

Historia de lo fantástico en la cultura española contemporánea (1900-2015). Edited by David Roas. Madrid: Iberoamericana; Frankfurt: Vervuert. 2017. 386 pp.

Coming out from the research activities of the Grupo de Estudios sobre lo Fantástico (GEF), based at the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, this edited volume provides a comprehensive account of the fantastic across literature, theatre, film, television, comics and short fiction produced throughout the twentieth and the twenty-first century in Spain. The volume edited by David Roas, who is also the Director of GEF, brings together the work of sixteen contributors, most of whom are associated with the research group, in a total of fourteen chapters. I invite readers to navigate the research group's website (www.lofantastico.com) where they will be able to access a significant archive of materials relating to the study of the fantastic.

The purpose of *Historia de lo fantástico en la cultura española contemporánea (1900-2015)* is twofold, as Roas states in the "Prologue" (9-14): 'el estudio panorámico (sin descuidar la reflexión teórica) y la dimensión comparada e interartística' (9). Overall, contributors respond successfully to this dual task. Indeed, the ultimate aim of the volume is to map the terrain of the fantastic across different areas of culture in order to demarcate the field of study for students and researchers alike. In this respect, the volume will be an excellent resource for the study of the fantastic in contemporary Spanish culture: authors and titles, traditions and trends, narrative models and stylistic techniques, tropes and conventions, and cultures and subcultures of the fantastic.

To facilitate the examination of historical and critical developments and of major political shifts in the period under consideration, the fourteen chapters are grouped under genre and chronological markers. Literature is covered in four separate periods and chapters ('Narrativa 1930-1950'; 'Narrativa 1950-1960'; 'Narrativa 1960-1980'; 'Narrativa 1980-2015'); cinema is divided into three different chapters ('Cine 1900-1965'; 'Cine 1965-1990'; 'Cine 1990-2015'); and, theatre and television merit two chapters each ('Teatro 1900-1960'; 'Teatro 1960-2015'; 'Televisión 1960-1990'; 'Televisión 1990-2015'). Accounts of the Modernist short story, the micro-story (*microrrelato*) and comics (*narración gráfica*) are presented in individual chapters.

All chapters succeed in providing instructive historical surveys of specific genres. Much is to be gained also from those chapters threading a comparative and intergeneric element into their arguments. A small number of contributors, however, lose sight of the theoretical considerations established in the prologue. There is a sense of anticipated familiarity, for example, in two of the chapters devoted to cinema. Here Pau Roig (Chapter 6) and Iván Gómez (Chapter 7) tread territories already explored in generalist accounts of Spanish horror and fantasy film rather than breaking any new critical or comparative ground. When contributors situate authors and texts against contemporaneous contexts of mediation, consumption and reception, their arguments are more nuanced and rewarding. Among the highlights of the volume is the opening chapter 'El cuento modernista' (15-38), where Ana Casas locates both canonical and lesser known Spanish modernist writers in relation to international cycles, trends and modes of production, as well as to broader cultural and (pseudo)scientific discourses. Similarly, Miguel Carrera Garrido valuably contextualizes the narrative produced between 1960 and 1980 (71-98) as part of broader phenomena in mass

culture and in the publishing world, while Ada Cruz Tienda in her chapter on television for the period 1960-1990 (175-194) contributes to the already existing scholarship on the cultural history of the fantastic in Spanish television, and, more generally, to the advancement of Spanish television studies, with rich ideas and a wealth of archival material.

Other individual chapters deserve more detailed commentary than is feasible within the length of this review. Nonetheless, the chapter by Raquel Velázquez Velázquez on the *microrrelato* (215-239) warrants a few lines, since it offers a lucid combination of a survey of authors, anthologies and synopses with a theoretical discussion of the mechanics of the fantastic, in particular the metafictional dimension of the *microrrelato fantástico* and the ways in which its mechanics problematize the conflict between reality and fiction. Moreover, the author's initial 'aproximación a la historia del microrrelato fantástico en España' (215) is strengthened by a critical awareness of the role of publishing houses, circuits of dissemination, and celebratory practices such as competitions and prizes which enable the constitution of the field.

As an introduction and source of reference to the study of the fantastic in Spanish contemporary culture, this is an informative, accessible and useful volume, which provides essential background for those researchers daring to venture into the relatively uncharted domain(s) of the fantastic. The book will undoubtedly be well-received by Hispanists who wish to include cultural production of the fantastic in their reading lists and their syllabi.

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