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MIMESIS AND NARRATIVE DISCOURSE: JUAN GOYTISOLO'S SEARCH FOR IMMEDIACY

Literary historians tend to categorize the contemporary Spanish novel (1942 to the present) into two groups: the neorealist phase, covering the forties, fifties, and early sixties, followed by a school of writing which could be called "postmodernist" and which extends from the midsixties to the present.¹ Some argue that neorealism is overextended and that it represents a stagnation in the evolution of the contemporary Spanish novel. Most believe that the publication of *Tiempo de silencio* (1962) by Luis Martín Santos heralds the rise of a new novel whose richness of style and complexity of technique are manifest in the works of Juan Benet, Luis Goytisolo, Juan Marsé, and the latest novels by Miguel Delibes, Camilo José Cela, and Juan Goytisolo.²

The tendency to subdivide the contemporary Spanish novel into periods raises an important question about the development of narrative over the past forty years. I refer here to the evolution of literature as opposed to its dissolution, a problem which gains importance when we consider the novelists whose careers as writers span both neorealism and postmodernism (e.g., Cela, Delibes, and the subject of my study, Juan Goytisolo). The consistencies in style and technique that are a natural feature of any author's oeuvre seem secondary to the historians who emphasize this generation's recantation in the sixties of its neorealism of the fifties. In the case of Juan Goytisolo, for example, we are left wondering how his neorealist novel, seemingly conventional in its technique, foreshadows his unconventional fiction of the sixties and seventies.

We may begin to trace Goytisolo's evolution by identifying this author's concept of neorealism, since he initiates his career during the early fifties. (He wrote *Juegos de manos*, his first novel, in 1952.) The need for authors to "comprometerse o perecer"--to use Goytisolo's words--is a major concern during this period of social commitment.³ The novel becomes a vehicle for unveiling, and thereby denouncing, the writer's immediate social circumstances. Although the goals of this generation are overtly ideological, their ideology serves to mold a particular narrative technique, a fact that becomes clear when we understand how these writers interpret the word "immediate."

In his essay "La nueva psicología," a discussion of the behavioral mode of characterization, Goytisolo shows how a sense of immediacy with respect to the action is essential to his neorealist technique.⁴ In this essay, Goytisolo calls for an impassive narrator who may only render the character's dialogues and action. Guided by such external expressions of emotion--he claims--the reader will be able to deduce the character's psychological motivations from his behavior. It is clear that Goytisolo seeks a rapprochement between the story and its retelling, between character and narrator. He indicates, furthermore, that the type of narrative discourse employed (dialogue, detailed description) is the key to establishing this closeness.

The question of immediacy and narrative discourse to which Goytisolo alludes in *Problemas de la novela* is a major concern of Gérard Genette's in his "Discours du récit."⁵ In this essay Genette studies the relationship between narrative discourse and the "distance" of the perspective. For Genette, a distance exists between the narrative instance, a hypothetical or expressed moment of seeing the action, and the narrative events. The problem is essentially one of both rhetoric and time, since for Genette the manner in which a narrator reports the story establishes a temporal remove between the moment of perception and the time of the events which are perceived. A discourse that rephrases, summarizes, or

condenses, for example (Genette's "discours narrativisé"), projects the greatest degree of distance. On the other hand, where a narrator reports actions and speech as they have occurred, as in the "discours rapporté," the gap between the perceiving and the perceived becomes shorter.⁶ Genette proclaims furthermore that this proximity of story and narration is proportionate to the degree of mimesis in a narrative. The "discours rapporté" is the most mimetic of discourses since the narrator reports events with little or no mediation, creating the illusion that we eavesdrop as the story unfolds. The "discours narrativisé," however, places us at a great distance from the happenings, and allows our gaze to encompass a vast span of action in a single glance. A story is thus more or less mimetic according to whether its narrator shortens or lengthens our remove from events.

