

University, Bloomington, 2 October 1995), Porcel himself defined it, asserting that his main interest and what he was trying to present in his books was "the essence of the subsistence."

A new and suggestive dimension is given to this novel by the deliberately fragmented structure of the narrative, which makes it a true fable in the Brechtian sense of the term; as in the works of the German dramatist, Porcel's apparently chaotic series of autonomous and frequently disconnected episodes leave it for the reader to establish the temporal and causal relationships that may provide a narrative logic. Porcel had been actively engaged in writing for the theater during the years preceding the publication of *Horses into the night*, and there is no doubt that, in the historical context that he himself was writing, he paid close attention to Brecht's work and its meaning. Porcel takes advantage of that particular dramatic technique and successfully applies it to the structure of a novel; his own aims and objectives do not necessarily coincide with those of the German writer, but the echo cannot be ignored.

A final word should be said about the translation. Porcel's language is of unsurpassed richness from a lexical point of view. His use of adjectives, the rhythm of his prose, the deliberate ellipsis, and his calculated contrasts amongst complementary or subordinate sentences are only some of the difficulties which face the translator. Porcel's style is, as a rule, rich in imagery and metaphor, profoundly sensual, and often of strong lyrical undertones, but it can also be extremely stark and concise; to reflect these changes of rhythm and mood without losing a proper sense of balance is not an easy task. John L. Getman has succeeded admirably; his work as a translator is not only extremely professional and accurate, but also a work of love and profound sensibility, showing a true understanding of Catalan in general, and of Porcel's writings in particular. That understanding is also well reflected in his short but illuminating introduction to the text. Catalan literature is not as well known outside Catalonia as it deserves, and there are very few translations to introduce it to the English speaking world. *Horses into the night* should whet the appetite of all discerning readers. It is to be hoped that its publication will not be an isolated instance and that many other translations from Catalan will follow.

María-Elena Angulo

Magic Realism: Social Context and Discourse

New York: Garland Publ., 1995. Pp. 124. \$27.00

Reviewed by George R. McMurray

In her Introduction, María-Elena Angulo states that her purpose in writing the present volume is to discuss magical realism in five Spanish-American novels; in addition, she will demonstrate how this type of narrative discourse

helps to elucidate social problems. The five novels Angulo has chosen include two canonical works—Alejo Carpentier's *El reino de este mundo* (1949) and Gabriel García Márquez's *Cien años de soledad* (1967)—and three less-known works—José de la Cuadra's *Los Sangurimas* (1934), Demetrio Aguilera Malta's *Siete lunas y siete serpientes* (1970), and Alicia Yáñez Cossío's *Bruna, soroche y los tíos* (1972). Although Angulo uses the term "magic realism" in her title, she prefers Carpentier's term *realismo maravilloso* throughout most of her text.

In her introductory discussion of *El realismo maravilloso*, Angulo covers old ground (still good for students), which includes ideas on the subject contributed by Franz Roh, Anderson Imbert, Uslar Pietri, Carpentier, Angel Flores, Luis Leal, Floyd Merrell, and Jaime Alazraki. But the two critical works she relies on most are Irlemar Chiampi's *O realismo maravilhoso: Forma e ideologia no romance hispano-americano* (1980) and Graciela Ricci's *Realismo mágico y conciencia mítica en America Latina* (1985).

Chiampi distinguishes between the fantastic and *el realismo maravilloso*, the former based on the poetics of the uncertain, with the disjunction of the natural/supernatural, and the latter produced by the nondisjunction of the natural/supernatural. Ricci emphasizes magical realism as an integral part of the Latin American cultural context—thus Latin Americans' acceptance without question of natural/supernatural reality.

In her chapter on *El reino de este mundo* and *Cien años de soledad*, Angulo first delineates the three cycles of Carpentier's novel, that is, Haiti under the French colonists, the black emperor Henri Christophe, and the Republican mulattoes. The principal emphasis here is on the intersection of history (Carpentier carefully documented his novel) and myth, the latter owing much to the voodoo religion. Important also is the Haitians' total acceptance of the supernatural as something ordinary. Social criticism is implied when Henri Christophe, who dominates the novel, meets his tragic end because he betrays the voodoo deities and enslaves his own people. With García Márquez's masterpiece, of course, magical realism becomes a well-established mode of discourse. To illustrate this point, Angulo treats three episodes in the novel: the Buendías' discovery of ice, Remedios the Beauty's rise heavenward, and the effects of the banana boom on Macondo, which constitutes an attack on gringo imperialism.

In her treatment of the three noncanonical novels (all by Ecuadorians), Angulo gives special emphasis to *Los Sangurimas*, which she sees as the first example of magical realism in Latin America. This book, about several generations of a family of *montuvios* (inhabitants of Ecuador's tropical, coastal region), presents a seamless amalgamation of everyday reality, social criticism, magic and myth, which Angulo treats convincingly both as a precursor of *Cien años de soledad* and as a seminal example of what was to become a new kind of fiction.

In her final chapter, Angulo analyzes the two more recent novels on her list. Santorontón, the town described by Aguilera Malta in *Siete lunas y siete serpientes*, resembles Macondo in that the natural and the supernatural are juxtaposed without disjunction, and the magical passages often serve to condemn injustice. Major differences between the Colombian and the Ecuadorian, however, are that the latter not only experiments with a variety of styles and narrative voices, but also suggests a greater degree of hope. Though interesting, Angulo's discussion of *Bruna, soroche y los tíos*, a novel I have not read, is perhaps the least convincing. Also depicting several generations of a family, this novel emerges, it seems to me, as more of a feminist critique of society than as an example of magical realism. Still, it does indeed contain examples of hyperbole reminiscent of García Márquez (a Catholic bishop has 245 children) and a scathing denunciation of myths, especially those based on religion. Angulo's study is highly recommended for two reasons: first, because of its emphasis on magical realism as a vehicle for social protest, and second, because of its scholarly discussions of three lesser-known examples of *el realismo maravilloso*.

Linda Tate

A Southern Weave of Women: Fiction of the Contemporary South

Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1994. Pp. 242. \$40.00

Reviewed by Axel Knoenagel

The cultural tradition of the American South is dominated by the male perspective. The hierarchic, even feudal, society of the Old South emphasized values such as honor and self-representation for men and silence for women. With this perception in mind, Linda Tate sets out to demonstrate that the literary tradition of the South has always been both male and female. *A Southern Weave of Women* attempts to give critical representation to frequently silenced or misrepresented female voices, and thus to come closer to an authentic portrait of the literary reality of this important segment of American culture. The focus on women's writing is a central prerequisite for this undertaking: "Southern women's fiction is not a defensive or apologetic response to southern men's fiction but instead an articulation of women's experience in the South" (22). Tate gives further evidence of the participation of Southern women's writing in the cultural traditions of the South by emphasizing thematic preoccupations that frequently parallel those of men's fiction, although, of course, the perspectives differ significantly.

Even though "southern women writers inhabit the thinnest margin of dominant discourse" (204), there exists a tradition of women's writing in the South that has been canonized for several decades. To establish the historical basis for her argument, Tate examines novels by Kate Chopin, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Zora Neale Hurston, and Eudora Welty, all of which emphasize the