Lenguaje, arte y revoluciones ayer y hoy

Lenguaje, arte y revoluciones ayer y hoy: New Approaches to Hispanic Linguistic, Literary, and Cultural Studies

Edited by

Alejandro Cortazar and Rafael Orozco

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INTRODUCTION

This volume consists of a selection of revised and expanded papers originally presented at the XXVII Biennial Louisiana Conference on Hispanic Languages and Literatures, held February 11-13, 2010. It is a volume thematically divided in two main parts: Part I: Literary and Cultural Studies, and Part II: Linguistic and Cultural Studies.

The theme of our 2010 conference was "Independence, Revolution, and New Reflections on the *Recollections of Things to Come*: 1810, 1910, 2010, and Beyond." With this event we wanted to contribute and to be part of this 2010 Bicentennial Commemoration of Independence from Spain, which has given place to numerous types of manifestations with different meanings in every region of the Hispanic American continent and elsewhere. In fact, for us in academia it has represented an opportunity to look back onto those crucial moments of hope, change, defeat, and social unrest that have contributed to the foundation of national histories, particularly by way of finding representation through a continuously evolving cultural production that extends up to the present day. The eight essays included in Part I correspond to a new trend of cultural representation in an attempt to finding new meaning(s). They explore a series of reflections on some of those moments—from the period that begins with the cry for independence in 1810 and that spans beyond 2010—textually translated as new approaches of analysis on the "recollections of things to come," for good or bad. The contexts examined evince a series of critical occurrences related to periods of change for democracy and social justice that may eventually lead to "revolutionary" or "emancipating" (read also "revealing") ends, at least by way of artistic, textual manifestations. Fallowing on these contexts several essays also explore the authors' artistic and symbolic mechanisms that may even lead to new levels of re-signification of the text-object of study. Thus, as the textual analysis progresses the relevance of said occurrence (i.e., a nationalist ethnic phobia or a "revolutionary" communal lynching among other possibilities) ends up developing in importance unfolding itself onto different symbolic and semantic levels. Therefore, through this process of exploration writing becomes—like a weaving thread, at times longer than others—a very meaningful revolutionary act. This is evinced in each and every finding pointing towards the recontextualization and reconfiguration—

and consequently the integration if not the rejection—of the elements-ideas-subjects that were unattended, tergiversated, silenced, or simply excluded from the discourse promoted by the literary, political, or cultural agenda during times of change in Mexico and Hispanic America (Argentina, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Transnational Mexico in the United States). These are the types of analyses that at the end—as exemplified towards the conclusion of this Part I—can best be understood as alternative readings about occurrences or situations with potentially viable meanings, but at times also unexplainably undecipherable if not meaningless before the "new" and continuing "revolutions."

Let us chronologically begin from north to south with the Grito de Dolores (1810) and the figure of father Miguel Hidalgo as a response to a call for representation of Mexican history and identity launched by intellectuals in the context of the Mexican Reform (1855-1867). Afflicted with the preoccupation of finishing the battle against the conservative forces and liberating Mexico, once and for all, from every foreign intervention, Reform intellectuals were also very aware that they still needed to win a more important battle, that is, the social battle. This battle consisted fundamentally of decolonizing the Mexican population from a mentality dependent upon European values and customs. One may ask what did the reiteration on old anti-Spanish sentiment have to do with the present situation, or even better, how could this Spanish phobia have been manipulated to serve that purpose? This is the issue that Gerardo Bobadilla Encinas tries to elucidate in his essay "Antiespañolismo y novela en México entre la primera y la segunda independencia: replanteamientos góticos y mitificaciones fundacionales." Bobadilla Encinas asserts that Mexican novelists employed a unique approach in providing an answer to this call through the gothic-style historical novel. He focuses his study on two exemplary novels: Juan Díaz Covarrubias's *Gil Gómez el insurgente o la hija del médico* (1858), and Juan A. Mateos's *Sacerdote y caudillo* (1869). The gothic subgenre had had certain influence in Mexican novels of the colonial period, but with Díaz Covarrubias and Mateos it certainly achieved a preponderant role with the use of the chiaroscuro (contrasting lights and shadows with their subsequent connotations) and the vigorous resurrection of anti-Spanish sentiment with the purpose of portraying a new and "true" appreciation of Mexico's Independence. The representations of darkness by these authors would refer to the time prior to Mexico's Independence as "a period of ignorance and oppression, of decadence and degradation" ('un periodo de ignorancia y opresión, de decadencia y degradación') in order to produce "terror before the colonial system," ('un terror ante la Colonia') and consequently give prominence to "the

articulation of an image of Independence as a mystical and supernatural act" ('la articulación de una imagen de la independencia como un acto místico y sobrenatural'). This is particularly the kind of act that would explain "the hero's capacity as predestination and enlightment" ('la capacidad del héroe como predestinación e iluminación') through which "the historic event—that is, Independece—acquires an almost messianic connotation which configures it as a providential act" ('el hecho histórico que es la independencia adquiere esa connotación mesiánica casi, que la configura como un hecho providencial').