When applied to Goytisolo's neorealist fiction, Genette's methodology reveals that, for the Spanish novelists of the fifties, the commitment to "desvelar la realidad inmediata" is more than an expression of socio-political purpose. The aesthetics of their novels--that is, the way these writers might intensify the degree of immediacy in the narrative discourse--is a primary concern of the neorealist novelists. A comparison of *Fiestas* (1956), one of Goytisolo's most socially committed novels, and *Juan sin tierra* (1975), a major work of Spanish postmodernism, will show how Goytisolo strives to achieve a greater sense of immediacy and a more complete form of mimesis.

The opening paragraph in *Fiestas* exposes the reader at once to the close-up perspective which characterizes this text. The action begins in medias res with the arrival of a truck in the open square of a poor neighborhood in Barcelona:

El camión se detuvo en el arranque mismo de la carretera, allí donde la calle Mediodía iniciaba su serie escalonada de terrazas sobre la panorámica de solares cubiertos de chozas diminutas que se extendía hasta el flanco de la montaña. Al divisarlo, los niños que jugaban entre los montones de basura abandonaron sus tesoros de vidrio y hojalata y corrieron hacia él; el hombre de la pata de palo que ocupaba el tenderete de la esquina dejó de vocear los veinte iguales y hasta el gitano viejo que tocaba el organillo detuvo la tonada a la mitad y se acercó a ver qué ocurría.⁸

From the very start of the novel, the narrator communicates a sense of immediacy. He describes the scenario and events as if they were simultaneous to his retelling. He expands the description by incorporating minute details and by a heavy use of nouns which emphasize a "visual" reading of the story (the "camión," "carretera," "terrazas" and "solares" with their "chozas," and the "niños" and "hombre de la pata de palo" among the rubbish).

This expanded use of detail is particularly significant in that it appears as the novel's opening paragraph. It has been determined that narrative shifts between chapters and sections often signal a lapse in time, a situation which forces the traditional narrator to confront this lapse by summarizing action transpired "in the reader's absence" at the beginning of each chapter. In keeping the reader abreast of the chronological flow of events, this narrator removes himself from the events he summarizes.⁹ In *Fiestas*, however, each new chapter opens like the first one, with a close description that approximates the action to the narration and thereby ignores the lapses in time. Thus, while chapter one ends in the middle of a dialogue between Pira and Piluca, chapter two opens with the description of an action wholly unrelated to the previous speakers:

El hurto se llevó a cabo con la misma facilidad que de costumbre.

El monedero ocupaba el lugar de siempre en el bolso de hule y no tuvo que revolver mucho para encontrarlo. (34)

Chapter two's opening (Pipo's theft of his grandmother's coin purse) moves us to a completely different scene, and although there is an obvious shift in place and character, the shift in time remains implicit and must be deduced by visual stimuli. Similarly, chapter two concludes with an exchange between Pipo and Gorilla that changes, in the opening of the next chapter, to a totally unrelated scene (Piluca in Ortega's math class), again without accounting for the lapse in time. And as in the first example, chapter three ends in the middle of a dialogue, in this case between Gorilla and Juanita, while chapter four opens onto a fully expanded description of the park at a different point in time. In none of these openings does the narrator account for the time gaps in the narration. Instead, he maintains a sense of immediacy at these points in his narration at the expense of chronological or spacial cohesion.

A brief analysis of the story's time span in *Fiestas* will illustrate this point further. An eyewitness account like the one cited above imposes obviously rigid temporal limitations upon a narrator. With respect to the proportion between prose and story, this passage signals a tendency toward a greater degree of prose for a more limited time span in the story. In contrast to this tendency signaled by each isolated scene, many of which correspond to brief hours or minutes, the time sequence of the novel on the whole is relatively long since it covers a period of about six weeks. In view of this contrast in the narrative's time structure, the reader is made to see rather lengthy gaps in the story, gaps which are represented by the shifts between the sections and chapters and which the narrator disregards completely.

