

CELEBRATING THE MILLENNIUM: Latin American Literature and Criticism

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THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN LITERATURE. 3 volumes. Edited by Roberto González Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Pp. 670, 619, and 864. \$90.00 per volume, cloth.)

THE LATIN AMERICAN SHORT STORY: AN ANNOTATED GUIDE TO ANTHOLOGIES AND CRITICISM. Compiled by Daniel Balderston. (New York: Greenwood, 1992. Pp. 529. \$65.00 cloth.)

MEXICAN LITERATURE: A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SECONDARY SOURCES. Edited by David William Foster. (Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow, 1992. Pp. 686. \$67.50 cloth.)

The three reference works on Latin American literature under review here reflect the growing body of Latin American literature and criticism published in recent years. These books attest to the rich maturity achieved in this field toward the end of the millennium.

Recent publication of *The Cambridge History of Latin American Literature* constitutes a landmark in Latin American literary studies. This three-volume reference work is the first major history of Latin American literature published in English that provides a detailed account of Afro-Hispanic and Latino literatures. Two other features make this landmark collection an invaluable research tool: it gives due weight to the cultural production of women writers, and Brazil is treated separately in the third volume in essays that form illuminating counterparts to the sections on Spanish America in the first two volumes.

The thoughtful editing of Roberto González Echevarría and Enrique Pupo-Walker has succeeded in producing an interrelated set of essays while allowing for individual methods and interpretations. The editors have also assembled a coherent collection of essays incorporating the changing perspectives that have emerged in Latin American literary and cultural studies. The editors' purposes were to summarize existing knowledge but also to break new ground by bringing together fresh research that will suggest new directions for the discipline. The *Cambridge History* was an international endeavor that brought together essays by more than forty contributors from the United States, Latin America, England, and Europe.

The three volumes of this comprehensive project cover Latin American literature from colonial times to the present. Volume 1 begins with pre-Columbian traditions and their first contact with European cultures and continues on through the nineteenth century. Areas included are New World historiography, epic poetry, theatre, novels, and essays. Volume 2 covers all genres of Spanish American literature from the end of the nineteenth century to 1990: the novel, poetry, autobiographical narrative, the short story, Afro-Hispanic American literature, theatre, and U.S. Latino literature. Volume 3 has two sections. The first surveys the history of Brazilian literature from the colonial period through the twentieth century. Among the areas covered are literary historiography and criticism in Brazil, popular literature, poetry, theatre, the novel, the short story, and the essay. The second section contains annotated bibliographies for each chapter as well as a general bibliography, another unique feature of *The Cambridge History*.

The eleven essays in the first volume dedicated to the colonial period attest to the fact that in the past two decades, scholarship in colonial Spanish American literary studies has expanded significantly. This area of study has been enriched by an interdisciplinary orientation that has resulted in deeper understanding of colonial discourse as well as the complexities of literary production. Recent work in colonial literary studies has been characterized by the crossing of disciplinary boundaries in analyzing canonical texts and recent incorporation of new objects of study.

This broadening of the range of objects of study in the Spanish American colonial literary canon has embraced European-born authors, mestizo and Amerindian writers, and women authors. Indigenous American authors and women writers of the colonial period are now being studied in vigorous and innovative ways, but much remains to be done in this area. Among the new objects of study are works pertaining to discursive formations not considered strictly literary in the traditional sense, such as chronicles, letters, *relaciones*, legal texts, and scientific documents. Underlying this trend in colonial literary studies is the expansion of the category of what are considered "colonial texts" and the relationship of literary texts to other types of discourses.

The introductory essay on the history of Spanish American literary historiography by Roberto González Echevarría frames the first volume of this inaugural reference by placing it in the context of previous literary histories. Such a section has never appeared before in any other reference work on Latin American literature. González Echevarría details the histories of Latin American literature and discusses how these earlier histories were interpreted by North American and Latin American scholars. Rolena Adorno's subsequent essay focuses on the study of Amerindian texts and traditions as interpretive responses to European colonialism and analyzes how they narrate the drama of cultures in contact from the native viewpoint. Her lucid discussion of the texts of the Spanish American encounter reveals the interdisciplinary and theoretical considerations underpinning

recent scholarship in colonial literary studies. No less revealing are the questions raised by Stephanie Merrim in examining the historiography of the first fifty years of the Hispanic New World. She analyzes closely the earliest chronicles about the New World and finds that the complexity of this corpus of writings derives from narrative strategies responding to dynamics of petition and persuasion. The earliest narratives about the New World, she reports, contributed to the “invention of America” in providing the founding images and topics that eventually reappeared in modern Latin American fiction: utopia, civilization, and barbarism.