From the literary artistry and messianic concepts for the interpretation of history, let us continue with a series of "revolutionary" editorial occurrences and their implied levels of significance, in other words, the latent message on the semantic field of the discourse that derived from a novelistic writing about a historical account in relation to the political arena of each time said novelistic writing would be published. This is what Wladimir Márquez Jiménez tries to disentangle in his essay "Delincuentes y bandidos, enamorados y suicidas: *Los piratas de la sabana* y la crítica a la institucionalidad política del liberalismo decimonónico en Venezuela." More than a faithful recreation of the motives and the robbery itself of the mining company El Correo del Oro in 1878, Celestino Peraza's novel *Los piratas de la sabana* (1896) intends to tell us something very important every time it is reprinted after 1897 (subsequent reprints took place in 1905, 1939, 1953, 1969, 1979, and 1988). Since the date of its first reprint the novel's conclusion, says Márquez Jiménez, indicates a potential truth "that is always about to reveal itself" ('que está, siempre, a punto de revelarse') since each publication date coincides with other "moments of political implications in Venezuela" ('momentos de coyuntura, de inflexión política en Venezuela'). The year 1897 is particularly meaningful since the thirty-year period of liberalism headed by Antonio Guzmán Blanco is about to conclude. Before the ineptitude of the caudillista state in maintaining social order, the mining company decides to hire its own crew—and Peraza is also hired as part of it—in order to subdue the thieves. This self-sufficient alternative can therefore be understood as a harsh criticism to the *guzmanato* and, consequently, its "potential truth" can be translated as a response that would come with said criticism resulting in a new centralist government through the figure of Juan Vicente Gómez. This finding on the signification of narrative discourse with relation to the context when the work is being reprinted is one that contrasts with the meaningless social significations of an individual—trapped on a low social status due to his racial origin—subject to Argentina's nationalist consumerist "modernity" towards the end of the

nineteenth century. In her essay "*En la sangre* (1887): Appearance, Consumption, Class, and National Identity in Cambaceres," Susan Hallstead finds that the idea of modernity was something articulated (manipulated) only by the state discourse. Consequently, this discourse of modernity would turn out to be a decisive influential discourse on the mentality and the evolving pragmatisms of social institutions, such as the customs of "modernity" as part of the national(ist) agenda. Under said circumstances, Hallstead says, the social dynamics that developed from productivity and consumption by the immigrant community represented a fear, a threat to customs and values to the upper levels of *porteño* society, traditionally shielded with barriers of prejudice and disdain against the "Other." But the protagonist "Other" in Cambaceres's novel, Genaro, far from turning away from situations of mockery and shame for his condition as an Italian immigrant sticks to his desire to change "the dark perspective of the future he would envision upon himself" (*'negra perspectiva del porvenir que se forjaba'*) in order to "try to become the master of his own existence through the consumption of fashionable items." He would live his new life in a constant battle before his financial possibilities—first, wasting all of his father's savings, and then extorting his aristocratic girlfriend Máxima—always struggling in hiding his origin, his sociocultural inferiority. The game of appearance through constant consumption—lying, pretending, deceiving, and so forth—is the game that feeds Genaro's longing to belong, the game that becomes a desire in a search for acceptance and identity with the upper levels of society (*'clase decente'*). The main problem for Genaro, concludes Hallstead, resides in his origin, in what he carries in his own blood (*'en la sangre'*). His constant attempt to establish an affluent modern social image ends up being futile because of his contrasting hereditary essence (working-class immigrant) unwelcomed by the powerful elitist *porteño* society still strongly rooted in a sociocultural reality of colonial customs and values.