In *Fiestas* this disregard for the time lapses acts to deemphasize the long span of the story and to reconfirm the narrator's commitment to an immediate viewpoint. The effect thus created is the illusion of a more limited story time, an effect born out by the references to time. To begin with, the month-long duration of the story is expressed in only one brief reference: we are told on page 67 that the "Congreso Mundial de la Fe," the novel's final event, will transpire a month later. Nevertheless, the time references make the chapters appear chronologically sequential. Chapter one, for example, ends "poco después de las cinco" (31), and chapter two begins at 5:15 (36). This second chapter ends at night (57), while chapter three begins with Ortega's early morning mathematics class. Similarly, we leave Pipo at home late at night at the close of chapter four, and begin chapter five at the port with Gorilla at 3:00 A.M. The tendency is patently to narrow the time span of each scene in order to focus on events at close range. That is, Goytisolo subordinates temporal continuity to an immediacy of perspective.

Just as time is adapted to the focal point's immediacy, so is the portrayal of character. The introduction of individuals by means of their physical description is a case in point, and serves the same end as the detailed portrayal of space:

. . . su rostro [Ortega] sólo era juvenil en apariencia y . . . visto de cerca, la piel presentaba arrugas menudas, como un esmalte resquebrajado. (111)

Su rostro [Pipo] reflejaba sucesivamente odio, tristeza, adulación, alegría; esbozaba amables sonrisas que se transformaban en muecas; hacía girar las pupilas como el niño sordomudo; sacaba la lengua. (126)

El Gorila observaba la escena sin decir nada y se incorporó con el rostro encendido. (218)

Ortega is characterized as being disillusioned and tired, and as in the first example, he is introduced repeatedly by references to the wrinkles on his face. Pipo is Goytisolo's mutable protagonist, as suggested in the second example by the various facial expressions he assumes. Gorilla's anger is commonly projected in his "rostro encendido." In short, instead of interpreting the protagonists' personalities for us, the narrator lets us deduce them from his descriptions. Once again, the impression of direct contact with the story is pronounced.

Wherever summarized scenes appear in *Fiestas*, they are filtered through the dialogue of the characters. Dialogue, in this case, becomes a major device for approximating the narration and the story. In chapter three, section four, the narration begins with a recounting of past action:

La tarde anterior, mientras bebía un porrón de tinto en la bodega, el Gorila había sido protagonista de una aventura extraordinaria: doña Rosa, que desde hacía algún tiempo parecía mostrar un vivo interés por su musculatura, le había llevado al interior de la vivienda con el pretexto de que le ayudara a clavar unos marcos. (90)

This and the two subsequent paragraphs appear to condense an afternoon encounter between Doña Rosa and Gorilla into a short narration. We seem to be confronted, at first glance, with an example of Genette's "discours narrativisé," one which creates the greatest sense of removal from the events. At the beginning of the fourth paragraph, however, there is a sudden transition in the object of our vision:

--Yo no sabía qué hacer, te lo juro. Doña Rosa estaba a mi lado, tal como había venido al mundo, y yo tenía que frotarme los ojos para convencerme de que no soñaba. Todo era tan confuso que ni siquiera me atrevía a moverme y miraba el suelo más tonto y escurrido que un bacalao.

--¿Y ella?--preguntó Norte--. ¿Qué hacía ella? (90-91)

While the first part of the story narrates Doña Rosa's encounter with Gorilla, we can only imagine their verbal exchange through details provided by the omniscient narrator. As a result, the scene appears remote. In this transition, however, the dialogue between North and Gorilla displaces Gorilla's description of the erotic encounter with Doña Rosa in order to become the main action. The act of narration or the "narrative instance," represented within this dialogue, is thus projected within the story as the immediate object of our gaze.

Dialogue, in fact, is an important technique in *Fiestas*, and a common feature of the dialogues in this novel is the suppression of the inquit in reporting the conversations between characters. Unaided by the "he said" or "she answered," the reader is forced to identify the speakers, as in the following example, by the content of their conversation:

--Encima querrás hacerme creer que se quedó muy satisfecha.

--No, no digo eso. Se volvió a poner la ropa y me acompañó hasta la bodega.

--¿Te pidió que volvieres al menos?

El Gorila se cruzó de brazos con ademán de impotencia. --No lo sé; mientras salíamos me decía un montón de cosas, pero yo ni la escuchaba. (92)

This passage shows how the "discours rapporté" predominates in *Fiestas*. The story, in this case, becomes the dialogue between North and Gorilla. In the absence of a narrator, the characters--like actors on a stage--sustain the narration through their interaction. The interjection "El Gorila se cruzó de brazos," albeit in the voice of the omniscient narrator,

serves merely to enhance this staging of the action. In this regard, we can see how the descriptive discourse of the narrator joins with the "discours rapporté" to emphasize his proximity to the action.