In a study of historiographic narratives written between 1550 and 1620, Kathleen Ross comments on individual texts in detail and discusses their significance for Spanish American literature. Her essay addresses the question, who were the historians writing about the conquest and colonization of Spanish America after the mid-sixteenth century? Ross observes that the most salient aspect of the writing of history during that period was the emergence of a new kind of historian: the first American-born writers of both indigenous and European descent who played an active role in defining New World history. This new group of historians began to rewrite the chronicles of the conquest from an American perspective and were later joined in this interpretative task by the first generations of mestizo historians. During the early decades of the seventeenth century, a parallel revisionist task was carried out by colonial women writers, mostly cloistered nuns who composed spiritual life stories that narrated historical events. Ross’s examination of historical writing in the early colonial period is complemented by David Bost’s essay. Bost describes how the historiography of the seventeenth century became more diverse in structure and style and discusses the indeterminate boundary between history and fiction.

Roberto González Echevarría’s and Margarita Peña’s essays cover lyrical and epic poetry of the colonial period. Textual commentary on the works is supplemented by the identification of relevant texts that have been neglected by literary scholarship. González Echevarría illuminates the poetic renewal that took place in Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and then explains its repercussions in America. With regard to the poetry written in the New World, he concludes that the uneasy coexistence of medieval and renaissance poetics resulted in the poetic movement that came to be known as the Barroco de Indias. According to González Echevarría, the major poet of the Colonial Baroque and the last major figure of the Spanish Siglo de Oro was Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. González Echevarría’s thorough study aims toward a more refined understanding of the colonial lyric. Margarita Peña traces the evolution of the colonial epic in America from its flourishing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to its decline in the eighteenth. She points out that the great manifestations of the epic genre in the New World represented three literary styles: renaissance, mannerist, and baroque.

The study of colonial lyrical and epic poetry is complemented by Frederick Luciani's essay on the Spanish American theatre of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Luciani argues that even though the main component of that tradition was Hispanic, indigenous modes of dramatic representation also affected the evolution of colonial theatre. In his view, the missionary theatre that flourished in the mid-sixteenth century integrated Spanish and native languages as well as European and indigenous dramatic modes, becoming thus the first artistic expression of the cultural interaction between Europeans and Amerindians. Luciani concludes that this form of cultural production can by its nature be considered a truly mestizo art form. Regarding seventeenth-century drama, he asserts that in the religious and secular theatre of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, the major theatrical trends of Spanish American drama reached their apogee.

The interdisciplinary approach prevailing in colonial studies is best exemplified by Asunción Lavrin's examination of Spanish American viceregal culture. Using historians' methodological tools, Lavrin reconstructs the processes of cultural transfer and exchange that took place between Spain and its colonies. The dynamics of viceregal culture, she aptly observes, resulted from the fact that throughout the colonial period, indigenous and Iberian cultural elements interacted to produce a distinctive new society.

The next three essays on the eighteenth century by Karen Stolley, Andrew Bush, and Frederick Luciani attest to the new vitality of colonial Spanish American literary studies. Stolley's essay examines the spectrum of intellectual life in colonial Spanish America by focusing on eighteenth-century narrative as cultural production. She explores the question of how to assess eighteenth-century narrative forms, scholarship, and learning as well as their possible implications for renovating colonial literary studies. Bush surveys neoclassical and romantic poetry written during the struggles for political independence and the early republican period in Spanish America. He believes that these poetic works deserve closer attention and calls for a systematic reappraisal of the lyric poetry of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The survey of eighteenth-century cultural production in Spanish America is rounded out by Luciani's thorough description of theatrical activities in the last century of colonial rule. On the basis of much fresh research, he offers a perceptive reading of a group of eighteenth-century colonial plays that have received little scholarly attention.