The discourse of modernity proclaimed by intellectuals of the Mexican Revolution was fundamentally (a state discourse) rooted in a national(ist) rhetoric that alluded to rural societies, the vindication of the indigenous world, and their assimilation into modern *mestizo* society. The representation of this ideal through Mexican narrative of the Revolution translated itself, paradoxically, in a direct criticism of the "revolutionary process" portraying realistic images of how this supposed process of "assimilation" was nothing but a discriminatory process of marginalization and, in most cases, violent extermination by the new "revolutionary" mestizo class in power. Asymmetry between the nationalist discourse and the problematic social reality gave place to a kind of reasoning that rather

than clarifying the "revolutionary" fallacy of *lo mexicano* (that is, the philosophical standpoint on Mexican identity) contributed to magnifying the myth. Throughout this "modernizing" process of the nation the idea of vindicating the rural, indigenous peasant consisted more of an abstract idealization, an aesthetic representation that socially silenced his past, his culture, his essence; it implied, consequently, new possibilities for establishing the historic-geographical limits of *lo mexicano*. In her essay "The Mexican American Novel of the Mexican Revolution" Yolanda Padilla takes issue with this nationalist project of *lo mexicano* for not having taken into account the preponderant space where military battles took place (that is, the northern states of Coahuila and Chihuahua, and some incidents beyond the border into the United States territory) and, consequently, for having ignored the influx of ideas and revolutionary plans undertaken with the displacement of peoples throughout this territory. Thus the nationalist discourse did not only mystify the image and destiny of the Mexican Indian but also that of the country's own history by ignoring this transnational displacement of ideas and peoples from its "revolutionary" national project. Padilla refers to novels of the Revolution written by Mexican American authors as "the other novel" of the Mexican Revolution as a conscious act with a vindicating objective. She concludes that the "Mexican American writers [that she studies: Leonor Villegas de Magnón and Josefina Niggli] rejected the idea that they were no longer a part of Mexico, demanding that their former homeland take them into account. [This by means of asserting] their own stories and perspectives as part of the story of the Revolution."

Myth and discursive philosophy of *lo mexicano* became a mystifying paradox of the Revolution. And this paradox itself became the fundamental source in recreating a social national history that was never able to conclude its process of metamorphosis. The paradoxical image of *lo mexicano* or the *mexicanidad* remained trapped in the political body that promoted its idealization in order to retroactively feed its own "revolutionary" image. For the PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institucional), who made the culture of the Revolution its own symbolic capital, its paradoxical *institucionalidad* would become its sort of medical tool-case with an always ready bistoury to either "cut off" or "insert" whatever, wherever, and whenever necessary to revitalize said capital; in other words, in order to modify the "revolutionary" history with an image that would benefit the interests of the regime of the present before an eminent critical state. This is the kind of context that Gerardo García Muñoz tries to decipher in his essay "*Senda de gloria* y la construcción del Estado posrevolucionario." Garcia Muñoz begins with a summary of the

ideological and aesthetic representation of the Revolution through film. Then he states that it is in the 1960s—taking advantage of television's functionality as an "instrument for creating consciences in contemporary times" ('medio formador de conciencias en la época contemporánea')—that the Revolution is brought to the television screen by means of the *telenovela histórica*. This technological innovation would become the revolutionary state's most effective ideological vehicle in its capacity to reach big audiences and serve the purpose of "telling, restating, and interpreting the nation's past" ('contar, recontar e interpretar el pretérito de la nación'). *Senda de gloria* (1988) is a *telenovela histórica* produced during critical times of economic devastation in the country. Its objective would be to revitalize the nationalist rhetoric—for a discredited PRI before the national public opinion—by way of constantly referring to "legality" as the sociopolitical concept which the nation's future would depend on. The telenovela, therefore "suggests a purposely reading of the nation's past; essential episodes are highlighted—the revolutionary education system, Obregón's and Calles's regimes—but Villa's and Zapata's ideal is obscured" ('propone una lectura intencionada del pretérito nacional; se iluminan episodios esenciales (la revolución educativa, los gobiernos de Obregón y Calles), pero se oscurece el ideario de Villa y Zapata'). García Muñoz then concludes that "behind the recurring idea on Carranza—that is, that institutions will prevail—one can find the ideological message of the telenovela: that a new PRI, despite its new changes will continue ruling the country" ('[d]etrás de la idea recurrente de Carranza—esto es, que las instituciones habrán de prevalecer—se esconde el mensaje ideológico de la telenovela: que un nuevo PRI, no obstante sus mutaciones, seguirá rigiendo el país'). Indeed a new PRI would prevail, a new "revolutionary" government nevertheless, whose share of nationalist rhetoric became since then almost extinct, unable to conceal its inefficacy in fulfilling its civilian responsibilities.

