

Abstracts

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ABSTRACTS

Valeria Wagner: *Otherness in Perspective: Narrative Strategies in El Hablador, and El cuento del ventrílocuo.*

In this paper Valeria Wagner questions the notion of perspective, so as conceived in modern occidental tradition, by means of two tales: *El Hablador* (Vargas Llosa) y *El cuento del ventrílocuo* (Melville). Both tales explore the future of the Other – analyzed in terms of modernization and hybridization, and the menaces they represent for America's peoples and cultures – opposing the notion of elusive Otherness to perspective, that is, a means of controlling reading and representation as a construction of reality. The two tales, according to Wagner's analysis, try to cross the limits of perspective, to think Otherness in a vital dimension against a sort of museographic future and of unhistorical assimilation, by means of ventriloquial narrative strategies. The conclusions Wagner comes to are different: Vargas Llosa, by means of ventriloquial narrative strategy based on the superposition and assimilation of the narrator's voice and the words of the "hablador", questions the notions of authority, perspective and representation, and shapes the tale in a heteronymous way, what allows him to capture the elusive voice of the Otherness. Melville's narrator, separating his voice from its origins according to the ancestral ventriloquial tradition, uses a voice that, far from designating someone, stresses the presence of an impersonal voice always and ever since circulating, a voice that at the same time evokes places and bodies, and draws attention to illegitimate forms of power.

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José María Pozuelo Yvancos: *Historical Uttering, and Narrative Constructing. Once again on the "moriscos" in the Quichotte.*

This paper discusses how literature can be understood to represent history through a reading of the episode of the Moriscos in the *Don Quixote*. The episode of the Moriscos stands out in Cervantes' text, not only because it is the only one to address a historical event contemporary to the writing of the narrative, but also because in

order to do so, it takes on specific formal features. The author concentrates on the latter, arguing that Cervantes conveys his position with regards to the expulsion of the Moriscos and its complex, multiple and problematic nature, less through the explicit discourses of the characters (their “historical saying”) than through the scenic arrangements of their interaction, which constitutes the narrative’s performative rendering of the conflictive historical event.

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Rodrigo Browne Sartori: *Resistance and Anthropophagous Re-readings, Cultural Studies and (In)Discipline.*

This paper argues in favor of an *anthropophagous symbolical strategy* as a form of resistance to Empire (Hardt and Negri). It proposes re-readings of pre-modern, modern and post-modern understandings of anthropophagy and of cannibalism, highlighting the ways in which this practice can constitute an affirmative formulation of the subversive counter imperial projects of contemporary thinkers such as Deleuze (rhizomic identities), García Canclini (hybridity), Derrida (difference-*différance*), Talens (des-incorporated simulacra), and others. The author believes that the notion of anthropophagy can re-invigorate those ideas and notions that articulate inter- and trans-disciplinary practices, and which have been “used up” in the course of development of Cultural Studies.

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Hugo Bizarri, and Julio Peñate: *History in Literature.*

This paper introduces a cycle of conferences organized by the University of Fribourg on the relationship between history and literature in the Middle Ages. The authors thus sketch a first approach to the more general question of the relationship between literature and history, through that of history and the novel. They start out considering the historical novel as one that explicitly incurs into the past of a given community, to then further distinguish various shades of “historicity” in the novel. They then present the editorial success of historical novels, and the kinds of historical scenarios that occur most often, and finally conclude with a discussion of the literary and cultural meaning of the proliferation of the historical novel in Spain in the past decades.

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Fernando Gómez Redondo: *Metaliterature, and Intertextuality in Narratives about Medieval Topics.*

The increasing popularity of novels set in the Middle Ages is without doubt one of the most striking literary phenomena of the last decade. To a great extent, these novels are based on intertextual discourse and metaliterary devices: the Middle Ages appear in the plot thanks to the writers' knowledge of basic texts or cultural models which they rewrite in their own work. Intertextuality is the most efficient strategy for generating metaliterary levels, because it allows the multiplication of narrative voices, literary registers and microtexts. However, none of these mechanisms is an invention of the modern novel: they already exist in the medieval texts.

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Paloma Díaz Mas: *From Historical Essay to Historical Novel.*

In this paper Paloma Díaz-Mas, from her double perspective as historian and writer, analyses – in this moment of apogee of the historical novel and apparition of a specific specialized reader – the relations and the mutual dues between the historical novel and the historical essay. Two main questions articulate the entire work: Where are the boundaries between what literature is and what is not? Where is the frontier between fictional narrative and historiographical narration? The conclusion she comes to, through her personal experience as historical novels' writer, is that it does not exist anymore an insurmountable frontier between the historical novel and the historical essay. And more: their relations are more and more dimmed because if on one side the essay takes part to the novel providing it with documentary material and versosimilitude, on the other side the novel takes part to the essay novelizing History, that is, relating History in a more entertaining and pleasant way, although never omitting the reflections on History and the way History is told.

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José Luis Corral Lafuente: *Fiction in History: narratives about the Middle Ages.*

In the first part of his article, intitled "History and fiction", José Luis Corral reflects on the need to reinterpret and rewrite the past, particularly that of the medieval age. He analyses today's political uses of History, then reviews some of the most widespread clichés associated to certain times of History and, finally, he studies the present boom of "national fictions" in European medievalism.

Among the analysed cases, he concentrates on the Spanish one. In the second part of the article, "Historical narratives and novel about the Middle Ages", the author analyses the historical novel as a genre and its main milestones. By way of conclusion, he offers a set of tips on how to approach the writing of this genre that he knows himself as an author.

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María Jesús Lacarra: *The Milky Way in Contemporary Literature: the Case of Luis Mateo Díez.*

After a brief review of the main Spanish contemporary novels revolving around the Way of Saint James, María Jesús Lacarra concentrates on the work of Luis Mateo Díez. Though never directly evoked, the Way of St. James appears as an almost ubiquitous element in the narrative of this writer from León. María Jesús Lacarra explores the topic of St. James through the evolution of the pilgrim's figure, on the one hand; and through the various legends about lakes flooding Castilian villages, on the other. In so doing, the author of the article reveals the importance of oral narratives and that of the topic of the disappeared rural world in the work of Luis Mateo Díez, both closely linked to the Way of St. James. Indeed, the latter constitutes a crucial element in a great deal of the stories by the creator of Celama's mythic dimension.