

Abstract

This thesis compares short stories by the New Zealand-born author Katherine Mansfield (1888–1923) and the Anglo-Irish writer Elizabeth Bowen (1899–1973), namely Mansfield's short story collection *Bliss and Other Stories* (1920) and Bowen's *The Demon Lover and Other Stories* (1945). It aims to offer a relatively complex view: it discusses the form as well as the content of the short stories, illustrating the arguments with concrete examples from the short stories, famous ones as well as less known; it suggests various influences that may reflect in the short stories, it offers opinions of notable critics on the individual authors and it also occasionally mentions the authors' own opinions on their work and literature in general. There are three chapters in the body of the thesis. One of them provides contextual information about the possible influences that may have shaped the authors' writing as well as about some critical approaches to their work. The other two chapters analyse the form and content of the stories, respectively. The discussion of formal aspects of Mansfield's and Bowen's short stories focuses on various features of the short stories that may be described as impressionist or lyrical, and on technical devices that may be compared to film. The analysis of content is concerned especially with themes, characters and also objects that appear in the stories and serve as means of characterization.

Key words: Katherine Mansfield, Elizabeth Bowen, short story, 20th-century literature, modernism, Bloomsbury group, female writers, New Zealand literature, Irish literature, *Bliss and Other Stories*, *The Demon Lover and Other Stories*