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Es especialmente valioso el planteamiento que nos hace aquí el autor en relación al enorme potencial de las genealogías como documentos historiográficos por su rol de legitimización de las aspiraciones sociales y políticas de aquellos a quienes se refieren. En esta segunda parte, se explora por tanto la enorme fuerza de las intervenciones autoriales, sus implicaciones literarias y las reacciones de los receptores de dichos textos: reacciones que dependen en gran medida de la sutileza con que se conecten la realidad del hecho descrito y la ficción de los medios que se usan para revalorizarlos, como leyendas, poemas, romances épicos, etc. También, en esta segunda parte, se indaga en la función política de la historiografía medieval catalana. Los textos cronísticos y biográficos se usan como armas que legitiman determinados posicionamientos y, lo que es más importante, justifican tomas de poder por parte de determinados individuos.

Como nos indica el propio Aurell en la introducción de su libro, tal vez uno de los aspectos más interesantes y valiosos del presente estudio sea la conexión que se puede establecer entre la historiografía medieval y la contemporánea. El examen de los textos cronísticos, como documentos híbridos entre la imaginación del autor y la literatura testimonial de un momento dado, su profunda conexión con el concepto de verdad histórica, el proceso de adaptación a los objetivos de aquellos a quienes sirven y las mutaciones que sufren en el proceso convierten *Authoring the Past* en un libro que no solo ayuda a entender los mecanismos historiográficos y literarios del pasado catalán sino también a plantear cuestiones que nos afectan a los lectores de historia del presente siglo.

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Dalleo, Raphael. *Caribbean Literature and the Public Sphere: From the Plantation to the Postcolonial*. Charlottesville: U of Virginia P, 2011. Pp. 296. ISBN 978-0-8139-3199-9.

Raphael Dalleo's *Caribbean Literature and the Public Sphere* delves into specific peculiarities that, he argues convincingly, define the region's literary production, be it written in English, French, or Spanish. He follows to a point Antonio Benítez Rojo's assertion that the Caribbean is a sea of historical and economic significance, which surrounds a cultural meta-archipelago lacking borders and a precise center. This island, which replicates itself despite each version's inherent uniqueness, allows Dalleo to trace meaningful tangents and to discuss within the book's eight core chapters authors and texts perceived perhaps as quite dissimilar by a less perceptive critic. He does so elegantly in a monograph whose complexity never alienates readers, causing them continuously to reflect upon the provocative notions he posits.

The author defines lucidly in the preface and introduction the nature of a project guided to an extent by what he terms “the modernist impulse for categorization” (xii), albeit responding fundamentally to the open canon proposed by postcolonial studies. In these initial pages, as well as elsewhere in the book, he alludes specifically to the literary critics and cultural philosophers who ground his outlook: Theodor W. Adorno, Benedict Anderson, Jean Franco, Édouard Glissant, Jürgen Habermas, Pierre Bourdieu, Benítez Rojo, Ángel Rama, Julio Ramos, Aimé Césaire, C. L. R. James, and so forth. Throughout the monograph he evinces profound acquaintance with these writers' ideas, as well as with those of countless scholars who have written eloquently about Caribbean history and culture. At its core, the introduction strives to characterize the public sphere as it emerges or evolves in the region. Declaring that Habermas's Eurocentric bourgeois marketplace could not be transported to the Caribbean, he examines a multiplicity of spheres, concentrating his analysis on three historical periods: plantation slavery, modern colonialism, and postcoloniality. In so doing, he posits initially the prevalence of a tacit or marginalized discourse in which the oppressed folk, as represented by the enslaved Africans, either had their voices translated by abolitionists indebted ideologically to the *metropole* or, as a counterpublic, expressed themselves exclusively through music, religion, or rebellion. This is superseded by an anticolonial discourse associated particularly with heroic figures, often literary intellectuals,

intent on redeeming the people in order to bring forth their participation in a public sphere, in a nation “for all and for the good of all,” as Martí desired. Finally, postcoloniality, what Dalleo describes as “a new context that goes beyond political status to include economic, social and technological changes” (12), implies the inability of the literary intellectual to speak directly for the people, having to surrender the public sphere, therefore, “to the popular elements of the newly forming nation-state” (17).

The book’s first chapter, “The Abolitionist Public Sphere and the Republic of the Lettered,” explains the discursive monopoly exercised by abolitionism during the plantation period, when so-called slave narratives addressed enlightened Europeans rather than a Caribbean democratic space *à la Habermas*, simply because such a locus did not exist. Although begrudgingly at times, writing and the forums in which it appeared protected a status quo entwined despite contradictions with the ruling plantation society that comprised Rama’s republic of the lettered in the Caribbean. Within this context, Dalleo studies Manzano’s *Autobiografía* and Mary Prince’s *History* to illustrate how the voices of the oppressed required validation from the quasi-hegemonic literary intellectual class to transcend regional borders and acquire political significance. A subsequent chapter, “The Public Sphere Unbound: Michel Maxwell Philip, *El laúd del desterrado* and Mary Seacole,” on the other hand, inquires into writers’ endeavor “to mobilize a Caribbean public through literature” (59), with the conscious or unconscious intention of developing a relationship with what the critic identifies as a “counterpublic of resistance” (59) that foreshadows late nineteenth- and twentieth-century literary anticolonialism.

