Marisol Soto

Discurso Neo-barroco en la Escritura Borgeana

A pesar de que Jorge Luis Borges siempre se ha postulado en contra de lo recurrente, circular, artificial y recargado, sus ideas siempre lo acercaron a este estilo. Estéticamente, la obra que surge de la amalgama de una escritura concreta y unas ideas barrocas son lo que convierten a la obra borgeana en excepcional, ocupando un lugar destacado en la literatura contemporánea. En otras palabras, a pesar de su posición pública y acérrima contra el barroco, lo que nos puede llevar a presuponer que nunca más escribió con el característico estilo barroco, Borges nunca pudo desprenderse de pensar como neobarroco. Es posible postular que esta marca del barroco en el origen del pensamiento de Borges es también la marca de un largo proceso de articulación y rearticulación de la estética barroca (y sobre todo neo barroca) a través de las diferentes etapas de su producción. Este trabajo propone examinar los elementos más sobresalientes de cada una de estas etapas en relación con el concepto de borde tal como lo postulara Walter Benjamin.

Nicholas Parmley

Calming the Sea: Marian Maritime Miracles and the Boundaries of an Imagined Alfonsine Empire in the Cantigas de Santa María

The sea in the Cantigas de Santa María is not always a space where one travels by choice, but where at times one is forced to suffer and die. The sea is not a safe space, for either pilgrimage or commerce. Rather, the sea is a space of terror, castigation, and death. It is a space that covers and conceals the wickedness of ignoble deeds: it is flawed and unordered. But this space is one of necessity for the troubadour king and his songs of praise. The Cantigas’ three-part structure: physical crisis, divine remedy, and thanksgiving, consistently reveal the notion of ordering disorder. The image provided by the Cantigas is one of “a king engaged in the consolidation of his society by using symbolic resources and the language of integration provided by the fear of death and the hope of salvation.” That is, the Cantigas are an effort “to bring order and uniformity to a society that [was] perceived as flawed and disorganized.” Consequently, I contend that the sea is a spatial marker of this disorder, of a flawed creation that Alfonso sought to reconcile. And perhaps ironically, through his use of “miracles,” that same space of unwarranted death and disorder becomes simultaneously a necessary path to restoration. More importantly, I explore how the Alfonsine text uses the Marian miracle not only to demonstrate the possibility of divine mediation, but how Alfonso X as royal troubadour and champion of the Queen of Heaven views himself as an indispensable participant and intercessor in her redemptive activities, and thus shares in her restorative power, at least in political terms. Consequently, what falls within the reach of the Virgin’s miraculous influence emerges as a delimitation of the political authority and geographic boundaries of an imagined Alfonsine Empire. Though the Cantigas can and have been read as a personal plea for salvation, I argue they can be equally understood as a textual and visual manifestation of Alfonso’s struggle for power over the sea(s) that lapped at Iberia’s shores.

In Memory of our group’s co-founder Isabel de Sousa Ramos