

LATIN AMERICAN THEATRE REVIEW

*a Journal devoted to
the Theatre and Drama
of Spanish and Portuguese
America*

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Abstracts

"Los hijos del terremoto: imágenes de un recuerdo"

The temptation to search for influences or a logical content which can be paraphrased forgets that each writer works from his obsessions and memories. Osvaldo Dragún is especially subject to this kind of reading, given the political thrust of his theatre and its similarities to Brecht and the *sainete orillero*, and critics tend to ignore the extreme theatricality of his works. *Hijos del terremoto* typifies the problem: rather than a logical development of a theme it is a series of images reflecting memories in the protagonist's psyche. The play uses intertextuality, unreal staging and flexible time levels as the protagonist attempts to come to terms with his life, his family, and the political situation. Inspired by Dragún's return to Buenos Aires after a long absence, he has called it a letter to himself. Clearly, it springs from the most personal autobiographical level and criticism must take this fact into account. (In Spanish) (FND)

"Borges, Averroes y la imposibilidad del teatro"

While Borges showed great interest in cinema in his life, his ties to the theatre are practically nonexistent. The exception is his story "La busca de Averroes," in which the concepts of "culture" and "theatre" interact. Borges creates a fantastic setting (Córdoba, c. 1183) where an historic character (Averroes) must decipher the Aristotelian terms "comedy" and "tragedy." This becomes impossible for him to accomplish because the idea of "theatre" as it existed in the classical world is alien to the Moslem commentator. This article analyzes the secret teleological and philosophical messages in this story, and reflects on the understanding of the scenographic which is not developed by Borges anywhere else. From Averroes' blindness to the theatrical arts, Borges deduces that we all live on a great Calderonian stage, and that we lack the cognitive instruments necessary to know where our own representations begin and end. (In Spanish) (IS:DJC)

"La resistencia cultural en *El toro por las astas* de Radrigán"

This analysis of *El toro por las astas* studies Chilean problems (allusion to the "state of siege," popular language, the misery of the people), together with that of alienation. Radrigán's *marginados* need the arrival of the Milagrero, who according to popular belief, can work miracles. This character's death provokes a change for all the characters: Antonio, the brothel employee, goes off to war; the others act as though they have been re-educated by the dictatorship and continue their self-alienation. Radrigán's theatre constitutes a type of judgement of Chilean reality during the dictatorship. Resistance should be a disturbing factor to reach the audience, which can recognize itself in the world of the play. (In Spanish) (LNE:DJC)

"Correspondencias estructurales y semánticas entre *El gesticulador* y *Corona de sombra*"

There is, in the work of Rodolfo Usigli, a noticeable cohesion and unity which will be highlighted in this analysis of the structural and semantic correspondences between *El gesticulador* and *Corona de sombra*. This comparative approach sheds light on the author's integral vision of the dramatic text and its historical and ideological sources as much from a structural point of view as from the total meaning of the work. In the former, we examine the temporal and spatial unfolding of the plot, and the development of characters and of the conflict itself; in the latter, the concept of history and the poetic process, the reflection on Mexican political events, the conflict between the double identity and the search for authenticity, the metatheatrical plane, and the use of several key symbols. (In Spanish) (LRS: DJC)

"Cristóbal de Llerena and His Satiric *Entremés*"

Cristóbal de Llerena's short dramatic sketch, performed at Santo Domingo's 1588 Corpus Christi celebration, is one of the first completely secular plays composed by a Spanish American. Although this *entremés* is noted for its combination of Classical characters and traditional comic types with aspects of New World reality and for its demonstration of increased secular influence on the writing of dramatic works in the Indies, it is the work's critical purpose, designed to indict the colony's administration, which distinguishes it in the history of colonial letters. Llerena's interlude is a good example of the pre-Quevedan grotesque, which appropriately conveys the startling issues he raises, and it is representative as well of an intermediate step between the early *pasquines* and the complete satires written before the end of the sixteenth century. (JGJ)

"Hiperteatralidade e releitura histórica: O teatro de Márcio Sousa"

In *As Folias de Látex*, Márcio Sousa proposes a critical rereading of an historical period (the rubber-based economic cycle which ran from the end of the nineteenth century to the end of World War I). In the guise of a parodic fable, he presents significant scenes from the political and social life of the Amazon, making use of vaudevillian techniques and cinematic representations of supposedly factual information. Structured much as a music hall number, the play is in fact a "show" whose aim is to stage a theatrical parody, the target of which is the Amazonian bourgeoisie of the "Belle Epoque." If the circus elements infuse duality, the elements of carnival reinforce the semantic ambivalence of a "metavaudeville" in which historical references encourage the public to reflect critically on the resemblance to the Amazon of that period. (In Portuguese) (MKR: DJC)

"Armando Discépolo: Entre el grotesco italiano y el grotesco criollo"

Much has been written about the intertextuality between the Italian grotesque and the *criollo* grotesque. The purpose of this essay is to show and contrast both the relationship and the differences between these types of the grotesque by comparing two texts by Armando Discépolo: *Muñeca* (two acts, 1924) and *Stefano* (grotesque in one act and an epilogue, 1928). The first play has a marked Pirandellian intertextuality, while the second is more clearly a model of the *grotesco criollo*. *Muñeca* proves that Discépolo knew the form of the Italian *grotesco* well, and consciously wished to include it in this text. On the other hand, comparing this play with *Stefano* on the level of the plot and action, as well as on the semantic level, demonstrates that these are two distinct texts. It also shows that the author was conscious that he was creating a new genre, undoubtedly derivative of the *sainete criollo*. (In Spanish) (OP:DJC)