

Subversión, innovación y marginalidad en la obra de Roberto Bolaño.

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Abstract.

Roberto Bolaño's narrative oeuvre has been heralded as a watershed in contemporary Hispanic fiction. His works, the majority of which appeared in print in the brief period from 1996 until 2003, have rearticulated, in fiction, the Latin American experience of the second half of the twentieth century with such force, that they have redefined the possibilities of the Hispanic literary map and influenced a generation of younger writers and critics.

This thesis argues that Bolaño's prose articulates a view of modernity that is situated, produced and enunciated from its very margins: that is, from the Latin American experience of the second half of the 20th century. To articulate this alternative view of the contemporary world, Bolaño's fiction develops a series of innovative narrative techniques capable of expressing equally novel contents. This thesis explores the relationship between the critical content of his texts and the narrative structures that the author develops in his fiction and early poetic prose. To this end, this thesis uses an approach based on textual analysis, aided by key concepts from the sociology of literature and Latin American critical theory. Each chapter of this thesis analyses a particular text (or series of texts).

The first chapter of this thesis situates Bolaño's creative *oeuvre* within the vanguardist literary tradition. It considers his infrarrealist poetry as that which lays the technical and thematic foundation upon which the author develops his later narrative fiction, especially as regards the creation of an infrarreal image and the formation of a marginal and subaltern *locus of enunciation*. The second chapter analyses the ways in which those infrarrealist poetic techniques and contents are transitioned into the narrative genre and it considers their particular functions in this new format. The third

chapter analyses the sabotage of a series of hegemonic discourses in *La literatura Nazi en America* and its parodic dialogue with certain generic conventions. The fourth chapter analyses Bolaño's novel *Estrella distante* and its fragmented narrative in the light of the social discourses that it questions, specifically, the hegemonic neoliberal discourse of the Latin America of the 1990's. Finally, the fifth chapter analyses *Los detectives salvajes* and its exhaustive use of polyphonic narrative structure in the creation of a critical discourse regarding the author's generation's political experience in the latter half of the twentieth century.

Bolaño's literary fiction is both considerably large and diverse; as a result, it has attracted much scholarly attention. No critical project, however, has presented a comprehensive investigation of his oeuvre, and none has considered his infrarrealist period or his marginal *locus of enunciation* as key to the development of the critical nature of his fiction. These are gaps in the critical literature which this project addresses through a textual analysis of the work in question, bolstered by key concepts from the sociology of literature and Latin American critical theory. This is also why our selection of texts includes a representative selection. Our investigation begins by analysing a series of poems from Bolaño's infrarrealist period, it then discusses his subsequent transition into the narrative genre, further analyses *La literatura nazi en América* and its parody of generic conventions and hegemonic discourses, investigates *Estrella distante* and its foregrounding of a marginal *locus of enunciation* and finally, examines *Los detectives salvajes* and its polyphonic narration of the Latin American experience of the second half of the twentieth century.