The example of an unfinished, worn down Revolution seems to have made an impact in other revolutions that would consider taking into account, once and for all, a true restoring process of the community through the social change that is promised by every social revolution. In his essay "*Sombras nada más*: Community and the Emotions of Justice," Gregory Schelonka argues that *Sombras nada más*, a novel by the Nicaraguan writer Sergio Ramírez, fictionalizes some *incidents* that took place during the revolutionary period in Nicaragua in order to evoke a critical judgment as a reflection on its consequences. The novel, says Schelonka, is primordially the story of a scapegoat, Alirio Martinica, told to his Sandinista captors, "a story that he is forced to confess to them

despite his protest to the contrary." Structurally, the novel alternates between numbered chapters that follow the fictive plot and unnumbered chapters presented as testimonials that inform about the nature of events and characters that fiction recreates. These forced testimonials serve the purpose of creating the necessary knowledge for the Sandinistas to justify their impartment of justice in a community that lacks juridical institutions. Beyond this subjective implication of justice, the problem for Nicodemo, Manco-Cápac and their fellow Sandinistas consists of how to separate their responsibilities as imparters of justice from the emotions that have driven their revolutionary hopes for social change. Bound to the memory of this feeling Manco-Cápac makes the decision to change "the procedure against Martinica and subjects him to an angry crowd" that "will pardon him if they applaud and sentence him to death [by way of public lynching] with their silence." While justice may be perceived and executed in their own particular ways, Sandinistas and the crowd are united by their emotions as a community seeking social vindication. Aware of the absence of state institutions, they bear a struggle as a fractured community that longs for unity and legal representation. For Schelonka, this is "the lesson of justice, evinced in Ramírez's view of the revolution in *Sombras nada más*, lest the community be just another shadow."

Towards the end of the twentieth century the revolutionary ideal in Hispanic America, understood as the discourse for justice, development, and social progress has lost almost total credibility—for the good of the few and the bad of many—with its obscure modifications. And the community… is still in the shadows, left behind by the state and its broken promises. Schelonka focuses his study on the novel *Sombras nada más* not because he is interested in its elements as a detective novel—such as the causes, the search, and the juridical process of an urban crime—but for the emotional depiction and perspective of a criminal facing a pseudo-juridical procedure. In her essay, "*La muerte me da*, con las manos en la masa metaficcional e intertextual de la novela policiaca posmoderna," Mónica Flórez finds that the Mexican author Cristina Rivera Garza recurs as well to the detective novel style not to follow the very own structure of this subgenre but as the vehicle that leads her to "dig into inquisitions of ontological and metafictional type" ('adentrarse en inquisiciones de tipo ontológico y metaficcional'). The author follows a postmodern style accompanied by a variety of intertextual referents that complement the constructive acts of writing—writing, indeed, of a "revolutionary" type. Therefore, the objective in *La muerte me da* has nothing to do with the purpose of exhibiting criminal findings per se but to evince the complexity of a human reality that contradicts the social reality prescribed by a

political apparatus. This is a reality in which the predominance of chaos and urban crime make evident the state's inefficacy in trying to maintain social and legal order. In *La muerte me da* the possible criminal's identity cannot be resolved and the mysteries that follow the criminal act cannot be revealed either. In the end Rivera Garza's literary recreation, Flórez concludes, "aims at the objective of reevaluating any preconceived idea on the concepts of reality, fiction, and criticism as reliable and tangible notions establishing with it that [as an expression of discontent] the only truth allowed in the postmodern world is the uncertainty that there is no possible certainty" ('tiene como finalidad reevaluar cualquier idea preconcebida de los conceptos de realidad, ficción y crítica como nociones confiables y tangibles y dejar claro así que [como expresión de descontento] la única verdad permitida en el mundo posmoderno es la incertidumbre de que no hay certeza posible').

According to these essays, revolutionary movements and calls for modern democratic (political, economic, social) processes in Hispanic America tend to fade away (through complex, rooted social dynamics and political corruption) in the hands of those who manipulate the state discourse; being this consequently a state increasingly unable to maintain its responsibility as guardian of order and civilian safekeeping. This has been particularly true during the last three decades. The state's lack of capability to find the necessary mechanisms to lead the nation towards self-sufficiency has resulted, on the contrary, in a deeper dependency upon the instability of an international economy. This helps to explain why social revolutions and modernity in Hispanic America have fallen short in their attempt to provide social progress for the national community. Interests behind the national(ist) discourse continue to give in to the more powerful interests (in the form of capital gains) of an influential transnational, global economy. The process is too broad and complex for us to be able to summarize in this introduction. We mention it because of its relevance to the final essay in Part I, which expresses great concern in relation to the endangering borders of *lo mexicano*. Let us remember that the official debate for Mexican cultural identity began with the intellectuals of the Revolution in the 1920s and that since then *lo mexicano* remained circumscribed to the national territory and its history, mainly representative of the central region: Mexicans and manifestations of *lo mexicano* beyond the national borders were excluded from the game since the beginning. This would change with time, ironically enough, since starting some years ago the Mexican government has publically recognized that Mexico's economy has been—for more than five decades—and will continue to be strengthened by the foreign capital sent by Mexicans that

