

suggerentes los análisis dedicados a la poesía en el capítulo cuarto, “La écfrasis que contiene la historia”, o los comentarios sobre textos filmicos y narrativos extranjeros, o sobre el teatro, a lo largo de todo el libro. Cueto Asín sorprende al lector frecuentemente con magníficos análisis de textos, así como con aclaradores y útiles resúmenes comparativos al final de cada sección o capítulo.

Eso sí, el lector deberá superar el reto de un texto denso, ambiguo y repetitivo, lleno de errores tipográficos, y con una sintaxis que obliga a volver, una y otra vez, sobre lo leído, a pesar de la innegable fluidez léxica de la autora. ¡Lástima que tanto y tan buen trabajo de investigación y documentación se vea ensombrecido por la falta de una última revisión editorial!

En conclusión, a pesar de la falta de una buena edición final del manuscrito, es evidente la cantidad de trabajo de archivo y de documentación que Cueto Asín ha puesto en este denso volumen: un libro que habrá de ser de referencia para los especialistas interesados en *Guernica*. Aunque, en mi opinión, se profundiza más en las resonancias culturales del episodio histórico que en las del cuadro, el libro también enriquecerá a aquellos especialistas que quieran informarse mejor sobre la formación del valor alegórico de la obra de Picasso en los medios de comunicación desde el segundo tercio del siglo XX.

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JEAN DANGLER. *Edging toward Iberia*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017. 170 pp.

Jean Dangler’s book offers an innovative approach to understanding the history and culture (or perhaps better expressed as “histories” and “cultures”) of the Iberian Peninsula during the thousand-year period that has monolithically come to be known as the “Middle Ages” and that has been rigidly defined and categorized according to dates, political systems, and geography. Defining and categorizing this long period by fixed dates such as 1492 or 1500, by Iberian kingdoms as fixed geographic spaces, or by rigid political terms such as *feudalism* has led to a static and lifeless view of a vibrant and fluid period; former approaches offer a view that robs us of a more accurate understanding of this period’s dynamics and this region’s expansive interconnectedness with the broader Mediterranean world. Dangler suggests that by combining and applying two analytical tools from modern technology – Network Theory and World-Systems Analysis – to the

information we have from this period, we can overcome the static view handed down to us and gain a better understanding of medieval Iberia's fluidity and the moving forces that truly shaped its history and development. Dangler provides a much-needed critical stance that will doubtless lead scholars to see the Peninsula's fluid history and culture in a brighter and clearer light.

Dangler's is a short but dense book. Between the introduction and epilogue, she divides seven chapters into three broad categories. In Part One, comprised of two chapters, she points out the shortcomings of ascribing traditional dates and geographic spaces to what has come to be known as Spain. She also explains the two methodologies she is proposing as new tools of analysis (Network Theory and World-Systems Analysis). Part Two consists of three chapters in which Dangler applies the combination of these two analytic tools to the trade network of the Islamic world, to the travel between the Iberian Peninsula and the Islamic world, and to the political and social institutions of feudalism, slavery, and poverty. Part Three (New Themes: Politics; Identity and Culture) is divided into the final two chapters of the work, dealing respectively with how to approach politics, and identity and culture by applying this combination of Network Theory and World-Systems Analysis. Dangler concludes with an epilogue in which she explains how her proposed approach has wider applications than merely the historical and political and can be helpful to literary studies, suggesting that a fruitful starting point could be the link between the Andalusí Arabic *zajal* and its thematic and formal presence in canonical Castilian literature (for example, in the *Libro de buen amor* or in Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa María*). Following the text of the book are a section of notes, a thorough list of works cited, and a very complete index. The physical book is excellently produced, with easily readable standard typeface and no problems with the Spanish names or Spanish orthography (the careful attention to the Spanish leads me to assume that the Arabic transcriptions are done correctly as well), and there are only two typographical errors that I found (both the result of word division at the end of a line, which is certainly a word-processing error). Dangler's style is direct and clear, and her reasoning is convincing.

Dangler both synthesizes the approach she is positing and provides enough analyses to show how useful it can be as a tool. She draws on the studies of many scholars who have worked with these analytic tools, showing how they used them and refuting them where she finds error in their applications. She suggests that scholars move away from theories, which generally attempt to prove something (such as capitalism's emergence as the end point of the Middle Ages, or such as the notion of today's globalization being comparable to the borderless regions of that

time period) and instead proposes using analytic paradigms to explain the relationships that existed and that have generally been overlooked or that can sometimes unexpectedly be found. Dangler takes the idea of network organization from Manuel Castell's Network Theory, which focuses on the interconnectedness of adaptable and flexible nodes that form a network and work together to achieve a network's goals. Rather than looking at these nodes as a vertical hierarchy, we can study them as a horizontal relationship, which will help to give us a more accurate view of the network in which they are functioning. For World-Systems Analysis, Dangler draws on the work of Immanuel Wallerstein, who opposes the creation of theories in favor of data analysis, which can provide broad explanations of systems. Wallerstein takes on a broad geographic scope, looks at the cyclical and patterned nature of societies, and sees systems as hierarchical, especially regarding economies. He notes that in economic systems, the stronger countries form a core, while the weaker nations form a periphery, and points out the mutability of this dynamic. Dangler applies her approach throughout her book to give us examples of how following network nodes and data analysis can lead to enlightening discoveries. For one example, she gives an excellent mini-history of the *maravedí*, which was minted in Al-Andalus as the Almoravid gold dinar (*murabiṭūn*) and became a standard coin in the Western Mediterranean region. Its existence and incorporation into Castilian culture reveal the interconnectedness of this area during this period, showing, too, the importance Islamic "Spain" exerted outward from its core.

Dangler's book is well written, well argued, strongly supported, and extremely helpful in that it not only describes a methodology for studying cultures, but also applies the methodology; and while Dangler focuses on the medieval Mediterranean region, her approach can work for studying any region or period. Her methodology offers a "technological" approach to the past: we can compare the traditional approach to a flat X-ray image, while the method Dangler proposes is akin to the 3-D image an MRI scan produces. It is an excellent book.

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