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### Review Of "Huellas De Las Literaturas Hispanoamericanas" Edited By J. Garganigo, R. De Costa, B. Heller, A. Luiselli, G. Sabat De Rivers, And E. Sklodowska

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Garganigo, John F., René De Costa, Ben Heller, Alessandra Luiselli, Georgina Sabat de Rivers, and Elzbieta Sklodowska, eds. *Huellas de las literaturas hispanoamericanas*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1997. 755 pp.

What does one hope to find in a critical anthology of a literature as varied and complex as Spanish America's? First, one expects a fair representation of the literature presented and its evolution across time. Second, any competent anthology of this type should be sensitive to the complexities and ambiguities of the literature presented so that authors are not artificially inserted within artistic categories that, while pedagogically attractive, may distort the writer's overall contributions to the literary evolution in question. Third, the editors should present some carefully chosen suggestions for further reading to enhance the reader's ongoing knowledge of the subject. Fourth, each division of the anthology should contain a succinct yet thorough introduction to the period and authors selected, and these sections should be an up-to-date reflection of critical thinking on these periods. Finally, since literature is an everchanging body of work, no anthology of this type should overlook the importance of giving the reader some indication of where the literature in question might be headed in the near future through the allusion to or presentation of texts that suggest an important change in direction. All of these expectations are admirably fulfilled in *Huellas de las literaturas hispanoamericanas*. It is obvious that this anthology is intended principally for survey courses of Spanish American literature at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. However, because of the quality and depth of its introductory essays on each period, this text will also be an essential reference tool for more sophisticated and less general studies. Teachers of Spanish American literature will find in the majority of these essays excellent overviews of each period and an invaluable assessment of the period and authors included. Particularly strong in this respect are the sections entitled "Literaturas prehispánicas," "El siglo de las luces: neoclasicismo," "Del romanticismo al modernismo," "Antecedentes a la nueva novela: Entrando en la modernidad," "El boom y la nueva novela," "Novísima narrativa: el post-boom y la posmodernidad."

Other attractive features of the anthology include the selection of works from the precolombian period by authors from the Aztec, Mayan and Inca worlds. From Náhuatl poetry the editors have chosen examples of four poetic tendencies: 1) the Yaocuícatl, songs of war; 2) the Teocuícatl, songs to the gods exalting the different divinities; 3) the Xochocuícatl, songs to flowers and metaphors for the works of divine origin; and 4) the Inocuícatl, melancholic songs of a philosophical nature expressing the intimacy of the human soul. In addition to poetry, examples of Náhuatl prose are also included in the form of Teotlahtolli, works that narrate the deeds of prehispanic gods; *Huehuetlatolli*, which express the wisdom of the community's elders and the Thlatolli, documents which reflect the philosophical beliefs of the ancient Mexicans. Selections from the Mayan *Popul Vuh* and the *Chilam Balam* are included as well as a Jailli from Inca tradition, exalting the god Viracocha.

In the final pages of the anthology there is an intriguing section entitled "Descolonización del canon" which reflects writing that the editors consider to signal an important change in Spanish American letters over the past thirty years.

While they recognize that a certain loss of a "center" or "ground" has occurred in Western culture during the postmodern period, they also contend that in Latin America a marked tendency toward decolonization in the cultural sphere has taken place. In the world of literature, according to the editors, this has led to a reappraisal of traditional notions of what constitutes the "literary" and to a redefinition of its canon. Included in this section are texts by the theologian Gustavo Gutiérrez, Roberto Fernández Retamar and Rigobertha Menchú.

For readers with a particular interest in Latin American theatre this anthology will, unfortunately, be a disappointment. Due to limitations of space the editors were able to include only excerpts from *Historias para ser contadas* by the Argentine playwright Osvaldo Dragún. Ideally, one would have wished for a more representational selection of contemporary Spanish American theatre to complement the selection and presentation of other genres that form part of this otherwise excellent anthology.

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John J. Hassett

González Echevarría, Roberto and Enrique Pupo-Walker, eds. *The Cambridge History of Latin American Literature. Volume 2: The Twentieth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996. 619 pp.

This volume of *The Cambridge History of Latin American Literature* offers well-informed and thorough coverage of the twentieth century. It contains seventeen essays written by recognized scholars in all of the areas of Latin American literature, from *modernista* poetry to contemporary fiction and Chicano literature.

The volume editors, Roberto González Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker, offer a "General Preface" to the three volume set and an "Introduction" to this second volume. In their general preface, they point to Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo's *Antología de la poesía hispanoamericana*, published in 1893, as the first history of Spanish American literature. They also point out correctly that this volume is the first history of Spanish American literature to provide detailed coverage of Colonial literature, the work of women writers, and Hispanic literature written in the United States. They think of the tradition of Latin American literature as being made up of major works. In addition, the two scholars emphasize, at great length, the importance of Colonial literature in Latin America (including Brazil and Spanish America).

The seventeen essays are organized on the basis of genre, theme, and time period. *Modernismo* is divided into two chapters, one for poetry and one for prose. There is also a chapter for the *Vanguardia*, as well as for the *criollista* novel, the Spanish American novel from 1950 to 1975, and from 1975 to 1990. Chapters organized around themes are one on the literature of *indigenismo* and one on Afro-Hispanic American literature. Modern poetry and the modern essay also occupy chapters. These essays are uniformly incisive and dense with information.

Some of the chapters cover topics not typically found in volumes such as this. Aníbal González's insightful essay on literary criticism in Spanish America is