

dedicados a las relaciones entre islam y cristianismo en la península ibérica. A nuestro parecer, se convertirá en un libro de consulta obligada en los próximos años para quienes nos dedicamos a este ámbito de estudio.

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DALE KNICKERBOCKER. *Spain is Different? Historical Memory and the 'Two Spains' in Turn-of-the-Millennium Spanish Apocalyptic Fictions*. Cardiff: U of Wales P, 2021. 265 pp.

In *Spain is Different?*, Dale Knickerbocker adds to his body of insightful, deeply researched and neatly argued explorations of Spanish science fiction, this time mining a surprisingly rich vein: the turn-of-the-millennium apocalyptic novel. Knickerbocker analyzes six of these works, demonstrating how each incorporates the discourses of both science and religion as a means of interrogating three metanarratives about Spain's history: the metanarrative of the Two Spains (progressive or conservative, "backward" or "pure"); of Spanish exceptionalism; and of the Transition, the period following the death of the dictator Francisco Franco. Knickerbocker's reading of the six novels reveals strategies for processing the unresolved trauma of Spain's past and making sense of the present. His intent is to demonstrate how the texts "serve as a release valve for the repressed desire for an open discussion of the truth of what occurred in the Civil War and Franco's dictatorship, for justice for the victims, and for a sense of closure that would give meaning to the traumatic historical experience" (5-6).

The book is divided into seven chapters. In the Introduction, Knickerbocker defines his terms, summarizes the historical events that gave rise to the three metanarratives, and describes how science fiction in general and apocalyptic fiction in particular can grant readers the ironic distancing necessary to achieve greater cognitive understanding and experience emotional catharsis (16). For the purposes of his study, Knickerbocker defines apocalyptic fictions as stories that represent "the end of one civilisation, giving rise to a radically different culture or mode of existence" (6). Additionally, in their characters and plots they share many characteristics with the Bible's famous myth of destruction and rebirth, *Revelation*: prophets and saviors, angels and demons, epiphanies and "divine" intervention, and oftentimes a final judgment that ushers in some version of heaven or hell.

Spanish apocalyptic fiction's affinity for biblical tropes and metaphors is important to Knickerbocker's project because of Christianity's centrality

in Spanish history and culture. Furthermore, the author maintains that Spanish apocalyptic novels from the era he is studying are “unique in that they are a hybrid of narrative types based on the conflicting interpretive paradigms of science and religion” (3). In Chapter 2, for example, “Apocalypse and Apotheosis in Rosa Montero’s *Temblores*,” Knickerbocker shows how apocalyptic crises, destruction and rebirth in Montero’s 1990 novel and its interrogation of utopia speak to “a desire to overcome the binary understanding of Spain’s history” as order/chaos, growth/destruction, good/evil (44) and to “transcend ... the ideological, religious and political models used time and time again” (51). Along the way, the author exposes how *Temblores* evokes and subverts conventions of the heroic adventure myth and sees in the novel’s indeterminate ending and failed utopia an erosion of faith in the euphoric promises of the Transition.

The technological grotesque/monster motif and the *novum*, or element of cognitive estrangement, are crucial to the author’s consideration of apocalypse and alienation in Javier Negrete’s 1990 quest novel, *Nox perpetua*. Through detailed textual analysis, Knickerbocker demonstrates how *Nox perpetua* thematically pits science and religion as opposing worldviews as a way to reference the conflict between the Two Spains. Drawing on the work of Istvan Csicsery-Ronay, Joseph Campbell, Mircea Eliade, and others, he exposes processes of (de-)familiarization at work in the novel and shows how its theme of human alienation “manifests Spaniards’ own suppressed desire to recover and make sense of their own past” (56).

Themes discussed in one or across several chapters of the book include justice, reconciliation, memory, free will, the nature of intelligence, and the post human condition. Textual interpretation makes up the bulk of each chapter, but Knickerbocker takes care to link his findings back to his central thesis during and at the end of each section. Chapter 5, for example (“Enlightening the Apocalypse: Enrique del Barco’s *Punto Omega*”), ends with a clear restatement of the ways in which *Punto Omega* reflects the materialist and religious worldviews that infuse the historical narrative of the Two Spains (140). The study concludes with a brief but powerful Afterword, in which Knickerbocker returns to the question he poses in the book’s arched-eyebrow title – *Spain is Different?* – and then turns his gaze outward, seeing disturbing echoes of Spain’s cultural and political past in the violent clashes between opposing worldviews today.

*Spain is Different?* is a valuable addition to literary scholarship that would enrich any research library and especially benefit those working with the genres, themes, or historical periods mentioned in this review. Though at times the writing is dense, Knickerbocker’s voice is clear and confident, and his ideas are interesting, abundant, and thoughtfully presented. His

critical framework and several of his observations could be presented fruitfully in undergraduate as well as graduate courses. Finally, Knickerbocker's assertion that "Spanish [apocalyptic] works are quite different from their Latin American counterparts in that they exhibit a far greater presence of religion" (3) is an irresistible invitation for future research and an indication of the scholarly resonance that *Spain is Different?* is likely to have.

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CLAUDIO PALOMARES-SALAS. *The Spatiality of the Hispanic Avant-Garde. Ultraísmo and Estridentismo, 1918-1927*. Leiden/ Boston: Brill Rodopi, 2020. 199 pp.

En los últimos años, se ha producido un interés creciente por las vanguardias históricas. Los estudiosos revisan lugares comunes e ideas asumidas; ahondan en aspectos ya conocidos estudiando temas, textos y géneros que antes no se habían tenido en cuenta; adoptan metodologías y teorías más novedosas, sin olvidar tampoco las ya existentes. Desde finales del siglo XX es cada vez más frecuente también el abandono de la perspectiva nacionalista y eurocéntrica al estudiar la vanguardia; el enfoque se pone ahora en el carácter transoceánico del fenómeno vanguardista. En este sentido, en años recientes, ha cobrado gran importancia el examen de las relaciones y desplazamientos de los intelectuales y artistas del primer tercio del siglo XX, incluidas las mujeres de la vanguardia. Se detecta la existencia de redes de intercambio personal y cultural a nivel internacional, y se estudian los espacios y las formas que adopta el asociacionismo vanguardista. El libro de Claudio Palomares aborda el estudio de la espacialidad en las primeras vanguardias poéticas y artísticas hispanas, prestando atención a la modernidad urbana en los textos ultraístas y estridentistas. Se nutre, para ello, de los estudios teóricos sobre el espacio de Michel de Certeau y Gaston Bachelard, pero adopta también un acercamiento transnacional inspirado en las aportaciones al estudio de la vanguardia hispana de Vicky Unruh (1994).

El libro se publicó en 2020, en la editorial académica holandesa Brill, una prensa especializada en las humanidades, y como parte de su colección *Avant-Garde Critical Studies*. Iniciada en 1987, la serie cuenta ya con casi medio centenar de volúmenes sobre las vanguardias, principalmente las centroeuropeas. El libro de Claudio Palomares, sin embargo, tiene su origen en la tesis doctoral del autor defendida en 2013 en la Universidad de Toronto