Chapters 3 and 4, which focus on Martí, Stephen Cobhan, Jacques Roumain, Claude McKay’s *Banana Bottom*, and “little magazines” of the 1940s, such as *La poesía sorprendida*, *Tropiques*, *BIM*, and *Légitime Défense*, emphasize the predominance of counterdiscursive literary efforts emanating from intellectual men of action or, paradoxically, from those who espoused only apparently effete aesthetic concerns associated with assertive inaction. All appear bent, nevertheless, on inscribing themselves within the existing marketplace in order both to earn a living and to translate the people’s voice with redemptory *élan*. These authors, who write between the 1880s and the 1940s, navigate the perilous waters between art and politics to evaluate “the conflicted relationship of the literary and practical in the context of anticolonial politics” (120).

The book’s last four chapters, which occupy its third part (“Postcoloniality and the Crisis of the Literary Public Sphere, 1959–1983”), center on the eclipse of the intellectual hero within the Caribbean archipelago. Dalleo ponders George Lamming’s and Martin Carter’s abandonment of quasi-conventional anticolonial writing to become actors in more minimal, yet perhaps more effective, terms as they become conscious of the limitations of literature to provoke action or to coexist effectively within the emerging technocratic sociopolitical structures. The final segments focus on the manner in which writers seek to inject themselves within prevailing governmental systems either to abide by them or to manifest opposition by quoting the voice of the folk affirmatively or otherwise. Dalleo studies testimonial literature as manifested in Miguel Barnet’s *Biografía de un cimarrón* and *La canción de Rachel*, as well as in the production of the Sistren Theatre Collective. He concludes by discussing the portrayal and analysis of popular music in modern Caribbean fiction and criticism, considering primarily Sánchez’s *La guaracha del Macho Camacho* and Lovelace’s *The Dragon Can’t Dance*. These efforts to liberate the voices of the people within postcoloniality convey the contradictory nature of a decentered new world.

In his partly summative conclusion, the author contemplates two models for interpreting contemporary Caribbean society: globalization theory and Empire studies. Both imply the novelty of the present; both appear flawed to the critic. Hence, he reflects on another text, Dionne Brand’s *In Another Place, Not Here*, to ask himself whether “the post in postcolonial [is] the post in post-Grenada” (231), referring to the revolutionary regime brought down by the United States invasion orchestrated under Ronald Reagan’s presidency. By scrutinizing Brand’s text, Dalleo discerns that the emerging postcolonial writing she represents conveys “a rethinking of the intellectual’s public role but also assumptions about race, class, gender, and what sorts

of identity can be public" (238). The inadequacy of previous methods of resistance underscores that they may not be viewed as ideal paradigms, but will continue to serve as inspiration for projects yet to come.

Despite a slightly tiresome tendency to reiterate certain notions as a way to link chapters and even fragments of chapters, Raphael Dalleo's *Caribbean Literature and the Public Sphere* is a highly appealing and well-thought out academic monograph. It will undoubtedly become indispensable reading for those who seek to study not only Caribbean literature *per se*, but also colonial and postcolonial letters in general.

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Ihrie, Maureen, and Salvador A. Oropesa, eds. *World Literature in Spanish: An Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO, 2011. 3 vols. Pp. 1294. ISBN 978-0-313-33770-3.

Chances are good that academics who grew up in the 1960s, 70s, and (perhaps) 80s lived in homes equipped with a graceful collection of matching volumes on the bookshelf. These gold embossed spines neatly displayed titles such as *Child Craft*, *World Book*, *Encyclopedia Americana*, *Encyclopædia Britannica*, and their contents were the authoritative source of information for many families. There were few school projects that did not begin with consulting an encyclopedia, and more than a few hand-written reports were the scribbled copying directly from the reference. In a predigital world, there may not have been additional resources available for basic, non-specialist information on most subjects.

There is little point in tracing the technological and social developments that have reduced—if not eliminated—the encyclopedia's presence in most households, and only a few luddites would argue that many educational objectives are not better served when we have instant access to multiple sources of research materials. Nonetheless, the March 2012 announcement that *Encyclopædia Britannica* had produced its last print edition provoked waves of nostalgic hand wringing. The subsequent acceleration in sales of remaining hard copies seemed to indicate a desire for something that was about to disappear forever, and that probably was more than the chance to decorate a bookshelf with an impressive row of authoritative-looking tomes.

Reflection on the state of knowledge (and access to it) in our society is broader than the focus that editors Maureen Ihrie and Salvador A. Oropesa propose in *World Literature in Spanish: An Encyclopedia*, but it is impossible to consider this project without thinking about the status of encyclopedias in contemporary culture and scholarship. This well-presented set of three volumes proposes a more modest objective than a comprehensive encyclopedia, but adequate coverage of literature in Spanish presents a formidable task. The introduction indicates that the editors understand both the broad scope of their project and the limitations on what is possible to accomplish in just under 1,300 pages. They limit the scope significantly by declaring that their intended audience is non-specialist high school, undergraduate college, and adult readers. From there, they state that the collection does not intend to be exhaustive, but rather provides a "solid general review" of literature before 1900, and then "concentrates somewhat more on works produced since then" (x). Advanced scholars immediately will understand that Ihrie and Oropesa do not intend to blaze new trails with innovative interpretations of any literary period. That said, the editors' cultural or thematic approach, in favor of a biographical approach, might provide new perspectives for even seasoned scholars. A team about 200 academic scholars prepared approximately 850 entries for this work. The successful organizing of so many contributors merits great admiration for the editors.

In order to assess how useful this encyclopedia of literature in Spanish might be to one section of the target audience, the reviewer cross-referenced reading lists from recent university course syllabuses with the encyclopedia's entries. For a course in medieval and Golden Age literature from Spain, college students would be able to reference short descriptions of *Cantar*