paris III) in 1975 and was elected President of the University in 1986. He is honorary president of the Société des Anglicistes de l'enseignement supérieur. Besides *Les poètes métaphysiques anglais* (Corti, 1960, 1973) and *Neoplatonism in the Poetry of Spencer* (Droz, 1960), he has published many essays, notably in the *Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare Studies* (1986), *Genèse de la conscience moderne* (PUF, 1983) and *Age d'Or-Apocalypse* (Publ. Sorbonne, 1986).

Willi ERZGRÄBER (b. 1926) wrote his PhD thesis on the Wessex Novels of Thomas Hardy in 1950 and his Habilitationsschrift on "William Langland's *Piers Plowman*: An Interpretation of the C-Text" (Heidelberg, 1957). Privatdozent and Associate Professor at the Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe University, Frankfurt/Main (1956-1961). Full Professor at the University of Saarbrücken (1962-1966), Frankfurt (1966-1970), Freiburg i.Br. since 1970. President of the German Association of University Professors of English (1981-1983). Main fields of research: English Literature of the Late Medieval Period, history of the English Utopia and Anti-Utopia; English and Anglo-Irish Literature of the 20th century. Editor of *English Poetry from Shakespeare to Dylan Thomas* (1969), *Modern English and American Literary Criticism* (1970), *English Literature from Morus to Beckett*, 3 vols (1970), *Modern English Poetry* (with Ute Knoedgen) (1976, 1984), *Interpretations of "Hamlet"* (1977), *Neues Handbuch der Literaturwissenschaft, Bd. 8: Europäisches Spätmittelalter* (1978), *Geoffrey Chaucer* (1983), *Neue Studien zur Anglistik und Amerikanistik* (with Paul Goetsch).

Jacqueline GENET Agrégée d'anglais, Docteur-ès-Lettres, Vice-President of the International Association for the Study of Anglo-Irish Literature, President of Caen University. She has published a series of translations into French of Yeats's main prose works, of P. MacDonogh's poems, Murdoch's plays, Mary Lavin's stories, *The Penguin Book of Irish Short Stories* and a collection of essays on Blake by K. Raine. She is the author of *Contemporary English Novelists, Yeats: Les fondements et l'évolution de la création poétique*. She edited *Le Cahier de l'Herne* on Yeats, *Collected Studies on Seamus Heaney* and the journal *Gaéliana*. She has written articles on Blake, Yeats, Eliot, Auden, Joyce, Beckett, Murdoch, Heaney, K. Raine, etc.

Herbert GRABES is Professor of English at the University of Giessen. He studied philosophy, English and German philology at the University of Cologne, where he received his Dr. phil. for a dissertation on Nicolai Hartmann's epistemology. In 1969 he completed his Habilitation on the imagery of the mirror in English literature of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Since 1970 he has held the Chair for English and American literature at Giessen. He has published books and articles on literary theory, the English Renaissance, and 20th-century English and American literature, among them *Speculum, Mirror and Looking*

Glass (1973; revised English translation: *The Mutable Glass*, 1982), *Fictitious Biographies: Vladimir Nabokov's English Novels* (1977), *Fiktion - Imitation - Ästhetik: Was ist Literatur?* (1981). He is one of the editors of *REAL* (*Yearbook of Research in English and American Literature*)

Guy L. LAPREVOTTE is Professor of English Literature at the University of Strasbourg. He is the author of *Science et Poésie de Dryden à Pope* (Lille: Université de Lille III; Paris: Honoré Champion, 1981) and of articles on 17th and 18th-century thought and literature. His current interests are in satire and political literature in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Hena MAES-JELINEK is Professor of English and Commonwealth literature at the University of Liège. She has been Visiting Professor at the University of Abidjan (1976) and the University of Bremen (1979). Her books include *Criticism of Society in the English Novel between the Wars* (1970), *The Naked Design* (1976), *Wilson Harris* (1982), *Heart of Darkness: A Critical Commentary* (1982). She has also edited *Commonwealth Literature and the Modern World* (1975) and *Explorations: A Selection of Talks and Articles by Wilson Harris* (1981). Most of her articles are on the English and Commonwealth novel, mainly Australian, Caribbean and South African.