had to emigrate, particularly to the United States. The Mexican government therefore thanks its "co-nationals" (Mexicans located beyond the nation's borders) for their true patriotism in adding to the nation's progress. This cynicism encloses a deep, serious matter that has existed "for more than five decades;" a problem that has to do with the human identity more than the national identity; a problem that has to do with the struggle for survival beyond human dignity. Because as emigrants-immigrants the identity of these "Mexicans" has degraded in a precarious subaltern "Other." Their attempt to cross the border—a process of departure, journey, and destiny—takes place like a "phantasmagoric trance" ('un trance fantasmagórico') in many instances conducing to death. In his essay, "Anotaciones a propósito del nuevo muro fronterizo: una lectura de Luis Humberto Crosthwaite desde los Derechos Humanos," Héctor Reyes analyzes how Mexican migrants are perceived and treated on both sides of the border between Mexico and the United States with the purpose of bringing to light the dehumanizing handling of these runaway human beings giving evidence of (indifference, prejudices, ill treatment) lack of democracy and of a true application of human rights—ironically, in a country that claims to be the true champion of human rights on the planet. Reyes asserts that Crosthwaite's narrative tries to emit a "balanced symbiosis between the artistic and the social" ('simbiosis equilibrada entre lo artístico y lo social') through an artful structure of language (fusion and counter-position of language at the different levels of colloquial, journalistic, informal, and formal styles among others). This is an artful technique properly designed by Crosthwaite, says Reyes, to refer "local stories" ('historias locales') fictionalized as "marginalized microcosms" ('microcosmos marginales') in a human being's universal context and his subaltern condition. The ultimate purpose of Crosthwaite's literary discourse is to incorporate the Mexican migrants' reality by emitting a series of perspectives and questionings to the legal discourse in relation to the non-compliance and continuous threat to the human rights of these people. Thus Crosthwaite's literary writing becomes a "voice," a "militant" practice that has been "used as platform for the denunciation of the individual concerns brought to the attention of the political system" ('utilizada como plataforma para la denuncia de las inquietudes individuales envueltas en el panorama del cuerpo político').

Part II consists of nine articles representative of the most current, groundbreaking research on Hispanic linguistics at the turn of the twenty-first century. As a whole, this part of our volume focuses on important cultural and linguistic issues pertaining, to various confines of the Hispanic World, spanning from the New York City metropolitan area and

Central Florida to Bolivia, and on to the Prince Islands in Turkey. This part of the volume provides important contributions to contemporary linguistic scholarship as it fills several voids in the current literature by exploring understudied topics and unexplored speech communities. These linguistic studies also answer questions which have emerged as a consequence of an unprecedented increase in Hispanic linguistic research conducted since the latter part of the twentieth century or that remain open in spite of it.

As we transition into the second part of this volume, our focus remains on identity. Part II opens with a study by Edwin M. Lamboy that explores cultural and linguistic identity among Puerto Ricans in the United States. Lamboy discusses how, in the last two decades, the profile of the typical mainland US Puerto Rican has been transformed. In doing so, he examines differences between newcomers and those who arrived in the mid-twentieth century in terms of educational attainment, socioeconomic status, ability to integrate into mainstream society, and preferred destination. While the State of Florida has become Puerto Rican migrants' favorite destination, the Orlando metropolitan area is now home to the fourth-largest Puerto Rican enclave in the United States. Lamboy compares the perceptions of Puerto Ricans who live in the greater New York City area to those who have recently arrived in Central Florida and examines the role language plays in the construction of the new Puerto Rican identity in the United States at the turn of the twenty-first century. Lamboy further explores how such issues as awareness of what happens in Puerto Rico, socioeconomic status, and linguistic competence in both Spanish and English, differentiate New York Puerto Ricans from those in Central Florida. One important difference between these two Puerto Rican communities is the role that Spanish plays in their ethnolinguistic identity construction process. Specifically, Lamboy discusses views regarding the maintenance of Spanish as a requisite for identifying with the Puerto Rican culture and way of life.

