

## COLLOQUIUM ABSTRACTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2012

(10:45) Silvia Colás Cardona, "Imaginarios del insilio: Las Habanas de Abilio Estévez"

El término *insilio*, construido a partir de *exilio*, se utiliza frecuentemente en la literatura cubana para referirse a la idea de exilio interior. Es nuestro objetivo mostrar que en la obra de Abilio Estévez el sentimiento de insilio se expresa mediante la creación de espacios imaginarios alternativos a una ciudad cuya realidad aliena a sus habitantes, particularmente en su trilogía *Tuyo es el reino*, *Los palacios distantes* y *El bailarín de Montecarlo*, reflejo de sus experiencias como habitante en La Habana de la Revolución.

**Note: this presentation will be given in Spanish.**

(11:15) Pablo Restrepo-Gautier, "De un entremesista a un bloguero: Resistencia y cultura popular en Calderón y Carlos Múnera"

¿Qué comparten un entremés de Pedro Calderón de la Barca (Madrid, España, siglo XVII) y los blogs de Carlos Múnera (Medellín, Colombia, siglos XX y XXI)? Quizá sea aquello que llamara Baltasar Gracián «ingenio y agudeza» al tratar de comprender el arte barroco de *exprimir* conceptos. Comparte Múnera el gusto del Calderón entremesista por recoger joyas de la tradición popular para incorporarlas en su obra. Unos versos de *La casa holgona* de Calderón constituyen una variación de un chistecillo escatológico español mientras que los chorizos y la sartén de una cocina campesina antioqueña componen un cuadro de una estética prodigiosamente barroca que captura el lente de Múnera. Las palabras que hacían reír en las calles de Madrid y los objetos de la gastronomía montañera resisten la asimilación de la pluma y la cámara cultas respectivamente, a la vez que estas evitan dejarse tachar de populares, quizá menos en Múnera que en Calderón. Esta ponencia explora la labor de dos creadores que a lados opuestos del Atlántico y en épocas distantes procuran encontrar lo extraordinario en lo cotidiano.

**Note: this presentation will be given in Spanish.**

(11:45) Dan Russek, "Lights of Havana: epiphanic moments in Cabrera Infante"

The paper examines how the multifaceted phenomenon of light is elaborated in the work of Cuban writer Guillermo Cabrera Infante (1929-2005), specifically in his 1967 novel *Tres Tristes Tigres* [Three Trapped Tigers] and his 1979 fictional *memoir* *La Habana para un infante difunto* [Infante's Inferno]. Cabrera Infante was forced into exile in the mid-1960s. My paper shows how light is a privileged medium through which the Cuban author elaborates a retrospective view of his life. I examine the literary and cultural meanings of such phenomena as the tropical light of Havana, as well as artificial light in a variety of devices (public lighting, neon lights and car headlights), and cinema.

(1:30) Lloyd Howard, "Diabolical Resistance in Dante's Inferno: Who is in charge?"

The choice of the pagan soul of Virgil, damned for eternity, to serve as guide to Dante, proves a challenge each time they encounter the demons who attempt to block their downward progress at critical junctures through Hell. Although this journey is willed from on high, limits are tested which beg the question: Who is in charge there below? The demons who act as Hell's civil servants, Satan, God? In part, the answer depends on whether you are a condemned soul, the normal state of affairs, or, uniquely, just travelling through, as is the case with Dante. But what if a condemned soul like Virgil functions as guide for this exceptional journey? We explore these questions beneath the walled City of Dis, where the demons mount their greatest resistance and the very journey appears doomed.

(2:00) Joseph Grossi, "Resisting Influence: Boccaccio's Parody of the Petrarchan Lover in the *Decameron's* Proem and Introduction"

Petrarch, or Francesco Petrarca (1304-74), and Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-75) were the two greatest fourteenth-century Italian writers after Dante Alighieri. Literary historians traditionally have regarded the relationship between them as one of teacher to pupil, with Petrarch being the former and Boccaccio the latter. Nevertheless, Boccaccio was capable of challenging his friend's judgement, as he did when Petrarch accepted an offer of patronage from the city of Milan, the hated enemy of the Republic of Florence to which both Tuscan writers owed allegiance. My talk explores Boccaccio's friendly criticism of Petrarch's poetry and politics by investigating the introductory sections of Boccaccio's *Decameron*.

Although women are portrayed unflatteringly in those sections, the real object of reproof may be Petrarch himself. I claim that Boccaccio is satirizing his older contemporary by hinting that no "real" man would flee into the wilderness to bemoan his unrequited love for a woman (as Petrarch occasionally portrays himself doing in his poetry) and thus forsake his friends and fellow Tuscans.

(2:30) Marina Bettaglio, "Il boom del noir italiano: il trionfo di un genere di denuncia o di evasione?"

The extraordinary success of Italian detective fiction raises some probing questions: why has a country that used to import foreign mystery novels all of a sudden become one of the leading producers of this kind of fiction? What are the social and political conditions that allow for this trend to prosper? What is behind this narrative boom? In my paper I will address the emergence of this literary phenomenon and its cultural implications.

**Note: this presentation will be given in Italian.**