

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Juan Valera by Enrique Rubio Cremades

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domesticity. This latter reading reduces the semantic complexity of a character whose femaleness reinforces her links to moral (narcissism, vanity), social (nobility, aristocracy), and literary (the *folletín*, romanticism) codes presented as alien and “other” in a work in which realism is allied to middle-class, capitalistic values through positively drawn male figures like Miquis.

Given the binary logic of a signifying system in which the male/female opposition corresponds to the dichotomies of strong/weak, reason/emotion, serious/frivolous, superior/inferior, etc., and given the patriarchal nature of nineteenth-century society, readers of the Spanish realist novel can expect to find many variations on the age-old Ave/Eva split (woman as chaste mother/woman as seductress). They can also anticipate the presence of many female characters who are passive, silent, confined to home and church, or, if not, punished for their infractions against social norms. By focusing her critical lens on the stereotypical nature of these representations, Charnon-Deutsch calls attention to the socially constructed and ideologically determined nature of gender, of roles that many still assume are biological and natural. *Gender and Representation* offers many incisive reminders of the ways in which patriarchy and phallogocentric discourse have shaped literary production, and the brief Lacanian analyses of its conclusion point to promising new dimensions in Hispanic feminist criticism.

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Juan Valera. Ed. Enrique Rubio Cremades. Madrid: Taurus, 1990. 511 pages.

This book, the latest in the series “El escritor y la crítica,” brings together twenty-nine previously published essays concerning Juan Valera and his works. The volume is divided into five sections: I. “Biografía y semblanza,” II. “Diplomática,” III. “Poesía,” IV. “Novelas,” and V. “Cuentos.” In addition there is a helpful “Introducción” and an up-to-date “Bibliografía.”

The chronological order of the essays in each section has the advantage of demonstrating to the reader how Valera and his works have been viewed by successive generations. In the first section, for example, one sees what Valera’s contemporaries (Leopoldo Alas “Clarín,” Palacio Valdés, Pardo Bazán, Gómez de Baquero “Andrenio” and Martínez Ruiz “Azorín”) thought of him. The next three essays show how Valera was viewed in 1924 on the

centenary of his birth; then three subsequent views (in 1957, 1970, and 1983) round out this section.

In part II. ("Diplomática") the Marqués de Villaurrutia (in "Don Juan Valera, diplomático y hombre de mundo") tells what it was like to work for Valera and gives his assessment of the latter's diplomatic career. Cyrus DeCoster's well-known "Valera en Washington" and "Valera y Portugal" conclude this section.

The first 175 pages of this book truly communicate the essence of Valera as a person, a man of letters, and a diplomat. The only thing lacking—and this is most likely due to the exigencies of the series which does not permit excerpts from longer works—is an explanation of Valera's sexual compulsions and how these repeatedly had disastrous effects on his diplomatic career, including his ambassadorship in Washington, D.C. (Such information, thanks to Carlos Sáenz de Tejada, may now be found in *Juan Valera. Estébanez Calderón: Crónica histórica y vital de Lisboa, Brazil, París y Dresde* [1971] and *Cartas íntimas* [1974]. Both of these works are rightly included in the [unannotated] bibliography.)

In regard to Valera's literary works, the editor shows good judgment in the emphasis placed. Thirteen essays are devoted to the novel, two to *cuentos* (Sherman Eoff, "El interés de Juan Valera por el Oriente" and José Montesinos, "Una nota sobre Valera") and one to *poesía* (Menéndez y Pelayo, "Notas a 'Canciones, romances y poemas' de Juan Valera").

Of the five novels considered, *Pepita Jiménez* understandably merits the most attention. First there is the indispensable classic by Manuel Azaña entitled "La novela de *Pepita Jiménez*," then Ruano de la Haza's "La identidad del narrador de los 'Paralipómenos de Pepita Jiménez'" is followed by Carlos Feal, "*Pepita Jiménez* o del misticismo al idilio," and the concluding study is María del Pilar Palomo's Introduction to a 1987 edition of *Pepita Jiménez*. The most exciting of these four studies (and one that can be counted on always to enliven classroom discussion) is Ruano de la Haza's argument that, contrary to Valera's affirmation in the "Prólogo," the narrator of the "Paralipómenos" section cannot really be the *Deán*; rather, he is actually Luis' father, Don Pedro.

There are three interesting studies on the novel *Doña Luz*, all quite recent (1979–1986). In the first, "Juan Valera: *Doña Luz*" (written for the series *El comentario de textos*), Andrés Amorós reproduces eighteen paragraphs from Valera's novel and then comments insightfully on this material. The text itself is well chosen for in the preceding fifteen chapters the novel's principal conflict is seen almost exclusively from the title protagonist's point of view. Now in Chapter sixteen, the selection used for commentary, *Luz* is once again alone with Father Enrique for the first time since entering hastily into an impossible marriage. Each experiences conflicting feelings of restraint, which struggle against their mutual erotic attraction. The narrator alternates between these two characters, mas-

terfully reporting, interpreting, and mediating two emotionally charged voices within each of the protagonists. Next, Gilbert Paolini's "Interacción del mundo artístico y psicológico en *Doña Luz* de Juan Valera" continues the focus on Luz and Father Enrique, analyzing other techniques used to communicate to the reader their complex relationship. And the final essay in this section is Francie Cate-Arries, "El krausismo en *Doña Luz* y *Pepita Jiménez*," which provides a thorough review of the tenets of Krausism, its history in Spain, and Valera's essays in favor of it. She skillfully shows how this philosophy is reflected in the two novels.

Three very recent studies (1971-1982) are devoted in turn to *Juanita la Larga*. Matías Montes Huidobro's "Sobre Valera: el estilo (Dimensión armónica y carácter funcional de las superficies pulidas)" includes techniques as well as style. Noël Valis' "El uso del engaño en *Juanita la Larga* de Valera" convincingly interprets "engaño" in a positive, ludic sense and describes how it helps characterization and plot development. In "Aplicación de la teoría de Jung a la interpretación de Doña Inés en *Juanita la Larga* de Valera," Roxanne Marcus believes that the retrospective application of Jung's concepts of *persona*, *ánimus* / *ánima* and *shadow* can help the reader to a better understanding of an important character.

The final novel considered in this volume is Valera's turn-of-the-century *Morsamor*. Of the two essays devoted to it, the most helpful is Lily Litvak's "*Morsamor* un viaje de iniciación hacia la India." This sensitive and convincing study delineates Valera's use of the traditional archetypes of ritual quest, initiation, and protagonist transformation. Moreover, this essay is enhanced by an integrated presentation of nineteenth-century intellectual currents, especially those which came to effect a lively European interest in the Orient and its spirituality.

Throughout this volume the specialized articles from scholarly journals tend to be more interesting, stimulating, and helpful than the introductions to editions of Valera's various novels. The generalized introductions also repeat some of the material covered in other parts of the book. Nevertheless, the editor is to be congratulated for his success in the difficult task of selecting and skillfully arranging so many fine studies. *Juan Valera* is a major contribution—one which will be much used, and long appreciated.

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"Ángel Guerra" de Benito Pérez Galdós y sus críticos (1891). By Marisa Sotelo Vázquez. Barcelona: Promociones y Publicaciones, 1990. 162 pages.

Sotelo's book, which focuses on the critical reception of *Ángel Guerra* by Galdós' contemporaries, is divided into five sections: a two part com-