The nineteenth century, traditionally the most neglected field in Latin American literary research, remains uncharted territory. Critical reevaluation of this area will require energy and resources to move this promising field forward. Scholars need to draw attention to new objects of study, ranging from journals still to be examined to individual authors and works. These portions of the *Cambridge History* demonstrate the diversity of nineteenth-century Spanish American literature while presenting the cur-

rent status of criticism and suggesting new directions. Together, the pieces address the major issues in this new area of specialization, among them the question of nation building and national identity, the relationship between literature and politics, the issue of modernity, travel literature, and journalism. These essays should guide future work in the field.

The study of nineteenth-century fiction begins with Antonio Benítez-Rojo's essay on the Spanish American novel. His long contribution offers lucid readings of a large corpus of canonical novels. Benítez-Rojo recalls the foundational role that Andrés Bello assigned to literature in the early republican period. Bello considered the novel to be the best form for promoting the idea of a Spanish American identity by creating the illusion for the reading public that it was experiencing the national territory for the first time. Benítez-Rojo then formulates his "discourse of Nationness/ Modernness" as the key to understanding the development of the novel in the nineteenth century. He demonstrates how the novels' paradoxical dialogue regarding progress and the land served as the public platform for debating the relationship between national identity and modernity in Spanish America. Finally, Benítez-Rojo addresses the significant relation between travel literature and the emergence of a nationalistic and modern creole consciousness.

Benítez-Rojo's extensive assessment of the novel is complemented by Enrique Pupo-Walker's insightful analysis of short narratives of the nineteenth century. The latter focuses on two modalities of literary creation: the sketch of customs and manners (*cuadro de costumbres*) and the short story (*cuento literario*). Pupo-Walker argues that the lack of critical consensus on how to approach and classify the *cuadro de costumbres* arose in part because the *costumbrista* story is often an act of narrative mediation in which traces of historical, political, and scientific discourses can be found. He points out a singular facet of Spanish American costumbrismo: its persistent link to the early historiography of the New World. Pupo-Walker asserts that by including broad nationalistic statements and regional features and customs in detail, the *costumbrista* sketches tried to help consolidate the fledgling countries and strengthen national identity. He argues that the *cuento literario* emerged primarily as a lyrical narrative, noting that early short pieces of fiction had a hybrid nature and loose format, which accounts for some of the tensions among narrative forms in the evolution of the genre.

Pupo-Walker's contribution is followed by Frank Dauster's thorough examination of the Spanish American theatre of the nineteenth century. His essay discusses the complexities involved in treating jointly a number of national literatures for the purpose of literary historiography. In Dauster's opinion, such an effort makes the historiography of Spanish American letters a polemical undertaking. His coverage of theatrical activities during the nineteenth century demonstrates that theatre in Spanish

America was usually based in a few cities. Dauster argues that Romanticism became the dominant aesthetic tendency of the period.

In the next two essays, Nicolas Shumway and Martin Stabb cover the nineteenth-century Spanish American essay tradition. Shumway studies the essay in Spanish South America, while Stabb writes about the essay in Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. Shumway's survey of the nineteenth-century essayistic tradition argues that the major essayists of Spanish America are distinguished by their ability to modify and reformulate European thought to adapt it to New World circumstances. Stabb reinforces Shumway's contribution in taking up the question of nation building and the essayistic tradition. Following the struggles for political independence, the essayists of the region sought to help build and consolidate the new republics and thus were concerned primarily with the many problems raised by nationhood.

Volume one of the *Cambridge History* ends with Josefina Ludmer's essay on the gaucho genre. She explains methodically the processes through which the gaucho genre took form. Ludmer shows that the genre's distinctive trait is the appropriation in verse of the gauchos' oral tradition. She aptly observes that the gaucho genre with its overtones of challenge and lament provided a space in which the nucleus of nationalism could be considered. Ludmer points out that the genre became one of the fundamental mediators between "civilization" and "barbarism." The cornerstone of her insightful analysis is the premise that what has defined the gaucho genre from the outset is the view of language as a weapon.

Contributors to the second volume of the *Cambridge History* cover authors, works, and genres from Modernism to the most recent literature of the 1990s. Their essays employ a broad range of current approaches in literary and cultural studies. They also formulate research questions around the most salient issues being debated today, among them gender, race, ethnicity, popular culture, and the issue of modernity in Spanish America. Another feature that makes this volume a valuable research tool is its incorporation of the study of writings by women and other historically marginalized groups such as U.S. Latinos. Analysis of this previously neglected corpus seeks to explain how texts work as cultural productions and how the cultural identities of these marginalized groups are constructed and organized in the modern world.