We continue exploring linguistic identity in a setting where it blends with language maintenance efforts, as Rey Romero takes us to the Prince Islands, Turkey. This archipelago, located off the coast of Istanbul, constitutes one of the least-known confines of the Hispanic world, and represents an important linguistic environment for Spanish-speaking Sephardic Jews. The survival of (Judeo) Spanish in Turkey has been constantly threatened by aggressive Turkish-only policies that imposed Turkish as the only language for education and government. Romero indicates that Judeo-Spanish until the mid-nineteenth century remained a strong language, transmitted from generation to generation, and an integral

ingredient of Jewish identity, community, and religion. Interestingly, his analysis of the language attitudes in this community shows that most Sephardic Jews still regard Judeo-Spanish as an important element of both their Jewish and Hispanic linguistic and cultural identities. Their feeling that Judeo-Spanish is an important part of their Hispanic heritage inspires a deep connection between Judeo-Spanish and the community's Hispanic origin with the subsequent desire to preserve Judeo-Spanish as a cultural marker, inter alia. These and other issues contribute to propitious linguistic environments for the maintenance and transmission of Judeo-Spanish. Romero discusses how the current sociolinguistic situation in the Prince Islands can facilitate the creation of much needed language nests. Sephardim are beginning to realize the value of Spanish as a world language, and many consider their dialect an asset that carries economic and educational value. More importantly, most young Sephardim wish to maintain or acquire communicative skills in (Judeo) Spanish. In addition to those who reside in the Prince Islands, hundreds of Sephardic children and teenagers visit every summer together with their parents and grandparents, thereby facilitating intergenerational transmission.

Our focus remains on sociocultural issues as Alison Grochowski and Karol Ibarra Zetter take us to Mexico. In a study that pushes the boundaries of Conversation Analysis, they examine how humor is produced and understood in Mexican film to show, among other things, that film dialogue constitutes a worthy source of data. Their approach to data gathering represents an important methodological innovation since Conversational Analysis has traditionally considered naturally occurring, authentic speech and its accompanying behavior as superior material for analysis. In terms of Hispanic linguistic research, the pragmatic analysis of humor also represents an innovation. While linguists and scholars in other disciplines have widely studied humor in many different languages, as Grochowski and Ibarra Zetter indicate, the production and comprehension of humor in Spanish remains largely unexplored. The authors analyze data from two Mexican films produced in the first decade of the twenty-first century that mirror Central Mexico's contemporary natural speech. Their analysis of humor focuses on three main factors: a) assuming a common cultural background or knowledge base, b) contextualization, and c) the use of profanity to create a feeling of solidarity. Moreover, this study provides examples of both explicit and implicit humor produced through one or more of several different strategies. Methodologically, one of the multiple virtues of this study lies in its replicability since it allows numerous possible replication studies in many different cultural and linguistic settings. It also serves as an incentive for further research

involving the validation of its results by means of studies that employ data from various sources.

We turn to sociohistorical issues as Sandro Sessarego takes us to the Bolivian Andes in his study of the origin and evolution of Yungueño Spanish. This Afro-Hispanic dialect is spoken in the Yungas region of Central Bolivia by the descendants of African slaves taken to Bolivia to work in silver mines during the colonial period. Sessarego examines linguistic and sociohistorical evidence to test John Lipski's (2006) hypothesis that Yungueño Spanish might have had a creole origin. Sessarego tests the feasibility of such a claim by analyzing the sociohistorical conditions present in colonial Bolivia at the time of slavery. His analysis involves cross-dialectal comparisons with other Spanish and Portuguese varieties to determine whether the Afro-Bolivian features have to be ascribed to a decreolizing language or can be accounted for by appealing to a non-creole origin. Sessarego indicates that due to the lack of reliable sociodemographic data for Afro-Bolivian, we cannot discard the hypothesis of a stable but not creolized variety of Spanish. The author concludes that after undergoing a process of dialect leveling due to contact with standard Bolivian Spanish, Yungueño would now be at one of its final stages, closer to more prestigious regional Bolivian Spanish. The results of Sessarego's linguistic and sociohistorical analyses suggest that Afro-Bolivian Spanish was probably never a radical creole. However, the information collected seems to favor the hypothesis of a conventionalized advanced interlanguage, which coexisted with Highland Bolivian Spanish since its inception.

As we transition into semantic evolution, we retain a historical perspective. F. Manuel Burgos offers a diachronic study of the semantic evolution of the Spanish verb *matarse* (to kill oneself/to get killed). The author uses 1125 tokens consisting of instances of *matarse* that span from the thirteenth century to the present to explore the discursive context in which this verb appears and is associated with the type of event it represents. Burgos shows how since the fifteenth century, *matarse* has expanded its semantic domain, by incorporating to its traditional uses (reflexive, reciprocal and impersonal) a reference to an accidental death. Employing an analytical framework based on the principle of grammaticalization, Burgos proposes that this new function has gradually developed through the demarcation of the reflexive construction. His central hypothesis is that this process produces a reinterpretation of the clitic *se*, which becomes a marker of middle voice. The semantic characteristics of this clitic and the discursive contexts where it appears, prompt speakers to associate *matarse* with sudden and non-agentive death.