In the passage just cited, an important precedence is established for a technique which Goytisolo adopts uniformly in his later novels. In *Fiestas* we have seen how Gorilla appears as the narrator of actions that have occurred in the past. His encounter with Doña Rosa is one example of this. Elsewhere he takes over nine pages to recount the story of his exile to Fernando Poo, a period of his life which covers a number of years. This condensation of story time into a comparatively short text corresponds to Genette's "discours narrativisé," the most removed and therefore least mimetic of the three. Nevertheless, Goytisolo frames this episode in such a way that we never lose sight of Gorilla retelling his adventures in the story's ongoing time sequence.

As a narrator-protagonist, Gorilla typifies a figure common to Goytisolo's early fiction, and the development of this character type is linked to the approximation of the narrative viewpoint in this writer's fiction. In both *Juegos de manos* and *Duelo en el Paraíso*, Goytisolo's first two works, the protagonists interrupt the sequence of events on repeated occasions to narrate their personal past. In each case the character's situation at the time of his telling is of primary concern since the past serves only to shed light on the present and since his narration appears in the context of a dialogue with other characters in the story's ongoing time span. In other words, the events recalled are secondary to the impulse to retell, the retelling being the incident linked directly to the causal-chronological sequence of events in the present. In these novels, furthermore, wherever the act of narration becomes a major element of the plot, we experience an elimination of all distance in the perspective since the narration is equated to the story. We may speak here of a synchronization of the narrative instance and the story time.

The synchronization of the narrative instance and the story time is the most essential aspect of Goytisolo's narrative technique in his post-modernist novels. As indicated above, this approximation is occasioned through increasing the role of the narrator-protagonist. This figure, significant in *Fiestas*, becomes supreme in *Juan sin tierra*. He usurps the narration entirely in such a way that his retelling is the story, the novel's only incident in its ongoing time sequence. In a word, Goytisolo portrays a man in the process of perceiving. By examining his means of integrating all elements of the plot into this portrait, we may understand how *Juan sin tierra* culminates an evolution toward the "discours rapporté," the most immediate perspective possible and the most extreme degree of mimesis.

Much of the story in *Juan sin tierra* is made up of the incongruous and often implausible images created by Alvaro, the protagonist and apocryphal author of *Juan sin tierra*. Fantasies that reenact scenes from his family's past appear alongside imaginary journeys through Islamic lands. Implausible, fantastic, or simply imaginary, these episodes stand in counterpoint to the "real" event of the novel in the unfolding present: the narrator-protagonist, who never leaves the confines of his studio apartment in Paris, is in the process of writing the narrative that we read. Focalization occurs therefore on two levels: in the portrayal of Alvaro's physical reality (his study) and within the realm of his consciousness (the imaginary episodes).

In the episodes which Alvaro fantasizes we find techniques immediately reminiscent of those employed in *Fiestas*. We recognize, as in the following passages, the amplification of detail and the "rosto" motif, the latter used here as well to introduce characters:

pelo cuidadosamente ondeado, frente abultada y tersa, cejas

pobladas, nariz amplia y roma, dientes grandes, blancos y brillantes, lengua ágil y rosa, piel morena y bruniada: dos aretes dorados cuelgan de sus orejas . . .¹⁰

ojos impenetrables y duros, sigilosos, astutos, de fiera que emerge a la luz del día de lo hondo de un tenebroso cubil: rostro cerrado, anguloso, difícil, tallado violentamente a hachazos: cuerpo macizo y compacto, como un bloque cristalino, prismático, de majestad suficiente y pura . . . (157)

Whereas in *Fiestas* the description is conveyed in complete sentences, in *Juan sin tierra* the descriptions are devoid of the rhetorical connectives (verbs, subjects) which would convert these fragments into clauses. Here the main elements of description--the hair, forehead, brow, and nose--lie bare, like bold strokes of a brush, to make the narration even more "visible."

