Introduction to New Trends in Iberian Galician Comparative Literature

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María Teresa Vilariño Picos and Anxo Abuín González

The special issue New Trends in Iberian Galician Comparative Literature of CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.5 (2011): is the result of the collective effort of a group of scholars who share a dedication to the discipline of comparative literature. As opposed to sceptical visions and perceptions of the discipline, the scholars collaborating in this project believe that the so-called crisis of the discipline is not necessarily a negative or paralyzing aspect. This belief stems from both a well-defined theoretical and methodological orientation, as well as the discipline's established presence in Spain both on the level of scholarship and institutionally. In this respect, it cannot be denied that the history of comparative literature is relatively recent: La Sociedad Española de Literatura General y Comparada was founded in 1977 and institutional recognition — by the Ministry of Education in 1990 — of the discipline in university curricula through its merger with literary theory into one area of knowledge is still not beyond debate even today, in 2011. Add to this the fact that the scholars participating in the project are writing from Galicia, a region of Spain that has struggled and struggles still to arrive at the recognition of its distinct culture (see also Kirsty Hooper and Manuel Puga Moruxa, eds. Contemporary Galician Cultural Studies: Between the Local and the Global. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2011).

This introduction is not the appropriate place to insist upon the obvious intercultural and plurilingual nature of the Galician culture: the articles of the collection speak for themselves. Suffice it to say that in order to underline the role of Galicia and particularly of Santiago de Compostela Galician culture is still struggling to distance itself from the locus of periphery. This is a paradoxical but at the same time enriching duality which makes Galicia a unique place for comparativist reflection from the local-global dialectic framed by a situation of constantly questioned minoritization whether in Spain proper or globally. On the other hand, running parallel to Iberian Galicia's place in Europe, the cultural participation of Galicia as an entre-deux in the Spanish and Lusophone spaces cannot and should not be ignored whether in scholarship or public discourse. And this, of course, refers us to European cultural identity rooted in a network of both historical and contemporary contact.

At the center of the above explained common ground, the scholarship presented in New Trends in Iberian Galician Comparative Literature is intended to introduce and share the state of comparativist
research in Galicia aimed at a global readership. Although a result of a major collaborative research project, contributors were not suggested directives with regards to the orientation of their work apart from the inherent disciplinary dimension they were to develop. Thus, a plural whole is offered, heterogeneous although at times contradictory in its principles and/or affirmations. But much like our comprehension of the hackneyed crisis of the discipline of comparative literature whether in Europe or the U.S., this dimension is not a drawback, but an encouraging sample of the inherently polyhedral, integrating, and dialoguing character of the discipline. Of import is also that the scholarship presented is in English as the majority of the work of the University of Santiago de Compostela research project was and is published in Galician and thus the scholarship presented is accessible to a global readership not the least owing to the journal's mode of publication in open access.

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New Trends in Iberian Galician Comparative Literature contains the following articles:


Villanueva, Dario. "Possibilities and Limits of Comparative Literature Today." CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture 13.5 (2011): <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/clcweb/vol13/iss5/2>

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