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Abstracts

Nancy Gates-Madsen, “Tortured Silence and Silenced Torture in Mario Benedetti’s *Pedro y el capitán*, Ariel Dorfman’s *La muerte y la doncella*, and Eduardo Pavlovsky’s *Paso de dos*.”

This essay examines the characterization of torturer and victim in three plays about state terrorism and torture in the Southern Cone. Given the inherent complexities involved in the practice and representation of torture, I argue that the portrayal of a stubbornly silent, heroic victim, especially when contrasted with a torturer who is all-too-human, risks converting victims into flat symbols of resistance instead of multidimensional characters. Furthermore, heroic representations of torture unwittingly reveal a disturbing reluctance to bear witness to uncomfortable truths about the slippery relationship between torture and betrayal and the power of radical evil. (NGM, Article in English)

Ariel Strichartz, “Consuming Argentina in the Name of Love: Cannibalism and Holy Communion in *Carne* by Eduardo Rovner.”

While Christian theologians have insisted on the sublime nature of the Eucharist, or symbolic consumption of Christ’s flesh and blood, other scholars have emphasized the contradictory urges of desire and aggression which characterize all metaphors of incorporation — Communion, cannibalism, sexual intercourse, and eating — in which the consumer seeks to absorb or subsume the Other. In *Carne* (1985), the Argentine dramatist Eduardo Rovner collapses all four acts of incorporation, as the work’s female protagonist permits her lover to consume her breast in order to insure his loyalty. However, while *Carne* underscores the unstable relationship between consumer/consumed and outside/inside, thereby problematizing the relation of power between the male consumer and the consumed feminine body, ultimately the work enacts the misogynist violence of the most recent military dictatorship. (AS, Article in English)

Miguel A. Balsa, “¿Qué Dios es ese que adoras?”: The Construction of Spectatorship in Sor Juana’s *Loa* for *The Divine Narcissus*.”

In principle, this *loa*’s simple plot, the perfect symmetry of its characters, and its religious and political orthodoxy leave little room for the audience’s agency or imagination. However, a closer examination reveals that, far from offering the kind of straightforward views and statements that one might expect from a work of such apparent simplicity, formal and conceptual elements are interwoven so as to elicit multiple, simultaneous, and conflicting readings. Simply put, the *loa* is designed to elicit questions, rather than to offer answers. Such questions, in turn, point towards a central *position* — the reader’s or spectator’s — around which the entire play gravitates. And yet, this center is constructed on such terms that it becomes a vanishing point: a presence as well as an absence, an inside and an outside, a constituting and a constituted gaze. (MB, Article in English)

Felipe Reyes Palacios, “La polémica del romanticismo en Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza.”

To appropriately situate the work of Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza in the history of Mexican and Spanish theatre, it is more important to consider his comedy *Las costumbres de antaño* (Madrid, 1819; Mexico, 1833) than his more famous work, *Contigo pan y cebolla*. Different from the latter, which satirizes the vogue for and the conventions of the sentimental novel of pre-romanticism, the former is dedicated to questioning directly the postulates of historical Romanticism of German origin, whose introduction in Spain dates to this time. Gorostiza’s critical stance is reaffirmed, in the theoretical realm, by the four articles that make up “On the Modern Spanish Theatre,” published in London during his exile (1824). These articles have been inexplicably forgotten, and upon their review it becomes evident that the author chose both of these *comedias* to commemorate his return to Mexico in 1833, as if he satirically presaged the advent of Romanticism in this country, which would soon appear in the dramas of Fernando Calderón and Ignacio Rodríguez Galván. (FRP, Article in Spanish)

Kimberle S. López and Angela Marino-Segura, “Governing Juana: Madness and the Manipulation of Power in Three Spanish American Plays on Juana la Loca.”

This article examines the representation of Juana of Castile in three twentieth-century Spanish American plays — Zavalía’s *El corazón extraviado* — (Argentina, 1957), Sabido’s *Falsa crónica de Juana la Loca* (Mexico, 1985), and Rueda’s *Retablo de la pasión y muerte de Juana la Loca* (Dominican Republic, 1996) — that portray the queen sympathetically as the victim of elaborate plots to usurp her authority. While the plays expose her madness as a pretext used by her father King Fernando and her son Emperor Carlos V to confine her for nearly half a century in the palace of Tordesillas, they do not deny the basic premises of the official history of “Juana la loca.” Thus, the captive queen is represented on stage as not only unable to govern Spain, but also as unable to control herself, leading others to “govern Juana.” (KL and AMS, Article in English)