

crítico de *La desheredada* (1881) es el pórtico de la teoría de la novela española de la Restauración. Para entonces Alas está embargado por la nueva poética naturalista; y ahora, en los artículos de 1885 y 1886, en el contexto de las reflexiones sobre el género que llevan a cabo Valera y Altamira, Clarín inicia un proceso de revisión crítica de la estética naturalista, a la vez que establece —según atinadas palabras de Vilanova—, «aunque en forma dispersa y fragmentaria, una verdadera teoría de la novela» (p. 37).

De esa fragmentaria y brillante reflexión sobre el género en la órbita naturalista, Vilanova muestra el interés de Alas por la concepción del personaje novelesco —elemento clave en la configuración del relato decimonónico— y más en concreto por «la estrecha conexión e interdependencia entre lo físico y lo psíquico» (p. 49). Esta concepción, verdadero sostén de su secular naturalismo espiritualista, tiene su punto de partida en el intento de «armonizar los postulados más fecundos e innovadores del naturalismo experimental con las más valiosas aportaciones de la novela realista, psicológica y de análisis» (p. 55). En este sentido, el profesor Vilanova documenta con exquisito rigor las fuentes zulescas (en *Les Romanciers Naturalistes*) de algunas afirmaciones de Clarín, lo que constituye, sin duda, la aportación más valiosa de su denso prólogo.

En resumen, la presente edición de *Nueva Campaña* nos ofrece un ejemplo más de la labor trascendente y decisiva que Alas realizó en el panorama de las letras españolas de la Restauración. El lector transitará por las sendas inteligentes y profundas, irónicas y sarcásticas, con las que Clarín preludiaba la fascinante labor de Miguel de Unamuno, su verdadero continuador no sólo en el análisis de la cultura española sino también en las teorizaciones sobre la novela.

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ADOLFO SOTELO VÁZQUEZ

Camilo José Cela Conde, *Cela, mi padre*, Madrid, Temas de Hoy, 1989, 255 pp.

While the title of this quasi-biography about the Nobel prize winner attests to the relationship between the biographer and his subject, their kinship is unequivocally confirmed by the tongue-

in-cheek humor that emanates from the titles of the introductions and the epilogue that encompass the superbly interspersed photographs and eight chapters of the book. If from nothing more than this cursory overview of the work at hand, little doubt remains for the reader that this firsthand narration by Cela's son will be imbued with much of the wit and sarcasm that generally characterize the father's own prose and otherwise uncanny pronouncements. All things considered, it is this very jocosity that underlies both the nature of what is shared with the reader and how it is transmitted, thereby dismissing almost from the onset any hopes of finding such typically biographical minutiae about Camilo José Cela as dates and blow-by-blow chronological accounts of his life.; the author begins by warning the reader *whoever really wants to know... (Cela) will have to read his books*¹. The outcome, then, of this a-biographical stance is the unpretentious narration of various events which highlight key points in Camilo José Cela's life and career, all of which, when all is said and done, leave the reader with a greater understanding of and closeness to Camilo José Cela the human being behind the audacious, irreverent and recalcitrant writer.

Notwithstanding the geographical markings of most of the chapters — «Madrid», «Cercedilla y Cebreros», «José Villalonga 87», «La Bonanova» and «VoráGINE literaria y algo más» — which serve as textual as well as thematic indicators of the important moments in Camilo José Cela's life, one becomes aware of a subtly interwoven subtext that deals primarily with the son's own self-image in counterpoint to that of his father's evolving and highly polemic profession in post-Civil War Spain. Parallel to this psychologically engaging father-son, biographer-subject, repartee is the discerning statement which the author himself — having been raised, schooled and molded in the Francoist Spain of the fifties and sixties — seems to make about the erstwhile Nationalist Movement.