Paule MERTENS-FONCK has held the Chair of Medieval English Language and Literature at the University of Liège for 18 years. Her publications include *A Glossary of the Vespasian Psalter and Hymns* (Liège-Paris, 1960) and articles on historical linguistics dealing particularly with linguistic change in 9th-century Mercian. She has also published studies on *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and on the General Prologue to the *Canterbury Tales*. She is engaged in research on Chaucer's indebtedness to the Clerk-Knight debates in Latin, French and Anglo-Norman. She is president of the Liège Centre for Medieval Philology and corresponding member of the Academy of Messina. She is regularly invited as Visiting Professor to the Universities of Catania and Messina.

Pierre MICHEL is Professor of English and American literature at the University of Liège. He has also taught at the University of Illinois (Fulbright, 1961-62), the University of Antwerp (1973), and Kent State University (1971, 72, 73, 75, 76). He held an ACLS Research Fellowship in 1969-70 (Amherst College) and did research at the University of Virginia on a Fulbright Grant (1980). His publications include *Cozzens: An Annotated Checklist* (1971), *James Gould Cozzens* (1974), *Mourning Becomes Electra: A Critical Commentary* (1981), *Henderson the Rain King: A Critical Commentary* (1981), *Sister Carrie: A Critical Commentary* (1982), and articles on American literature (20th century) and American Studies, Bellamy, Philip Roth, Locke, Whitman, Hawthorne, Dickinson, and Faulkner. Editor of *Revue des Langues Vivantes* (1972-79); co-editor of the US Bicentennial issue of *Revue des Langues Vivantes* on American literature (1976).

Paulette MICHEL-MICHOT is Chargé de Cours at the University of Liège where she teaches English literature. She is the author of *William Samson: A Critical Assessment* (1971) and of articles on novelists and short-story writers in English published mainly in *Revue des Langues Vivantes*, *English Studies*, *Ariel*, *Studies in Short Fiction*, *La Nouvelle de Langue anglaise*, *Visions Critiques*. Continental editor of *Studies in Short Fiction* and contributor to *Annual Bibliography of*

*English Language and Literature* (1968-87). She is currently working on a study of the short story in English.

Jacques NOËL taught English language and linguistics at the Universities of Antwerp and Brussels, and has been, since 1975, head of the University of Liège's English Language department. His main fields of research are English grammar and lexicography, computational linguistics, machine translation and artificial intelligence. In 1986, he was appointed head of the Liège University research team which represents francophone Belgium in EUROTRA, the EEC's machine translation project. Jacques JANSEN has a degree in electronic engineering. A specialist in computer software, he has been working on dictionary databases with Professor Noël's research team for over five years. Archibal MICHIELS was a British Council scholar and as such studied under Professor Randolph Quirk at University College, University of London (1974-75). In 1979 he became Assistant Lecturer in the University of Liège's English Language Department. In 1982 he took his Doctor's degree at the same University with a dissertation entitled "Exploiting a Large Dictionary Data Base." In 1983 he was appointed Chargé de Cours at the Institut Supérieur de Traducteurs et d'Interprètes in Brussels. He is also head of the Eurotra Dictionary Task Force. His main areas of research are lexicography, computational linguistics and artificial intelligence. André MOULIN taught English in secondary schools for 10 years, he was appointed Assistant Lecturer at the University of Liège's Language Centre where he taught English to the Business School undergraduates. In 1984 he was appointed Senior Lecturer in the University's English Department. His doctorate (1973) was on "Humour in the novels of Evelyn Waugh." His main areas of current research are English grammar and lexicography, varieties of English, computational linguistics and machine translation.

Christine PAGNOULLE teaches contemporary English literature and translation at the University of Liège. Her publications include critical studies on Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano* (Lausanne, L'Age d'Homme, 1977) and David Jones's poetic fragments (University of Wales Press, 1987) as well as translations of poetry. She is interested in the literatures evolving in countries which have had to recover or re-create their cultural identities, also in myth-making in 20th-century literature.

