

tucky let far too many errata slip by to deserve equal praise, although the book is handsomely formatted.) One admires as well Johnson's unwavering focus on the way philosophical issues and debates (in)formed the work of these writers, many of whom — especially in the Generation of 1914— are not conventionally identified with the philosophical novel. The same clarity of purpose must have guided her research, to judge from the impressive variety of sources she employs to trace, in a most readable way, the development of the writers' ideas. Throughout *Crossfire*, Johnson's skills as a literary critic are evident in her discussion of elements of form and literary techniques that serve in the individual novels to refract and comment on the ideas presented. It is this perspicuous analysis which, in the end, makes *Crossfire* far more than a «simple» history of philosophical currents and polemics in Spanish fiction of the first third of the twentieth century.

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Gullón, Germán. *La novela moderna en España (1885-1902); los albores de la modernidad*. Madrid, Taurus, 1992, 217 pp.

This is the first in a projected series of four volumes on the evolution of the modern novel in Spain. Essentially, it is a student manual or guidebook whose purpose is to provide a summary of *fin de siglo* narrative through an analysis of several key works. Starting with an initial chapter on the idea of the modern in literature, Gullón describes what he considers the founding or beginning phase of the modern Spanish novel, a process he presents in three moments or stages. First, there was a so called dawning or precursor phase in the mid-1880s; then came a second moment of affirmation during the 1890s; and finally there was a breakthrough or triumph during the «miracle year» of 1902, which is where the volume ends. The argument is developed almost exclusively through a detailed analysis of eight representative works: *Fortunata y Jacinta* (1887) and *La Regenta* (1885) for the moment of inception; *Paz en la guerra* (1897) and *Los trabajos del infatigable creador Pío Cid* (1898) for the 1890s; and for 1902, the four classical novels so often identified with *modernismo* and

*noventayocho: Camino de perfección, Sonata de otoño, Amor y pedagogía, and La voluntad.*

The opening chapter on modern literature is perhaps the weakest part of the book because it is so elementary. Gullón suggests that toward the end of the nineteenth century, science and technology increased the availability of leisure time and thereby permitted people to explore and deepen their individuality. As a result, referential narrative was slowly replaced by a new subjective writing that was sensitive to interior time (*la durée*), fragmentation, and an interest in puntillism and the imprecise. The modern novel was thus much more subjectivistic than that which preceded it while at the same time possessing a greater sensitivity to language and form.

The problem is not that such ideas are incorrect, but that they are so obvious as to be trivial. Ultimately, they are too vague for understanding the specific situation of Spain, where a major issue was the difficulty or slowness with which social modernity took hold. Thus, it is important to recognize the degree to which writers remained deeply attracted to traditional understandings even as they also began to discover modernity. For example, we would fail to comprehend figures such as Clarín, Ganivet, Unamuno, or Valle-Inclán if we overlooked the persistent conflict in their work between a desire for change and a perceived need to maintain a sense of the past. This conflict can go a long way toward helping us understand the fragility of the subject as developed in their work. They were caught between tradition and change, which is to say, a strong but unsatisfactory past and a desirable but uncertain modernity. Unfortunately, Gullón seems completely unaware of the problem and fails to show the nuances it creates.

On the other hand, one of his strengths is to begin the account of modern narrative with Galdós and Clarín, both of whom are often considered merely as realists or naturalists and therefore not yet a part of the modern novel. To Gullón, Galdós represents the threshold of modernity, a writer whose sensitivity to the newly emergent urban consciousness of the late nineteenth century led to an exploration of the subject as autonomous and independent, an idea fully evident in *Fortunata y Jacinta*. The critic thinks this is no less present in *La Regenta*, with the added benefit that Alas goes much further than Galdós in developing a narrative form that is authentically modern, especially in his use of indirect free style. In

the end, one would have wished for a more profound discussion of subjectivity in *La Regenta*, but ultimately, it is a virtue of the book that both Galdós and Clarín are given their rightful place as founders of the modern novel in Spain.

