



REVIEWS

TERUEL, JOSÉ. *Los años norteamericanos de Luis Cernuda*. Valencia: Pre-Textos, 2013. 266 pp.

In *Los años norteamericanos de Luis Cernuda*, Teruel's objective is as clear as it is ambitious: clarify the poetic production and image of Luis Cernuda during his years in exile in the United States and Mexico between 1947 and 1963. As Teruel rightly argues in the introduction, there is little doubt that Cernuda has been valorized as a "poeta del 27," and much of the interest surrounding his poetry has gravitated to the early years that run from the publication of *Perfil del aire* in 1927 to *Como quien espera el alba* of 1941–1944. In Teruel's appraisal, however, Cernuda's later work is not only worthy of study in its own right, but it also illuminates and adds crucial perspective to the poet's complex poetic persona.

Teruel's study is composed of an introduction and ten chapters and presents in chronological order Cernuda's life and poetry from his arrival at Mount Holyoke College in 1947 to his death in Mexico in 1963. Teruel makes clear in the introduction that his intention is to refute the well-worn argument that Cernuda's later poetic production exudes an aesthetic fatigue and an overall impoverishment of creativity. Likewise, he aims to demonstrate the unity of Cernuda's "obra completa" and to what extent his later poetry and meditations on self during his years of exile in fact dialogue with his earlier lyric endeavors. The remaining chapters articulate these distinct yet complementary aims, and they do so with precision and consistency while weaving together critical readings of Cernuda's poetry and a wealth of his correspondence and personal notes.

One of the most illuminating aspects of Teruel's study is the manner in which it brings to the fore Cernuda's insecurities about his craft and, in particular, his image as poet. Beginning with his first revised collection of poems, *Perfil del aire*, Cernuda would fret and fume for the rest of his life over the way his poetry was read, interpreted, appraised, and ignored. Indeed, *Perfil del aire* was received with scant enthusiasm from Spain's intellectual community, and it even garnered an abundance of negative and hostile reviews. As Teruel sees it, Cernuda was never able to transcend this initial disappointment or the betrayal he endured from those he believed were his closest allies at the time (his mentor Pedro Salinas, to whom the book was dedicated, responded with a simple acknowledgement of receipt when Cernuda sent him a personally dedicated copy of it). The appearance of *La invitación a la poesía*, *Donde habita el olvido*, *Invocaciones*, and the homage paid to Cernuda's poetry in *El Sol* in the years leading up to 1936 did little to ameliorate his hurt feelings and growing sense of disaffection with Spain's cultural milieu. Shortly after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, he was invited to deliver a series of lectures at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge that were scheduled over a period of a few months, but the war made it impossible for him to return to Spain. And so began his life in exile in 1938.

For Teruel, Cernuda was consumed by a sense of exile. This was, in reality, only aggravated in 1938, for he had always felt somehow estranged and underestimated since the publication of *Perfil del aire*. It was these nagging feelings that generated the rich tension in his later work between past and present, ideality and reality, and sexual craving and platonic love. These sentiments also played a hand in the unpredictable dialectic that ruled Cernuda's life between place and displacement. More concretely, Cernuda's years of exile, as Teruel methodically documents, are characterized by constant movement, a constant shifting and transition between countries, lifestyles, and outlooks. In Teruel's words, "su errante, interina y zigzagante vida lo llevó de la pasión por el Absoluto (con inicial mayúscula, como concebía su obra) a su relativismo desesperado" (30). In the end, Teruel succeeds in demonstrating throughout his study the manner in which Cernuda's anxieties about self and image would advance and retreat during different periods of his life and morph into an overwhelming "manía persecutoria" (59). While this "manía" certainly added profundity and intense richness to his poetic endeavors (chapters 7 and 8 are especially relevant in this respect), it also crippled him socially and left its mark on his perceptions of self-worth. Yet, as Teruel is quick to point out, "Cernuda nunca fue el poeta olvidado que él imaginó ser" (35).

Teruel's study explores other aspects of Cernuda's work. Firstly, he adds new details to what we knew about the influence that English literature exerted on Cernuda's poetic craft. In his readings of Blake, Keats, and Wordsworth, Cernuda