Anna RUTHERFORD is Associate Professor and director of Commonwealth Studies at the University of Aarhus. She is the editor of *Kunapipi* and on the editorial board of *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature*, *World Literature Written in English*, *Ariel* and *Westerly*. She is the chairperson of the Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies. She has founded and directs Dangaroo Press. She has been Visiting Professor at the University of Zaria (Nigeria) and the University of Adelaide. Her publications include *Commonwealth Short Stories* (1971 & 1979), *Common Wealth* (1971), *Enigma of Values and Cowries & Kobos: The West African Oral Tale and Short Story*, both with Kirsten Holst Petersen (1975 & 1981), *Silas Marner: A Critical Commentary* (1982), *Middlemarch: A Critical Commentary* (1984). She has also written numerous articles on Australian, African and Indian literature and on the post-colonial literatures generally.

- Willem SCHRICKX. Professor Emeritus, University of Ghent. Author of *Shakespeare's Early Contemporaries* (Antwerp, 1956) and of *Foreign Envoys and Travelling Players in the Age of Shakespeare and Jonson* (Ghent and Wetteren, Universa, 1986). Co-editor of the Marginalia of Coleridge in *The Collected Coleridge*, edited by Kathleen Coburn. For general bibliography see *Elizabethan and Modern Studies*, edited by J.P. Vander Motten (Ghent University, 1985).
- Herman SERVOTTE. Professor of English Literature at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. His doctoral dissertation on The Narrator in English Fiction was published in Dutch under the title *De Verteller in de Engelse Roman* (1965). In 1974 he published a translation and commentary in Dutch of T.S. Eliot's *Four Quartets*. Later publications include an essay on the growth of the English novel, *De simulators* (1981) and a methodological introduction to poetry, *Language into Meaning* (1980). He reviews English books for the leading Flemish newspaper *De Standaard*.
- Kristian SMIDT (b. 1916) was Professor of English literature at the University of Oslo and the University of Tromsø. Emeritus Professor since 1985. Rockefeller fellowship, Princeton University, 1951-2; Folger Shakespeare Library fellowship, 1960-1. Publications: *Poetry and Belief in the Work of T.S. Eliot* (doctoral dissertation, 1949, rev. ed. 1961), *James Joyce and the Cultic Use of Fiction* (1955, rev. ed. 1959), *Inturious Impostors and "Richard III"* (1964), *The Tragedy of King Richard the Third. Parallel Texts* (ed., 1969), *Memorial Transmission and Quarto Copy in "Richard III"* (1970), *The Importance of Recognition. Six Chapters on T.S. Eliot* (1973), *Unconformities in Shakespeare's History Plays* (1982), *Unconformities in Shakespeare's Early Comedies* (1986). Work in progress: Unconformities in Shakespeare's Tragedies, the series to be completed by a book on the late comedies and romances.
- James SUTHERLAND (b. 1900) graduated from the University of Aberdeen in 1921. After two years of university teaching in Canada, he proceeded to Merton College, Oxford, where he obtained his B.Litt. He then became a lecturer in English at Glasgow University. From 1930 until 1967 he taught at the University of London, and was successively Professor of English at Birkbeck College, Queen Mary College and University College. From 1957-62 he was Public Orator for the University. Among his publications are two books on Defoe, *A Preface to Eighteenth Century Poetry*, *English Satire*, *English Literature of the Late Seventeenth Century*, and an edition of *The Dunciad* (for the "Twickenham" Pope). His most recent publication is *The Restoration Newspaper and its Development* (1986).
- R.W. ZANDVOORT. Emeritus Professor of English Language and Literature at the University of Groningen. Founder and one-time editor of *English Studies*. Author of *Sidney's "Arcadia": A Comparison between the Two Versions* (1929); *A Handbook of English Grammar* (1945; 15th ed. 1981).