The emphasis on detail to describe space, as occurs in the following passages, is a further example of the way *Fiestas* foreshadows *Juan sin tierra* with respect to the immediate viewpoint:

. . . para la niña música, tiestos con helechos, canastas de fruta, ramilletes de flores: el retrato ovalado de alguna bisabuela imperativa presidirá la ceremonia de la fiesta, un criollito con alas de ángel . . . (16)

en la plaza del sultán Ahmed para ser más exactos, descartando la fálica invitación del obelisco de Teodosio y de la columna serpentina, en medio de los jardincillos que se extienden de la mezquita azul a la basílica, caminando hacia ésta y torciendo a la derecha, en dirección al quiosco de la fuente y el mirador sobre el Bósforo . . . (103)

Yet in *Juan sin tierra* we can see, once again, that Goytisolo subordinates all verbal elements which do not affect a pictorial image. The setting for a young girl's piano recital at Alvaro's ancestral batey in Cuba (the first example) and the streets and buildings of Istanbul (the second) are represented through verbal signs which emphasize the pictorial. *Juan sin tierra*'s more intensely visual prose amounts to a greater sense of immediacy.

Together with descriptions of character and setting, the presentation of dialogues without the mediation of the narrator is a device for reducing distance in *Fiestas*, and this device can be documented in *Juan sin tierra* as well. Returning to the sequence at the batey, we observe the following conversation between the great-grandfather and great-grandmother:

el Bisabuelo, en la hamaca, comienza a dar señales de impaciencia Marita!
ahora mismo voy!
el Ama se compone rápidamente el rostro y lo rocía con un pulverizador de perfume antes de regresar al salón: . . .
hace una noche divina!: dan ganas de sentarse en el cenador del jardín y contemplar las estrellas con el telescopio del señorito Jorge por qué te has demorado tanto?: tropezaste con alguien?
(32-33)

Presented without the narrator's intervention, this conversation is anticipated by the dialogue cited earlier between North and Gorilla. The characters' voices--like their facial features or the objects that surround them--stand out to signal the narrator's firsthand view of the action.

The descriptions of character and setting and the treatment of dialogues in these imaginary episodes show how Goytisolo continues to

develop a close-up viewpoint in his writing. To say that such a perspective represents a greater degree of mimesis may appear contradictory since the episodes that Alvaro imagines fail to correspond by other criteria to mimetic norms. One might envision parody, therefore, in Goytisolo's realistic treatment of "unreal" subject matter.

Such a conclusion does not diminish, nevertheless, the mimetic impact of the plot's framework--Alvaro's act of recounting his mental adventures. Alvaro provides a true-to-life context in which all elements of the plot are coalesced. His fantasies, in fact, are an integral part of his self-portrait. His narration, like Gorilla's, represents a total approximation of perspective since, as the only incident in *Juan sin tierra's* ongoing stratum of time, this act synchronizes completely the narrative instance and the story time. The particular way in which Alvaro objectifies himself as narrator and protagonist will help us to understand how Goytisolo affects this synchronization and achieves the most immediate--and most mimetic--viewpoint possible.

This synchronization becomes apparent initially in Alvaro's repeated references to his act of composing the story. These references are integrated within the scenes transposed from the protagonist's imagination and serve to create the two levels of "reality" described earlier. As we approach an episode in North Africa among the Senusi tribe of nomads, for example, the narrator prefaces his description of the chieftan with the phrase "describirás la imaginaria escena en dos partes" (30). By referring to himself in the second person, the narrator projects himself within the story he creates. His voice stands as a device for documenting his presence in the action and as a leitmotif of the novel's intimate viewpoint.