Another strength of the work is to avoid most of the old clichés about *modernismo* and the Generation of 1898, neither of which receive more than passing mention in the volume. In Gullón's view, the issue is how *fin de siglo* writers pursued the theme of subjectivity while attempting to find a narrative form adequate to it. In the 1890s, both Unamuno and Ganivet undertook this quest with increasing intensity, thereby moving decisively toward a break with realism. *Paz en la guerra* deploys Unamuno's existential view of the self-as-becoming while also exploring narrative forms that express the idea of living in the flow or *fluir* of the present. For his part, Ganivet develops an unreliable narrator while stripping away the layers covering the self so as to reach a point where the subject breaks down altogether. In this context, Gullón is correct to stress the importance of *Pío Cid*, which has not received the attention it deserves. Its inclusion in this volume will hopefully contribute to a better appreciation of its importance.

The so called «miracle year» of 1902 has been discussed on many occasions and Gullón provides a current overview without saying much that is new. Baroja's *Camino de perfección* shows a new emphasis on fragmented emplotment, multiperspectivism, and a trait that was common throughout the period, the so called *paisaje del alma* or description of the external world as an extension of the self. *Sonata de otoño* shows Valle-Inclán's pursuit of refined sensations, decadence, aestheticism, and the thematic link between erotic love and death. In *Amor y pedagogía*, Unamuno loosens up narrative emplotment by moving toward a whole new emphasis on interior monologue, dialogue, and a tragicomically ambiguous victory of love over reason. And finally, in *La voluntad*, Azorín fragments experience by creating a decentered world where subjectivity evaporates midst a sustained questioning of the value of progress. All four works are significant for the variety of their approaches to the issue of subjectivity and the formal break with earlier modes of narration.

Experts in *fin de siglo* narrative will not find much that is new here. Some will wish for more thorough discussions of works like *La Regenta* or *La voluntad*, and others will lament the absence of

this or that text they think should have been included (I would have liked to see some discussion of *El amigo Manso* or *Misericordia*, for example.) Still, the volume offers a basic orientation into the beginnings of modern narrative in Spain while moving beyond *modernismo*, the Generation of 1898, and other old fashioned notions.

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Ángeles Ezama Gil. *El cuento de la prensa y otros cuentos: Aproximación al estudio del relato breve entre 1890 y 1900*. Zaragoza, Universidad de Zaragoza, 1992, 252 pp.

Ezama Gil ofrece un panorama de conjunto del relato breve finisecular, según era difundido a través de la prensa «periódica» —tanto diarios como revistas— en la última década del siglo, y fija sus rasgos constitutivos. Procede a una caracterización formal del relato en base a la obra de siete autores: Manuel Bueno, Joaquín Dicenta, *Fernanflor*, *Silverio Lanza*, Jacinto Octavio Picón, Salvador Rueda y Eduardo Zamacois.

El libro, una tesis doctoral, es un análisis laborioso dirigido a clasificar y demarcar un corpus de ficción que apenas ha recibido atención crítica. Sin embargo, el afán inventarial asfixia la posibilidad de desarrollar el comentario crítico sobre los problemas que el género plantea y que se empiezan a perfilar en los dos primeros capítulos.

El libro se divide en siete capítulos, rematados con unas conclusiones y una bibliografía. Los dos primeros, «El cuento (1890-1900): Medios de difusión» y «El cuento periodístico: La determinación del medio sobre el género» ofrecen una informativa introducción al desarrollo de la prensa periódica en estos años y a la vinculación que el relato mantiene con ella. Se plantea el influjo decisivo que las circunstancias de este medio difusor ejercen sobre el relato breve en cuanto a su configuración como género independiente y a la consolidación del término «cuento». Su convivencia con formas periodísticas resulta en «una quiebra de los límites entre realidad y ficción» (p. 43) que el capítulo segundo examina en su aspecto más formal, pero sin intentar definir términos problemáticos, como «veracidad», «la realidad de lo narrado», «la rea-