This is facilitated by the construction's reflexive value affording *matarse* the possibility of describing another cognitive domain. Moreover, it is proposed that the incorporation of the verb *suicidarse* to the Spanish lexicon in the nineteenth century favored the increased use of the accidental meaning during the last two centuries.

Continuing with our historical perspective, and with our focus on evolution, Charles Elerick takes us into the realm of historical phonology. He explores the development of the obstruent sounds (consonants produced with various degrees of obstruction of the outgoing airflow) as Latin evolved into Castilian. This analysis represents an innovation since traditionally, the focus of historical Spanish phonology with respect to consonants has been to track progressive lenition, going from /t/ to Ø, as well as the causes and results of palatalization. A focus on compensatory strengthening facilitates our understanding of the existing macro-trends in Spanish historical phonology when they are treated within a single, larger view of change in the Latin > Spanish obstruent system. Compensatory strengthening emerges as a change that preserves essential balance in acoustic noise through successive linguistic stages. Elerick proposes that the most prominent innovation in this regard is the phoneme /t͡ʃ/, represented orthographically as *'ch.'* The author shows how the emergence of this high frequency and "noisy" phoneme, often etymologically unexpected, helps maintain balance in the obstruent system. Such exploration of integrative and systemic phonological change is possible only with good long-term attestation of stages of a language, demonstrating once more the importance of Spanish as an object of historical linguistic investigation. Elerick's analysis opens the door to subsequent, more detailed studies to examine phone-to-phone, acoustic salience. It also motivates parallel studies in other (Romance) languages for which sufficient diachronic data is obtainable.

We remain immersed in the internal structure of Spanish as we address a morphosyntactic issue. Using Peninsular Spanish data Alberto Pastor explores adjectival degree constructions headed by a copular element *de* 'of.' Contrary to initial appearance, *de* does not function in these constructions as a preposition. Despite having received some scholarly attention in other languages, and as occurs with some of the topics studied in previous chapters, adjectival degree constructions in Spanish are still largely understudied. By means of a well-structured analysis that contains clear examples, Pastor shows that these constructions feature several degrees of predication. In so doing, he distinguishes between predicative degree constructions with comparative interpretation and those with

evaluative meaning. This distinction is based on a number of contrasting properties that these two types of predicative degree constructions display, including word order alternations and information structure. Their divergent semantic, pragmatic, and formal properties result from the different nature of the degree predicate involved in each type of construction and a dissimilar syntactic configuration of the predication relation. This chapter provides a very original analysis of adjectival constructions in Spanish by explaining their semantic and syntactic properties with the inclusion of well-founded theoretical and empirical motivations. Furthermore, Pastor successfully augments our knowledge not only of adjectival degree constructions but also of the mechanisms that govern human language.

While keeping our focus on morphosyntactic matters, we turn our attention to verbs and their relationship with sentential subjects. Roberto Mayoral Hernández examines the role of verb type as a predictor of the occurrence of a pre- or postverbal sentential subject. At the outset, the author shows the inherent difficulty in identifying verb types. Then, he describes the main characteristics of the intransitive, emission verbs that constitute the *swarm* group. This analysis provides theoretical and statistical evidence from the study of subject position, showing that *swarm* verbs behave as unaccusative rather than unergative, especially with respect to locative alternation. Because subject position helps identify the fundamental properties of verbs from a lexical-syntactic perspective, Mayoral Hernández proposes the subject position test as a useful diagnostic to facilitate the identification of verb types in Spanish, since unaccusative verbs have a higher percentage of postverbal subjects than typical unergatives. The results indicate that swarm verbs pattern together with unaccusatives since they all show a higher percentage of postverbal subjects in locative alternation. An important contribution made by this study is that it reconciles the apparently discordant verb classifications by Perlmutter (1978) and Levin & Rappaport (1995) by showing that swarm verbs can behave as unergative or unaccusative. Considering that a higher number of postverbal subjects is associated with unaccusative verbs in Spanish, we can safely conclude that swarm verbs behave as unaccusatives when they occur in a sentence that participates in locative alternation.