The second volume opens with two discussions of Modernist poetry and prose by Cathy Jrade and Aníbal González. Both critics underline the relation of *modernismo* as a literary movement to Spanish America's entrance into modernity and argue that in broader terms, it is also related to the question of Spanish American identity. What distinguishes modernismo from later poetic movements, Jrade correctly notes, is its faith in attaining a harmonious vision of the universe through poetic language. She explains that religion became the primary discursive model of modernist

poetry, particularly the ancient esoteric tradition that had survived in hermetic and occultist sects. The contribution by Aníbal González provides a more comprehensive view of the movement by focusing on the various prose genres cultivated by Modernist writers: the chronicle, the short story, the essay, and the novel. His lucid examination of these prose genres asserts that philology and journalism became the main models for the Modernists' literary endeavor.

Hugo Verani offers an extensive survey of the Latin American avant-garde by examining the literary movements that appeared in Latin America between about 1916 and 1935, among them *creacionismo*, *ultraísmo*, *estridentismo*, and Afro-Antillean poetry. He concludes that the absolute freedom of invention advocated by the vanguardists altered profoundly the practice of writing. This development in turn made possible the self-reflexive experimentation associated with the rise of modern literature in Latin America.

Indigenismo and Afro-Antilleanism are discussed in detail by René Prieto and Vera Kutzinski. Both movements represent a major tendency in modern Spanish American literature: the rejection of European civilization in favor of incorporating more indigenous elements of New World societies into the mainstream of national life, specifically Indians and Africans. Prieto's thoughtful analysis of indigenismo explores effectively how this literary tendency evolved into a second phase, commonly referred to as *neoindigenismo*. He asserts that in combining Western techniques with stylistic elements from Amerindian literature, *neoindigenista* fiction has provoked the first major disruption in the Western Hemisphere of the mimetic tradition that characterizes European literature. Kutzinski provides a thorough account of Afro-Hispanic (American) literature. She chronicles the specific historical developments of Afro-Hispanic literature, emphasizing the Afro-Antillean or *negrista* poetry and fiction written during the 1920s and early 1930s. Kutzinski also narrates the recent emergence of the Afro-Hispanic novel.

The next four essays trace the evolution of the Spanish American novel from the novel of the Mexican Revolution in the early twentieth century and the regionalist novel to the novel of the Boom in the middle to late 1960s. The set of essays ends with recent developments in the genre from 1975 to 1990. This section begins with an analysis of *criollista* novels by Carlos Alonso. In assessing the *novela de la tierra* (the Spanish American regional novel), Alonso offers innovative readings of several canonical novels by reevaluating these works in the light of current literary criticism. This essay examines the distinctive response to the question of *lo autóctono* articulated by the *criollista* novel as part of the rhetoric of cultural discourse in Spanish America and its relationship to the experience of modernity. Novels written by Mexican authors about the military phase of the Mexican Revolution (1910 to 1920) are studied in the essay by John Rutherford.

His survey calls favorable attention to the works of one woman novelist of the revolution, Nellie Campobello. Randolph Pope's long essay provides an insightful account of the Spanish American novel from the 1950s to the mid-1970s. Pope offers a lucid reading of the relevant texts and analyzes the narrative strategies of major writers of this period, including women novelists. His thorough assessment of the prose and fiction of those years shows a marked shift in the conception of the novel: history as novel replaced the idea of the novel as history, and thus language with all its possibilities prevailed over the power of facts. Finally, Gustavo Pellón's study focuses on recent developments in Spanish American fiction. His overview of the evolution of the novel from 1975 to 1990 identifies three main currents: the documentary novel (*novela testimonio*), the historical novel, and the detective novel in its hard-boiled version. Another current trend examined by Pellón is the incorporation of popular culture, specifically that of the mass media, into recent fiction as a response to conventional literary tradition.

The changes in prose were accompanied by a change in poetic language, as discussed by José Quiroga's contribution to the *Cambridge History* on the twentieth-century poetic tradition. He observes in his study of Spanish American poetry from 1922 to 1975 that Spanish America's encounter with the modern age raised questions about the relationships among poetry, language, and history, which were in turn translated into a search for a new poetics in the region.