Throughout his narration Alvaro lists the materials with which he composes his narration, or he prefaces an episode by describing the technique that he will employ, a further means of converting his narration into a story. Indications such as "saltarás al futuro verbal" (231) or "someterás la geografía a los imperativos y exigencias de tu pasión" (82) allow the reader to follow Alvaro's mode of recounting. Of particular note are the brochures from the Swiss Tourist Office that aid Alvaro in narrating scenes that take place in an Alpine landscape:

acometerás la descripción de un paisaje alpino: Megève, Saint-Moritz, Andermatt?: Chamonix, Closters, Saas-Fee?: el Bureau de Tourisme helvético te ofrece su preciosa ayuda con una panoplia de estampas e impresos . . . (38)

The books used to compose chapter three's journey through history and chapter four's odyssey across the North African desert are mentioned at the beginning of chapter four:

de la vasta latitud del espacio a la no menos vasta latitud del tiempo: del mapamundi escolar al viejo manual de historia . . . (179)

Like his voice, Alvaro's materials and techniques are signs that conjoin the narrative instance and the object of the narrator's gaze. They lead us to follow, at once, the way the story is told and the events recounted.

Just as Alvaro's act of composing *Juan sin tierra* is projected within the story, so is the room in which he writes a further sign of his presence. These descriptions include his "biblioteca minúscula" and the "estantes del mueble clasificador" of his "abuhardillada habitación" (225). Even the "silencio denso del escritorio-cocina" and a "mariposa nocturna [que] ronda en torno a la lámpara" (255) appear, giving this setting greater relief. Time and again we are brought to feel the immediacy of a man who gazes now into the crannies of his mind, now at himself and the physical space which surrounds him.

In our analysis of *Fiestas* we have treated time as a vehicle for controlling distance in narrative. The control of distance and the treatment of time are inextricably related, as indicated above, since distance is equal to the narrator's hypothetical temporal remove from the story. Genette's three categories of narrative discourse are defined in part by the extent to which story time is condensed in a given segment of prose.¹¹ The "discours rapporté" that we consider the most characteristic of Goytisolo's fiction expands the narration and concentrates on a relatively short span of story time. This category of narrative discourse reduces distance completely when the narration corresponds in duration to the story. This is the case throughout *Juan sin tierra*. The total absence of references to time by the clock in this novel is a fundamental aspect of its immediate focal point. We realize that the only measure of time here is Alvaro's act of narration, that the duration of his telling defines the chronology of the story, and--finally--that story time and the narrative instance proceed in unison. In the synchronization of the narrative instance and story, we are afforded the most intimate vantage point of a man in the process of seeing as his perceptions unfold.

To say that *Juan sin tierra* is the most mimetic of Goytisolo's narratives--even more mimetic than the so-called neorealist novels of the fifties--may seem contradictory in view of the implausible subject matter which constitutes this work. Yet when viewed within the context of Alvaro's ongoing discourse, these happenings appear as an acutely "real" portrait of the protagonist's mind. We experience here the mental vagaries of a man whose visions of his physical and mental realities seem equally immediate. It is clear that this synthesis of the real and the imaginary is essential to the realism of his mental portrait. We can understand at last how the evolution of Goytisolo's writing parallels the development of the modern novel from Flaubert to Joyce. For Genette, this evolution results in the most extreme mimesis of discourse, a mimesis effected "en effaçant les dernières marques de l'instance narrative et en donnant d'emblée la parole au personnage."¹² Such a development illustrates again the general trend of the arts, whereby--according to José Ortega y Gasset--the experience of seeing has come to supplant, over the centuries, the reality of the objects seen.¹³ In representing the intricacies of this "experience of seeing," Goytisolo achieves his ultimate goal.

--Bernardo A. González

NOTES

- 1 These historical classifications are essential to the following studies: Ramón Buckley, *Problemas formales en la novela española contemporánea* (Barcelona: Ediciones Península, 1973); José María Martínez Cachero, *La novela española entre 1939 y 1969: historia de una aventura* (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1973); Santos Sanz Villanueva, *Tendencias de la novela española actual (1950-1970)* (Madrid: Cuadernos para el Diálogo, 1972).
- 2 John Butt, *Writers and Politics in Modern Spain* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1978); Fernando Morán, *Explicación de una limitación: la novela realista de los años cincuenta en España* (Madrid: Taurus, 1971).
- 3 Juan Goytisolo, *Problemas de la novela* (Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, 1959), 86.
- 4 Juan Goytisolo, *Problemas*, 55-62.
- 5 Gérard Genette, "Discours du récit: essai de méthode," *Figures III* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1972), 62-273.
- 6 Genette clarifies his three categories of narrative discourse--

discours narrativisé (or raconté), transposé and rapporté--in an analysis of the main character's declaration at the end of Proust's *Sodome et Gomorrhe*. "J'informai ma mère de ma décision d'épouser Albertine" exemplifies a discours narrativisé or raconté. "Je dis à ma mère" or "Je pensai qu'il me fallait absolument épouser Albertine" are forms of a discours transposé. The transcription of the main character's words (which is how the line appears in Proust's novel), "Il faut absolument que j'épouse Albertine," corresponds to the discours rapporté (191-92).