perfected the essentials of poetic composition, yet it was his attentiveness to Browning's aesthetics of the dramatic monologue that allowed him to explore in what ways close psychological observation of a particular setting and flights of self-inquiry could furnish the primary materials for authentic poetic expression (the collections *La realidad y el deseo* and *Desolación de la Quimera* are suggestive on this topic). Teruel also dedicates a full chapter to Cernuda's labors as a literary critic—a topic often given short shrift when evaluating the poet's intellectual legacy—and he reveals convincingly to what extent the poet's criticism served him well to meditate upon his image as poet. In Teruel's estimation, Cernuda's criticism can only be fully understood in light of his poetry and the broader psycho-emotional pains that informed it. “[La] crítica y la poesía,” Teruel states, “fueron en su caso tareas paralelas, en especial desde su exilio británico. Su labor crítica estuvo estrechamente vinculada a su reflexión sobre la poesía” (164). Teruel focuses mostly on Cernuda's evaluations of Cervantes and Unamuno. He delves into various of Cernuda's articles to make the case that Cervantes supplied the poet with “un modelo de artista frente al mundo, cuya amplitud, riquezas y flexibilidad de pensamiento encarnaban una tradición con la que se identificaba frente a la realidad histórica de España” (170). Clearly, Cernuda identified with the outcast and idealistic figure of don Quijote, a figure that was reimagined and reassessed during the poet's “época juvenil” during Spain's so-called Edad de Plata. When it came to Unamuno, Cernuda was concerned mostly with his poetry and its romantic underpinnings, and his approach to Unamuno's poetry was clearly clouded by his readings of the great age of English Romanticism. Other aspects of Unamuno's poetry, such as its religious expression and deep meditative quality, also captivated him. Following Philip Silver's notion of romantic restitution in Spain, Teruel suggests that Cernuda is one of the first critics to properly recognize Unamuno as establishing the necessary aesthetic and theoretical foundations for Spanish high Romanticism (the same high Romanticism that Cernuda himself would explore in his poetry).

All told, where Teruel succeeds admirably with *Los años norteamericanos de Luis Cernuda* is in rendering Cernuda's humanity; that is, the flaws, insecurities, misgivings, and inner demons that plagued the poet throughout his years in exile and that found permanent expression in his poetry and writings. Teruel's study discloses with vividness Cernuda's personal difficulties in accommodating the shifting and oftentimes inimical world about him, yet it also brings to life what Sartre once called “a man's relation with himself,” or the deep subjective discoveries that inspire or beset an individual and lead him down a path towards self-realization or crippling dubiety. As the winner of the Premio de Investigación Literaria Gerardo Diego, *Los años norteamericanos de Luis Cernuda* is a solid

achievement and a valuable addition to the growing literature on Cernuda's life and work.

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CEVALLOS, SANTIAGO. *El Barroco, marco de agua de la narrativa hispanoamericana*. Madrid: Iberoamericana; Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert, 2012. 323 pp.

Cevallos's book examines a less common variety of Baroque, the Baroque as a hidden or "latent" aesthetic (*Barroco latente*) in twentieth-century Latin American literature. Cevallos's distinction between two opposite types of Baroque, "manifest" and "latent," joins a long-standing thread of debate in Baroque studies that traces Baroque expression outside the inner circle of the stylistics of Baroque extravagance and excess. An older study that comes to mind for making a parallel distinction in European seventeenth-century literature is Frank Warnke's *Versions of Baroque*, which differentiates between an "ornate, exclamatory, emotional" trend in works of the High Baroque, typified by Crashaw, Gryphius, Marino, or Góngora, and a "spare, witty, intellectual" trend exemplified by Donne, Marvell, or Quevedo, whose Baroque traits are more conceptual and restrained than expressive (12). Cevallos finds the "latent" Baroque in three early-twentieth-century Latin American writers: the Ecuadorian Pablo Palacio, the Uruguayan Juan Carlos Onetti, and the Argentine Jorge Luis Borges. The study concludes with a fourth chapter on Cuban writer José Lezama Lima's essays and fiction as an example of the "manifest" Baroque, or more precisely, *barroco como manifestación*. Cevallos frames his investigation of the "latent Baroque" in twentieth-century Latin American literature as an extension of Julio Ortega's claim that the Baroque has been the latent aesthetic of Hispanic American literature from its inception to the present, as well as Emir Rodríguez Monegal's affirmation that the Baroque constitutes the latter's watermark (*marco de agua*). Unlike the "manifest" Baroque, the "latent" Baroque is visible only indirectly, like a watermark against the light. Indeed, Cevallos intends his paired categories of latent vs. manifest Baroque to replace "la división simple entre un Barroco y un Neobarroco hispanoamericanos" (11) as more precise terms able to capture internal differences *within* the historical Hispanic American literary Baroque as well as the Neobaroque. He elaborates: "En este sentido, propongo diferenciar entre distintas formas del mismo: a) un *Barroco dominante* —que se corresponde con un Barroco histórico hispanoamericano—, b) un *Barroco manifiesto*, c) un *Barroco latente* y d) un *Barroco como manifestación*. La presente investigación atiende a las últimas dos formas del Barroco, vale decir,