The study of the evolution of the modern essay in Spanish America from its emergence with José Enrique Rodó's *Ariel* (1900) to its radical transformation in recent years is the subject of José Miguel Oviedo's outstanding contribution. In his view, the essays of the 1920s ended the idealistic cycle of *ariélismo* by presenting a more complex view of mankind's social and universal situation through a process involving diagnosis, Americanism, and speculation. During the 1930s and 1940s, nationalistic and Americanist interpretations were replaced by more profound inquiries into aesthetic and moral questions. Among the most innovative changes during the modern period was the appearance of the *ensayo creador*. This new mode of literary creation went beyond the essay as a mere vehicle of thought, raising it to higher forms of artistic expression and thus erasing the boundaries that had separated the essay from more creative genres.

Aníbal González's thought-provoking essay on Spanish American literary criticism scrutinizes its history in the region. To understand fully the development of literary criticism, he affirms, one must acknowledge that until recently it was viewed in Spanish America as an enterprise related to the founding of national culture. González explains that the current panorama of Spanish American literary criticism exhibits a lack of consensus: a series of diverse and competing "approaches" ranging from Marxism to poststructuralism, each with its own theoretical positions and ideological commitments.

The following two essays focus on twentieth-century prose. Sylvia Molloy reviews the many forms of Spanish American autobiographical writing, while Daniel Balderston discusses the contemporary short narrative. Molloy observes that nineteenth-century autobiographical writing was usually a vehicle for narrating an incipient national history. But in the twentieth century, self-writing moved away from its initial affiliation with history by diversifying into various forms and acknowledging close links to fiction. As Molloy points out, the components of what might be referred to as the Spanish American autobiographical tradition—claims to national representativeness, to group or gender bonding, and to testimonial service—have already been incorporated into the rhetoric of autobiography as part of the subject's self-perception. Consequently, these elements can now be found in even the most private and fictional autobiographical texts. Balderston's essay deals with the twentieth-century short story in Spanish America. He offers an original interpretation of the genre by focusing on a series of images that appear in diverse texts as metaphors for narration itself. Taken together, these metaphors describe the poetics of prose in short stories. The images Balderston examines—circles, lines, bodies, statues, dolls, mirrors, and copies—are all duplications that convey the idea that storytelling always involves repetition.

Theatrical activities during the twentieth century are described by Sandra Cypess. She reviews the theatrical experiences of Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Argentina to illustrate the transition from the costumbristic realism of nineteenth-century drama to the mature dramatic expression of contemporary Spanish American theatre. Cypess asserts that issues like class, gender, and ethnic diversity have been addressed in contemporary plays. She concludes that theatre in Spanish America is being integrated into other cultural practices, creating polyphonic theatrical works that contain multiple cultural voices and national identities.

The second volume of the *Cambridge History of Latin American Literature* is rounded out by two essays on Latino literature, one by William Luis and the other by Luis Leal and Manuel Martín-Rodríguez. Both reflect a significant change in U.S. academic institutions: recent growth in scholarship on literatures of ethnic minorities. In their study of "minority discourses," these three contributors try to define its distinctiveness while articulating its relations to dominant traditions of writing and thought. William Luis begins his innovative study of Hispanic Caribbean literature written in the United States by pointing out that Latino Caribbean writers are at the vanguard of a literary movement that has opened up a new field in literary history and criticism. He explains that as a group, they are creating an ethnic literature that responds to concerns about their isolation within a dominant culture that has denied them an identity and access to the mainstream of Anglo-American society. The movement, which is both Hispanic and North American in character, is helping to bring the two cul-

tures and their literatures together. Luis's study is complemented by the essay on Chicano literature by Luis Leal and Manuel Martín-Rodríguez. The authors explain that Chicano literature is the manifestation of a borderlands culture at the juncture of the North American and Latin American traditions. As such, it is constantly being reshaped by physical and cultural crossings from one side of the border to the other.

The third volume of the *Cambridge History* offers the most comprehensive account in English of Brazilian literature from the colonial times to the contemporary period. The seventeen essays in this volume balance textual commentary with historical analysis and often elicit new meanings from old topics or point toward new questions. Benedito Nunes's introductory chapter offers an authoritative overview of Brazilian literary history in which he explores the intimate relationship existing between literary historiography and the rhetoric of nationhood in Brazil. David Haberly examines the literature of the colonial period and explores how Romantic liberal ideology led to the confluence of literary and historical discourses.