From a purely thematic point of view, the places alluded to in the chapter titles serve as structural underpinnings for what this book really is all about: an anecdotal recounting of Camilo José Cela's literary career. In this regard, the first chapter speaks of the economically strapped pre- and post- *La familia de Pascual Duarte* days as they developed in Madrid immediately following

¹ The underlined represents the reviewer's translation, 21.

the end of the country's civil strife. Subsequent chapters continue along similar lines, with chapter three serving as the turning point in Camilo José Cela's career when his novel, *La catira* (The Blonde) was commissioned by the Venezuelan government and henceforth proved to be the beginning of that financial stability that allowed its author to decide to leave Madrid for good and establish permanent residence in Mallorca. It is from that time on in the mid-fifties that Cela's literary undertakings really began to flourish and leave their mark on the then virtually dormant intellectual life of Spain. As Camilo José Cela undertakes such endeavors as the founding of the «Conversaciones Poéticas de Formentor» in 1959, the creation of *Papeles de Son Armadans* in 1956, the implementation of the «Alfaguara» publishing house, and the writing of some of his most significant novels since *La colmena*, he also strategically moves his family and household from one location to another in Mallorca, changes which are meticulously plotted in chapters four through seven.

As one might imagine, interspersed throughout these chapters are the names of Camilo José Cela's friends — Gregorio Marañón, Pablo Picasso, Pío Baroja, Joan Miró, etc. —, renditions of many «tales» both legendary and told-for-the-first-time, and the author's recollection of his father's election to the Royal Spanish Academy in 1957 and later to the Spanish Parliament where he served as a senator. As the accomplishments of Camilo José Cela's professional life are disclosed, so too are some aspects of his more personal: his fascination with gazing upon cattle and the empowerment it brings him, his incorrigible bad habits as a motorist, the peculiarity of his snoring, etc. On a more sublime level and as the final chapters of the book materialize, the author conscientiously strives to point out what appears to be for him his father's most salient characteristic: an unbridled rebelliousness and ensuing abhorrence of rules, formulae and prescriptive dictates for human behavior.

For the reader who perhaps retains a mental image of the front cover of the 25 december 1989 issue of the magazine *¡Hola!* — on which are exhibited photos of Cela's ex-wife Charo, Maria Castaño and himself accepting the Nobel prize in Stockholm —, curiosity about whether or not the author will make any reference to his father's reputed amorous leanings is assuaged in the «Epilogue», where the issue is addressed by way of a tacit, albeit sar-

donic, allusion to its veracity. Whether this is merely and quite simply a sign of the author's allegiance to his kinship and to his father's right to privacy or only a matter of good taste, the reader comes away from a reading of this book with a sense of humanity and integrity for the much maligned Nobel prize winner.

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CREACIÓN

Eduardo Mendoza, *La isla inaudita*. Barcelona, Seix Barral, 1989, 236 pp.

La isla inaudita, quinta novela de Eduardo Mendoza, se desarrolla por una vía intermedia entre la monumentalidad de *La verdad sobre el caso Savolta* y *La ciudad de los prodigios*, y la aparente levedad de *El misterio de la cripta embrujada* y *El laberinto de las aceitunas*, consideradas (equivocadamente, según mi opinión) novelas «menores» dentro de la trayectoria del autor. En común con el resto de la producción novelística de Mendoza, *La isla inaudita* destaca por una distintiva cualidad de *exceso*, tanto en cuanto al uso del lenguaje como a las formas narrativas y la capacidad imaginativa empleada. Sin atenerse a patrones pre-establecidos, la novela adopta libremente elementos de diferentes géneros literarios, de variados discursos heterogéneos, mezclando distintos niveles de realidad, en una irónica diatriba contra el ordenado racionalismo burgués.

Aunque no sigue las pautas narrativas ensayadas anteriormente con éxito por el autor (reconstrucción imaginaria histórica, o aventura policíaco-picaresca), esta novela explora la relación —siempre central en Mendoza— entre el individuo y el desorden que le rodea, manifestado en el espacio narrativo de la ciudad. La ciudad ocupa obviamente un papel protagonista, funcionando como metáfora del universo, imagen de la organización de la realidad y reflejo del yo individual. Mendoza utiliza en esta novela la estrategia narrativa del viaje como forma de conocimiento; la exploración física se yuxtapone a la historia de una búsqueda espiritual. El protagonista, Fábregas, es un empresario barcelonés enfrentado en el espejo al hastío de su vida rutinaria, que decide romper las