As we draw to a close, it is important to consider two crucial facts. First, all of the participants in this project share pedagogical concerns regarding Spanish. Second, the magnitude of university-level Spanish language instruction in the US today is such that for over fifteen years Spanish course enrollments have surpassed the aggregate of all other modern language enrollments by more than 100,000 (Furman, Goldberg &

Lusin 2010: 3). Thus, a good compilation of Hispanic linguistic, cultural and literary studies edited in the US would be incomplete without due attention to pedagogical issues. In this vein, our volume concludes with a thought-provoking replication study by Joshua Thoms that explores the (dis)connection between the use of authentic texts and the development of speaking functions in a Spanish as a Foreign Language class devoted to literary discussion. This research responds to numerous calls for studies dealing with an under-represented and under-researched area of Second Language Acquisition: how classroom-based factors affect students' ongoing development of speaking skills in introductory L2 literature courses. Thoms analyzes how an instructor and her students in a college-level Spanish literature course co-construct knowledge via whole-class discussion. In so doing, the author focuses on the instructor's role as an effective socializing agent whose interactions with her students would ideally provide them the opportunity to speak in extended discourse. This study expands Second Language Acquisition's theoretical perspectives and extends them into unexplored territories. Its results raise a number of issues that merit further research and discussion including the need to articulate gaps in L2 instruction in the hopes of better preparing students to be active participants in upper-level literature courses. Instructional challenges that deserve further attention include the development of a) strategies to deal with varying student language abilities, and b) a classroom atmosphere that encourages active student participation. Thoms's findings show, among other things, that despite a recent surge in research dealing with L2 students' oral proficiency development, we remain far from possessing definitive answers. Moreover, it is imperative to maintain strong connections between literature courses and language courses as we enhance the development of students' speaking proficiency. Research like this should act as a catalyst for dialogue between relevant parties in order to improve students' L2 oral proficiency regardless of the content and/or focus of the course.

The future undoubtedly looks bright for research in Hispanic linguistics due, among other things, to recent contributions to linguistic theory. Besides professional meetings specifically dedicated to Hispanic linguistics, the most important linguistics conferences in the Western Hemisphere customarily devote entire sessions to Hispanic linguistics whose attendance consistently includes scholars who specialize in other languages, many of whom are not speakers of Spanish. The linguistic articles in this volume employ a variety of different perspectives (morphosyntax, phonology, conversation analysis, second language acquisition, language maintenance, inter alia) to explore a diverse array of

issues including the internal structure of Spanish, the development of fluency by those who acquire it as a second or foreign language, aspects of language evolution, pragmatics, linguistic and cultural identity in different parts of the Hispanic World. This volume has brought together twenty specialists with widely differing theoretical orientations and preferences. As a whole, the collection of fascinating articles assembled in this volume provides a good measure of contemporary research in the vibrant field of Hispanic Studies. One of the virtues of this compilation is that, in general, it consists of studies that invite and incite further research. It is our wish that our readers become motivated to pursue some of the questions that have been generated by the research presented here, some of those that remain unanswered, or some of those not addressed in this collection.

We would like to thank all of our colleagues who submitted their research to this publication. We are also greatly indebted to the members of the Board of Reviewers, who provided us with valuable feedback on various aspects of this volume. Their insightful comments were valuable to both the contributors as well as the editors in enhancing the quality of this publication. They are absolved, of course, of all responsibility for any shortcomings, which we fully assume ourselves. Finally, we are very thankful to Cambridge Scholars Publishing for their strong interest in establishing a presence in the field of Hispanic Studies and in works of this nature. Their encouragement and interest in making our volume available to a wider audience has been crucial to our editorial efforts and is duly acknowledged.

—The Editors

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PART I:

LITERARY AND CULTURAL STUDIES

CHAPTER ONE

ANTIESPAÑOLISMO Y NOVELA EN MÉXICO ENTRE LA PRIMERA Y LA SEGUNDA INDEPENDENCIA: REPLANTEAMIENTOS GÓTICOS Y MITIFICACIONES FUNDACIONALES

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Para el estudio de la relación literatura-sociedad durante el período de entre-independencias, esto es, entre 1821 y 1867, período en el que se consuman las independencias de México con respecto del colonialismo español y el neocolonialismo francés respectivamente, se abren dos posibilidades: una primera que la explique a partir de la función, características y desarrollo que tuvo en México la Academia de Letrán (1836-1856)—la célebre primera asociación artística del contexto independentista—y otra que, sin soslayar esos planteamientos, permita la reconstrucción dinámica de las ideas, conceptos e imágenes del mundo vigentes en la época que condicionaron tanto la función de la literatura como la del escritor que preconizó dicha academia. Considero un tanto reduccionistas y anecdóticas muchas de las conclusiones ofrecidas por el primer acercamiento, pues, manifestaciones de una práctica historiográfica literaria concebida como una mera relación cronológico-temática de autores y títulos, explican las problemáticas planteadas sólo a partir de un elemento—biográfico o ideológico casi siempre—simplificando con ello la complejidad de la realidad literaria y cultural mexicana. Por esa razón enfocaré la discusión y desarrollo de este estudio a partir de la segunda