In examining Brazilian poetry from the 1830s to the 1880s, Fábio Lucas demonstrates that the Romantic lyric was influenced by political tensions and points out the similarities between Brazilian and Spanish American poetic traditions during the nineteenth century. *Romanticismo*, *parnasianismo*, and *simbolismo* developed as three distinct movements in Brazil. They are analyzed by Massaud Moisés and Marta Peixoto. The study of Brazilian poetry is rounded out by an essay by Giovanni Pontiero analyzing it from Modernism to the present. He reviews the profound impact of the *Semana de Arte Moderna* in 1922 on poetry and concludes that the tenets of artistic freedom and innovation celebrated during that week invigorated not only Brazilian poetry but the cultural and intellectual life of the country. Severino João Albuquerque analyzes nineteenth- and twentieth-century theatre. He observes that the nineteenth-century comedy of manners prevailed through the first three decades of the twentieth century.

The next five essays offer extensive coverage of fiction by focusing on the relationship between fiction and nonliterary discourses as well as on several genres: the novel, the short story, and the essay. Mary Daniel's study of Brazilian fiction from 1800 to 1855 investigates the close links existing between fiction and journalism. Daniel explains that in the latter half of the twentieth century, the growing influence of the *folhetins* (serials) and literary supplements made possible the development of the narrative in Brazil. David Haberly studies the remarkable evolution of the Brazilian novel in the second half of the nineteenth century. Daniel subsequently takes up the study of Brazilian fiction by focusing on the works produced between 1930 and 1945 by the writers of the "new novel" of the Northeast. Despite the commercial success achieved by Northeastern authors, João Guimarães Rosa is still considered by many critics to be the greatest twentieth-century Brazilian writer. His fiction is discussed by John Gledson (the novels from

1940 to 1980) and David Jackson (the short stories). In his perceptive study, Jackson identifies two overarching concepts as having defined the scope of literary critical thought in Brazil: cosmopolitanism and the sense of nationality. He concludes that the tension between these two concepts has enhanced the vitality and high quality of critical debate in Brazil.

The primary role played by popular literature in Brazil is explored by Candace Slater in her essay on the *literatura de cordel*. She describes its unique formal and thematic features and examines how educated authors have appropriated and transformed the discourse of popular culture in their own works. Thomas Skidmore surveys the Brazilian essayistic tradition of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. He focuses on several influential writers who have tried to define Brazil's national identity in cultural and political terms while taking into consideration the question of how racial intermixture has affected the Brazilian character. This volume ends with a comparative essay by the late J. G. Merquior on Brazilian and Spanish American literatures from the colonial period to the present.

A unique feature of the *Cambridge History* is the excellent classified bibliography of 455 pages in the third volume. It consists of a general bibliography of Spanish American literature compiled by Hensley Woodbridge and a well-annotated bibliography for each essay in all three volumes. The large bibliography provides an annotated list of the major general bibliographies, dictionaries, and handbooks on Spanish American literature as well as sections on women, black authors, and translations (which includes Brazilian works). The major section is arranged by country and also by region. The bibliographies by country are usually arranged by literary genres and topics. Most items listed in this excellent bibliography have been published since 1980. The annotated bibliographies for each chapter feature primary and secondary sources, including up-to-date critical studies. Among the items listed in these thorough bibliographic essays are the best critical editions available, rare first editions, unpublished materials, and original manuscripts. All entries have been evaluated for being up-to-date and generally useful.

In sum, the *Cambridge History of Latin American Literature* has proved to be a major literary event in bringing together for the first time the history of Spanish American and Brazilian literary traditions from a comparative perspective. The high standards of this impressive enterprise have surpassed the demanding requirements of a reference tool. The interdisciplinary scope as well as coverage of the literary historiography and literary criticism of Latin America have created a broader framework in which to view and analyze the literature of the entire region. The great strength of this reference work is that it provides fertile ground for in-depth analyses to follow. The *Cambridge History* achieves this objective in several ways. First, it incorporates a diversity of theoretical approaches exemplifying recent advances in literary theory and cultural studies. Second, it devotes

special attention to the cultural production of women writers and U.S. Latinos, while opening new areas of research such as popular culture and Afro-Hispanic and Hispanic Caribbean literature written in the United States. Another feature encouraging future research is the extensive annotated bibliography and a general bibliography on Latin American literary studies. This ambitious history has succeeded in creating the most complex history of Latin American literature to date, one that will inform and guide scholars and the general public for years to come.

