

specifically on writers and works, reveals the readiness of the Spanish authors to incorporate ideas and notions of critical methodology from outside Spain. This is heartening. Indeed, if one were to take this anthology of essays as exemplary of critical discourse here and now about Hispanic literature, one would readily grant that in most cases it reveals a robust desire to embrace revisionist approaches and to renew patterns of critical discourse. But, from this side of the Atlantic, one notices the absence of feminist and queer critical approaches as well as of strongly theoretical contributions. Does this one wonders, reflect editorial tastes, or a residual conservatism in certain areas of current criticism of modern Hispanic literature?

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Tolliver, Joyce. *Cigar Smoke and Violet Water: Gendered Discourse in the Stories of Emilia Pardo Bazán*. Lewisburg PA, Bucknell UP, 1998, 219 pp.

As the methodology for this cogent and readable study, Tolliver has chosen linguistic discourse theory, narratology, and a keenly feminist sensibility. Beginning with three riveting scenarios taken from different short stories, she evinces the heterogeneity of this part of Emilia Pardo Bazán's prodigious literary production. Though she is not by any means a neglected author, the critic contends that parts of her opus, particularly her short stories and essays, have not been scrutinized beyond their relevance to literary naturalism. This is a shame considering that her most active years as a short-story writer were from 1890 to 1920, coinciding with a burgeoning intensity in the feminist movement in the rest of Europe and the United States.

Tolliver finds that «the sheer number of her stories has contributed to their critical neglect, for when all 580 of them are conceived of as an autonomous body, there is little critics can do, and little indeed that they have done, but classify them» (18). She concentrates on six short stories that yield particularly meaningful conclusions and that appear in current anthologies in Spanish and English, including the twin MLA volumes (1996) to which she has contributed.

The «cigar smoke» and «violet water» encapsulate as images the double-bind that Tolliver detects in the author's writing and publishing situation. In order to establish herself as a writer, doña Emilia had to avoid too great an identification with her own gender, for she would thus be confining herself to the women's presses. On the other hand, her feminist consciousness did not permit her to identify totally with the perspectives of masculine writing, which still harbored anti-feminist and often misogynistic attitudes. Pardo Bazán strove toward androgyny, a writing

persona free of gender markers that would not invite comparisons to popular and simplistic notions of masculine vs. feminine writing, or cigar smoke and violet water. Tolliver catches the impossibility of writing as an androgyne. The author placed her writings in a context surrounded by male authors, for whom the conventional reader could be presumed male as well. This explains why, in her fiction «the reproduction of dominant discourse, and thus of the ideology inhering in it, coexists in the same text with narrative tactics that undermine that discourse and that ideology» (38). The individual studies prove that the struggle between cigar smoke and violet water leads to an enriching complexity of the author's narrative voice.

The second chapter succinctly outlines the misogynist discourse that is liberally sprinkled throughout the mainstream periodicals in which most of Pardo Bazán's short stories were first published. Attacks on suffrage, infuriatingly essentialist definitions of femininity and the alarming prophecy that women who undertake jobs heretofore considered in the male domain would take on male physical traits fill the pages. Surveying the new journals geared to a female readership that sprang up in the first two decades of the last century, none is found to be particularly liberal or feminist. While the author published her own monthly journal *Nuevo Teatro Crítico* for two years, she did not wish to limit herself to a sole venue of expression. Strategies of indirection and engendering would have to camouflage her peculiarity in the context in which her writings appeared.

Chapter Three focuses on two stories with similar plots but different narrative voices, «El encaje roto» and «La punta del cigarro», and establishes that the construction of gender for Pardo Bazán implies both different value systems and different schema of consciousness. In both stories, a minor incident signals a dramatic change in a love relationship between a man and a woman. A female character narrates «El encaje roto» as a story that was told to her by another female character, the one who actually experienced the event. The narrative situation here is akin to that of the epistolary novel, the paradigmatic feminine genre since the Enlightenment. Readers are made privy to the story in the same way that the framing narrator is made privy to it by the protagonist, so it is like a string of tales told in secrecy. Narrative authority is relinquished by both the framing narrator, who admits that she missed the event, and the internal narrator, who is certain that she will not be believed. Based on Lanser's discourse analysis, Tolliver finds this narrative structure to be coded as female, with women enforcing silence upon themselves. The third-person narrator of «La punta del cigarro», on the other hand, is mainly focalized through a male character's experience of a changed relationship, and addresses a public and anonymous narratee with confidence and authority. However, when it comes to the dramatic event that has wrought an irreversible change in the protagonist's mar-

riage, the narrator can only echo the husband's ignorance of what caused the transformation in his wife's behavior. Husband, narrator, and readers miss out on the story-within-a-story that must be known only by the wife.

Chapter Four notes that none of the author's novels and novellas and only a few of her short stories employ female narrators, most likely in order to avoid association with flowery feminine fiction of the day. Nonetheless, Tolliver uncovers the narrative transvestism or ventriloquism of «¿Cobardía?», a story whose male narrator ironically subverts the masculine custom of the duel of honor. The fifth chapter skillfully searches for the «disappearing woman» in «Mi suicidio». Linguistic anomalies and shifting narrative styles are examined to delineate the slippage between two contrasting scripts (Romantic Suicide vs. Avenged Infidelity) and two contrasting consciousnesses (the narrator past and present) that adds intrigue to a tale of salvation via romantic disillusionment.

In a chapter on «No lo invento», one of the most macabre and Gothic stories, Tolliver illustrates the textual strategies that serve to lessen the narrator's accountability in telling the story of a necrophiliac gravedigger caught in the act by a bereaved young suitor. She also reveals the fascinating interplay of references to female passivity and virtue and the aesthetic of the exquisite female corpse as an ironic response to certain currents of necrophilia that were present in Romantic, Gothic, Symbolist, and Modernist-Decadentist discourses. Chapter Seven studies «Náufragas» as an «indictment of women's economic servitude» (155) that calls attention to the vulnerability of the *ángel del hogar* when she lacks the support of male financial planning.

Emilia Pardo Bazán's short stories are an enjoyable and effective way of introducing the undergraduate student to nineteenth-century Realism. Each chapter of Tolliver's excellent book addresses questions that are pertinent to the interpretation of the stories in the classroom. In addition to being indispensable for teaching, it will be a foundation for further work on Pardo Bazán's short stories and the history of the short story in Spain. A host of qualities commend themselves to the reader, including the keenness of its critical insight, the clarity of its expression, and the thorough research of both texts and contexts. Tolliver has done a great service to doña Emilia; all that is left to be desired is a rediscovery in popular culture such as the one that has bolstered Jane Austen's visibility in English-language movies and media in recent years. Altogether possible, if Fernando Trueba were to direct Penélope Cruz in an adaptation of *Insolación*.

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