



**Harmon, Maurice. *Loose Connections*. County Clare, Ireland: Salmon Poetry, 2012. 66 pp. ISBN: 978-1-908836-19-9**

Much of the contemporary debate surrounding literary criticism that regards Poetry turns itself into lyricism and non-lyrical poetry, such as the works by Baltrusch et Lourido (2012); Casas (2011); Gräbner et Wood (2010); Merquior (1999) and Perloff (2009, 1989). Maurice Harmon's latest collection, *Loose Connections*, prove that lyricism is not only still possible, but also, the core of Poetry.

Following his former collections, *The Mischievous Boy and Other Poems* (2008), *The Doll with Two Backs and Other poems* (2004) and *The Last Regatta* (2000), the poet Harmon once again dares exposing the soul in *Loose Connections*, discussing metaphysics and deepening the lyric-I's awareness of the importance of words, and history. In poems such as "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men", and "In a Bookshop", the sounds of those who ground Irish tradition help indicate a sense of Irish identity, as much as the musical lines in poems such as "A Dog's Life", which signal to that other kind of musicality weaved in verses and that form what Ezra Pound has long defined as *melopoea*. The same Irish belonging which identifies Dugort and Howth (in the poems "A Ditch in Dugort" and "Hill of Howth") displays the contemporary cosmopolitanism of which Irishness is made.

It is the same cosmopolitan hue that ranges from a poem ("The Cottage") that quotes Slievemore to others such as "Last Flight to Lanzarote" (where the Nobel prize winner José Saramago kept residence) and "3 Poems from the Galician" that Harmon finds the perfect pace for delving into metaphysics and reflections upon love, desire, life, living together, writing and other themes. His incursions into the Galician atmosphere as both translator and poet had earlier appeared, particularly, in a volume edited by Mary O'Donnell and Manuela Palacios (2010) in which Harmon translated one of the most acclaimed contemporary Galician poets Ana Romani. Therefore, the transit amongst other geopolitical spaces and realities grants Harmon the multicultural knowledge to convey the contemporary meaning of Irish belonging/Irishness. This means reflections upon life and the belief in religion and science ("Speed"), which go along poems that reveal the nature of the senses, and the inevitability of passion, such as "Just for Now", "Finding Your Knickers in the Park", "Her New Curate". The evocation of memory, the conventional motive of lyricism, is also present in *Loose Connections*, as in the poem "A Distant Place", showing that the system of genres still accepts literary enunciation nowadays. In short, Harmon's poetry once again proves that the lyric-I's effacement is unnecessary, in times of cosmopolitan subjectification.

In other words, the subjectification process is still inevitable in poetry and does not give argument to the idea of a non-lyric poetry. José Guilherme Merquior apud Arturo Casas (1972) defines lyricism as that which would “consist of a mimesis of states of mind oriented toward the knowledge of universal human truths, using discursivity that is highly organized or controlled.”

In Harmon’s poems, emotions and feelings matter the most and places interest less than their influence upon people. Gilles Lipovetsky (2005) defines our contemporaneity as hypermodernity, thus, advancing on concepts earlier defined as postmodern. As we go along *Loose Connections*, we easily learn more about hypermodern identities, whose lyrical voices move along poems irrestrictively of places, marking their existences in global life atmospheres. *Loose Connections* is about love and our capacity to reinvent ourselves in a global, hypermodern world, as it teaches us to reconnect to ourselves and to the universe around us, by pointing out to our emotional frontiers: that which is said, and that which is still silenced within ourselves, ready to be said (or, not quite so).

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## **Works Cited**

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