The two specialized books on Latin American literature under review are informative and certain to become standard reference works in Latin American literary studies. The lack of investigative tools on the Latin American short story has hindered research in this area for years. The few research tools available to scholars in this field were either surveys of anthologies of individual national literatures or incomplete guides to the larger corpus. Daniel Balderston's *The Latin American Short Story: An Annotated Guide to Anthologies and Criticism* has now filled this need. As he explains, this annotated guide to short story anthologies and criticism was conceived to bring together the large corpus of materials on the genre to facilitate systematic study of this body of primary and secondary sources.

Balderston's compilation is divided into two annotated bibliographies, one dealing with anthologies of short stories and the other with critical studies on the genre. The first section displays more than thirteen hundred analytic entries of collections of short stories (in both Spanish and Portuguese), arranged into general anthologies from Latin America, general anthologies in English translation, regional anthologies, and anthologies from individual countries. In the second section, Balderston classifies material under short story theory, general criticism, literary history, regions of Latin America, and individual countries. The volume ends with a series of useful indexes of the items in the bibliographies. The indexes are arranged according to authors of the stories, editors of anthologies and authors of essays, introductions and other critical material, titles of anthologies and critical studies, and themes.

Almost all the major works and most of the less-known ones dealing with the short story in Latin America are listed here. The items listed in the two main sections of the book are usually annotated with descriptive and critical comments. Balderston's detailed approach constitutes another strength of this reference work. For instance, in surveying national anthologies of short stories, Balderston goes beyond a panoramic national overview to include works focusing on the short stories of provinces, states, cities, and regions.

Balderston discusses the difficulty of studying the enormous corpus of short story anthologies. He then describes this larger body of texts and indicates directions for future study. Balderston proposes topics that include the study of canon formation and the critical debates surrounding this issue;

the use of anthologies to examine literary markets; study of the anthology as a genre; the relations between short story anthologies and mass society; the roles played by vanity presses and literary workshops in publishing of these collections; links between anthologies and literary magazines; and the function of literary contests in giving exposure to new writers.

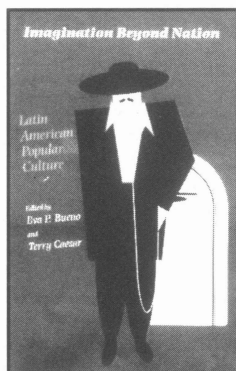
Mexican Literature: A Bibliography of Secondary Sources, compiled by David William Foster, is the second edition of a work published in 1981, now enlarged to expand coverage of Mexican authors in scope and number. The new edition deals with writers from pre-Columbian times to the present. Foster's preface announces his intention to represent Mexican writers about whom a well-defined critical tradition has emerged. Significant academic literary scholarship was the guiding principle in this compilation.

Mexican Literature consists of a bibliography of general references followed by one on authors. The first covers general topics such as bibliographies, general histories, collected essays, literary criticism, reviews and journals, literature and other subjects, and special literary topics. Three special categories are relations with foreign literatures, women authors and feminist topics, and journals. These categories serve to guide further study of Mexican women writers, to examine Mexican literature in the context of world literature, and to explore neglected periodicals. The first part also includes subsections on time periods and genres such as general studies on colonial, nineteenth- and twentieth-century literatures, special topics in poetry, and studies on dramas, fiction, and essays from colonial times to the present. Foster incorporates a category of local and regional literature, thus providing a fuller picture of the literary scene in Mexico. The second section is a bibliography of secondary sources covering eighty authors from colonial, nineteenth-century, and twentieth-century Mexican literature. The volume concludes with an index arranged by critic.

Foster covers the entire spectrum of Mexican letters. He has also achieved balance in the attention given to periods, genres, and specific authors. The result is a specialized reference tool that will help redefine the Mexican literary canon by guiding research toward neglected writers representing different movements and periods.

Notwithstanding these books' differences, all offer a more complex yet coherent picture of Latin American literature. These informative sources will be useful to Latin Americanists specializing in literature but also to those from other disciplines. These works synthesize the achievements of Latin American literary studies and criticism over the past decades and provide fertile soil for future work in the field. They thus represent a successful attempt to move the discipline forward.

