

In This Issue

Volume Seven of the *Arizona Journal* is a particularly rich one, with not one, but two distinct but related special sections. The special section of essays entitled “La península híbrida” has been edited and put together by Alberto Medina, who selected them from presentations given as part of the conference of the same name that took place in the Spring of 2000 at the King Juan Carlos I Center of New York University. All of these very original essays attempt to answer the question, “How does one reconcile the growing strength of the political and cultural projects of the oftentimes essentialist nationalisms of Spain and other countries within the context of globalization?” Medina states that since identity is event, or a story of a flight without origin with an itinerary whose point of departure has been forgotten, one cannot help but speak with a voice that includes the other.

“Brokering Spanish Postnationalist Culture” was the first of a series of annual seminars sponsored by the Department of Romance Studies of Duke University held in November of 1999. The presentations and subsequent critical discussions have resulted in a collection of eight diverse and extremely insightful essays on Spain’s nationalisms, collected here and edited by Teresa Vilarós. All seek to articulate exactly how the nature of nationalism in Spain has changed since 1939, when Ernest Renan gave his seminal speech “What is a Nation?” If we are to believe the authors of these essays, assumptions about nationalism on Spain have altered dramatically, whether we believe that the ghost of the nation still haunts Spaniards or not.

Elisabeth Guerrero’s essay “Leyendas urbanas” studies the literary characters Tina Modotti and Agelina Beloff, creations of the Mexican novelist and journalist Elena Poniatowska in the novels *Tinísima* (1992) and *Querido Diego, te abraza Quiela* (1978), respectively, as *flâneuses*. Unlike some critics, Guerrero is of the opinion that the existence of the *flâneuse* is entirely possible, and even essential to an understanding of the changing roles of women in urban Mexico in the twentieth century. Reminding us of Walter Benjamin’s assertion that “History decays into images, not into stories,” Juan Egea’s essay “Imágenes becquerianas” makes us question commonly held assumptions held by many Hispanic scholars about Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer by looking at the effect that photography and the circulation of paper money had on the imagery found in his poetry. Guillermina de Ferrari’s “Aesthetics Under Siege” is about one novel by Cuban author Pedro Juan Gutiérrez entitled *Trilogía sucia de La Habana* (1998). It is much more, however, in that it discusses how the postmodern case against pure aesthetics has been aggravated by a shift in values and interests among different social groups in the context of receding socialist models on the ever-expanding horizon of globalized capital, and, through a careful analysis of the novel and its reception, one can better understand the ideological cosmology of a world in transition.

Once again, our contributors, guest editors and all of the many Hispanists on both sides of the Atlantic who have collaborated on this volume have taken another step towards theorizing Hispanic Cultural Studies. It is an ongoing, fascinating and productive process.

Susan Larson
Managing Editor
University of Kentucky