

Béguelin-Argimon analiza el cuento "El caso del traductor infiel" como un ejemplo novedoso de metaficción, ya que en él se indaga no sólo en la relación entre el autor y su ficción sino entre el autor, la ficción y el traductor. Asunción Castro Díez aborda el tratamiento del "tema americano" en *Las crónicas mestizas*, una trilogía formada por *El oro de los sueños*, *La tierra del tiempo perdido* y *Las lágrimas del sol*, novelas unidas por el mismo protagonista, Miguel Villacé Yólotl. En su análisis, la crítica destaca la intertextualidad con la novela histórica, la novela pastoril y picaresca, la crónica, la novela de caballería y la poesía mística. Esther Cuadrat evidencia el diálogo que las novelas de Merino establecen con las obras de Julio Cortázar, Lewis Carroll, García Márquez, Stevenson, Defoe y otros. José Manuel Trabado Cabado explica la importancia de lo que llama "las escrituras intermedias" en *Los Invisibles*: la confesión, la narración maravillosa y el ensayo; comenta también los usos metafóricos de la invisibilidad en la novela.

Los críticos no entran en debates ni desacuerdos, sino que más bien coinciden en sus observaciones. El orden de los ensayos en el libro parece un tanto accidental. El libro en su conjunto, ofrece una lectura fragmentada, algo común en volúmenes que compilan diversas ponencias de un coloquio. El valor de este libro es servir de guía y ayuda para los estudiantes de literatura y para los críticos de la obra de José María Merino, quienes encontrarán allí diversas ideas y referencias bibliográficas.

Kata Beilin

University of Wisconsin, Madison

DuPont, Denise. *Realism as Resistance: Romanticism and Authorship in Galdós, Clarín and Baroja*. Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 2006. 250 pp.

In *Realism as Resistance: Romanticism and Authorship in Galdós, Clarín and Baroja*, Denise DuPont examines the individual and literary struggle to overcome the attraction of romanticism and adopt a realist discourse and worldview. DuPont explores this dynamic through the figure of the "author-character," that is, a character who writes texts, either literally (by becoming an author) or figuratively (by inventing narratives that s/he attempts to act out). With the exception of Ana Ozores, all of the author-characters studied seek to gain power by subscribing to realism and by overcoming their attraction to romanticism, which they associate with quixotism, immaturity, the feminine, the irrational, and the unrefined tastes and desires of the general reader and the masses. What Dupont's study ultimately reveals, however, is realism's incongruity with both the authorial

project itself and political activism. First, as aspiring authors who seek to distinguish themselves from the masses, these author-characters place themselves in the role of the hero, thereby ironically playing the protagonist in a romantic adventure in their quest to become realist authors. Secondly, and along the same lines, a belief in romantic heroism is shown to be an essential ingredient in political and social activism as well as creativity since author-characters who give up their poetic visions of themselves and society lose their inspiration and become passive observers rather than active participants in the artistic and cultural transformations taking place. Finally, in order to acquire an audience and establish themselves as authors, these characters are forced to satisfy the general reader's preference for entertaining stories of romantic adventure. In other words, the author-characters' attempts to gain autonomy from the influence of the readers/masses is futile as the latter's romantic yearnings must be taken into account in the creation of any narrative. Thus, in DuPont's words, these author-characters are forced to "reconcile the hegemony of realism with the irresistible pull of romanticism" (14).

The first three chapters of *Realism as Resistance* are devoted to the first series of Galdós' *Episodios Nacionales*, ten novels beginning with *Trafalgar* and ending with *La batalla de los Arapiles*. Here DuPont follows the narrator and author-character Gabriel Araceli in his development as an author. Although Gabriel comes to associate himself with the realist project, he also recognizes that both his desire to be an author and a patriotic defender of his nation require a belief in romantic models of heroism. Furthermore, as an author who must acquire a reading public, he comes to understand that he must make use of romanticism in order to captivate his audience. Thus, paradoxically, Gabriel's realist project is dependent on romanticism. In chapter 4, DuPont studies Baroja's trilogy *La lucha por la vida* and how the protagonist Manuel Alcázar struggles between romanticism and realism as he "vacillates between living on the margins of society and striving for greater economic and emotional security" (141). When Manuel finally chooses a life dedicated to the latter, a life that involves marriage and the ownership of property, it also coincides with his passivity, lack of creativity, and his withdrawal from political life. Thus, here, the author-character's renunciation of romanticism leads to the abandonment of political activism. In chapter 5, DuPont reads *La Regenta* as a battle between three competing author-characters (Ana, Fermín and Álvaro). Both Fermín and Álvaro attempt to seduce Ana by creating romantic narratives that she will want to live out. While Fermín and Álvaro try to resist their own attractions to romanticism, they are ultimately no more immune than Ana as all three share the same romantic desire to see themselves as superior to the rest of Vestustan society. Both suitors ultimately fail as authors, however, since Ana chooses to become the writer and protagonist of her

own narrative, a narrative which is wholeheartedly romantic, unlike the narratives of the two male "authors." Thus, in DuPont's reading, it is precisely Ana's unambiguous acceptance of romanticism that converts her into the only successful author-character within the text.

DuPont's work shines in its detailed analyses of the texts she studies. Scholars of Galdos' *Episodios Nacionales*, Clarín's *La Regenta* and/or Baroja's *La lucha por la vida*, will appreciate Dupont's new insights into these works. Also, the perennial conflict between romanticism and realism, which is meticulously explored in its psychological, political, and literary manifestations, should be of interest to scholars of all periods and genres. The weakness of DuPont's study, however, is its failure to qualify the usage of the terms "romanticism" and "realism" in any way. The author uses the terms indiscriminately to refer to disparate concepts such as specific nineteenth-century literary movements, recurrent literary modes, a general worldview and certain political affiliations. Also, there seems to be some inconsistency in the usage of the terms. For example, in one instance romanticism is a synonym for idealism ("idealism [*or* romanticism]" 13), in another it is not ("romanticism *and* idealism" 22). The result is that the terms become protean, catchall phrases whose specific meaning is difficult to ascertain. While this multiplicity serves DuPont's purpose well in that it allows her to expand the scope of her analysis, it is employed at the expense of clarity. Nevertheless, apart from the ambiguous terminology, DuPont's study sheds new light on the literary works and the time period she studies. She adds to the debate on the viability of literary classifications by deconstructing the concept of "pure realism." Moreover, her argument that "romanticism" is necessary for individual growth, political progress, and artistic creativity brings into question the tendency to disregard idealistic literature as a "low" form of culture. In short, *Realism as Resistance* leaves the reader with the important question: is a certain degree of idealism (quixotism) not in fact a necessary part of both life and literature?

Jennifer Smith
Southern Illinois University, Carbondale

Larson, Susan and Eva Woods, eds. *Visualizing Spanish Modernity*, New York: Berg, 2005. 358 pp.

Given the tensions surrounding modernity in Spain, *Visualizing Spanish Modernity*, edited by Susan Larson and Eva Woods, is a welcome and significant contribution to peninsular studies and to visual studies. In their incisive introduction, the editors explicate the volume's interdisciplinary approach to visual cultures and explain the aim to, "interrogate how we