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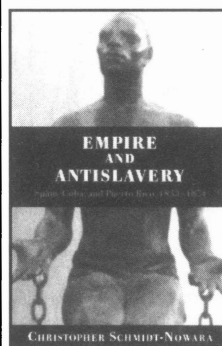
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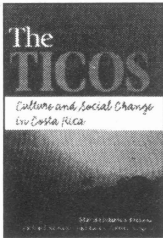
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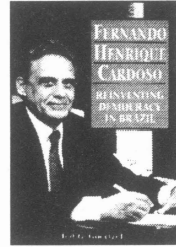
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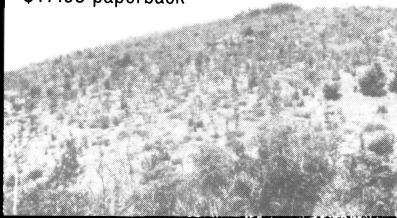
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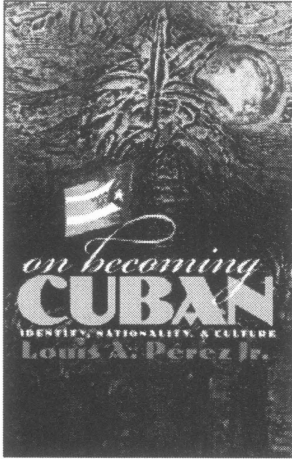
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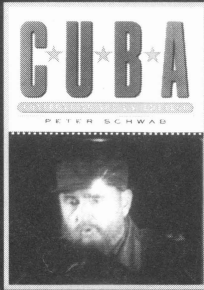
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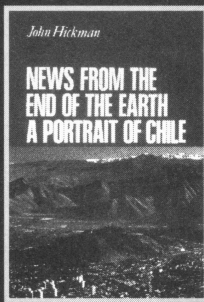


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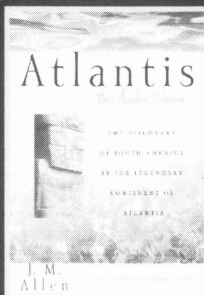
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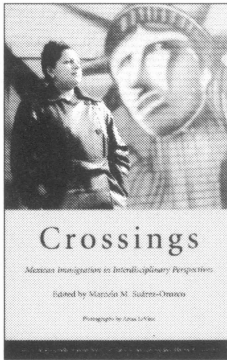
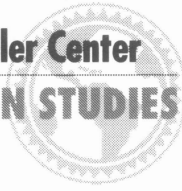
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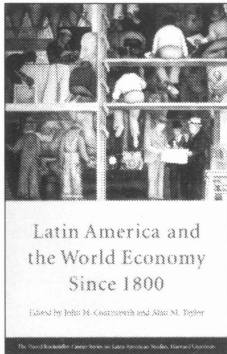
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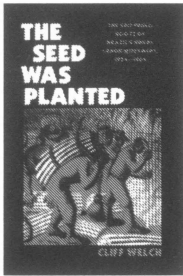
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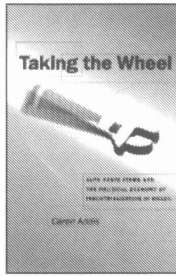
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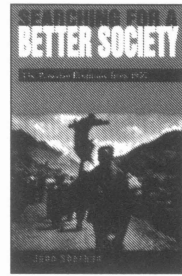
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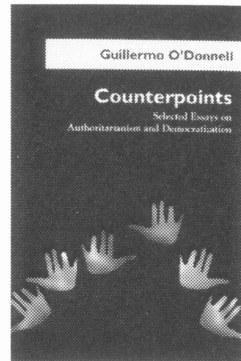
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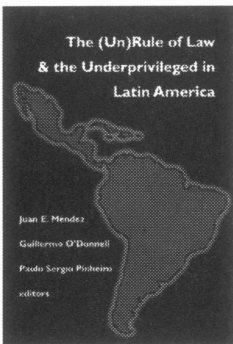
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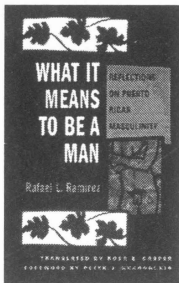
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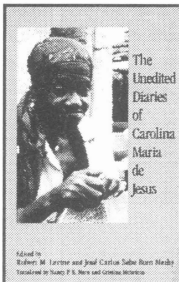
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