- 7 "La forme la plus 'mimétique' est évidemment celle que rejette Platon, où le narrateur feint de céder littéralement la parole à son personnage: 'Je dis à ma mère (ou: je pensai): il faut absolument que j'épouse Albertine'" (Genette, 192).
- 8 Juan Goytisolo, *Fiestas*, 3d ed. (Barcelona: Destino, 1969), 7. Subsequent citations from this edition will be given in the text.
- 9 For Franz Stanzel (*Narrative Situations in the Novel*, trans. James P. Puskas [Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1971], 109) the chapters and sections, the narrative's "outer structure," are shifts and ordering elements that he deems instrumental for evaluating perspective. The immediacy that Stanzel describes in Henry James's omission of "narrative report" (the omniscient narrator's summary of events) at the end of chapters, and in his practice of ending chapters in the middle of dialogues, is similar to the technique found in *Fiestas*.
- 10 Juan Goytisolo, *Juan sin tierra* (Barcelona: Editorial Seix Barral, 1975).
- 11 "Les facteurs mimétiques proprement textuels se ramènent, me semble-t-il, à ces deux données déjà implicitement présentes dans les remarques de Platon: la quantité de l'information narrative (récit plus développé, ou plus détaillé) et l'absence (ou présence minimale) de l'informateur, c'est-à-dire du narrateur. . . . Cette définition nous renvoie d'une part à une détermination temporelle: la vitesse narrative, puisqu'il va de soi que la quantité d'information est massivement en raison inverse de la vitesse du récit; et d'autre part à un fait de voix: le degré de présence de l'instance narrative" (Genette, 187).
- 12 Gérard Genette, 193.
- 13 José Ortega y Gasset, "Sobre el punto de vista en las artes" in *La deshumanización del arte y otros ensayos de estética* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1981), 139-57.

THE LITERARY CRITICISM OF JUAN GOYTISOLO

Juan Goytisolo has through the years concerned himself with the problems of writing in general, theories about the novel, and literary criticism relating to various movements and authors. Scattered throughout a number of literary reviews and periodicals, many of his essays were collected in *Problemas de la novela* (1959), a manifesto on social realism; *El furgón de cola* (1967), essays written between 1960 and 1966; *Disidencias* (1977), articles written between 1970 and 1976; and *Libertad, Libertad, Libertad* (1978), written between 1975 and 1978. Goytisolo also has much to say about literature and literary criticism in *Obra inglesa de D. José*

María Blanco White (1972), in a number of personal interviews granted to Julio Ortega and others, and in his own fiction, especially *Reivindicación del conde don Julián* (1970) and *Juan sin tierra* (1975).

In his essays, as well as in his fiction, Goytisolo dedicated himself to destroying the myths concerning Spain and castigating the constrictive effect of Catholicism and government censorship on Spanish creativity and literary criticism. Aside from physically preventing publication, they condemned both readers and authors to a moral and intellectual atrophy and obfuscated the dichotomy between citizen and writer. Goytisolo, acknowledging that literary production depended on a complex of forces which often escaped the will of the creator, nonetheless urged fellow writers to develop their creative possibilities to the maximum because political pressures, unlike creative productions, were transient phenomena.

Goytisolo regretted that Spanish literary criticism, often convoluted and confabulatory, adhered to a false value system involving intellectual anti-Semitism. In his country, Goytisolo claimed, literary reputations were formed by people who had neither the sensibility nor the judgment to evaluate objectively a work which involved unorthodox or sexual motifs. In many instances critics, investing their irrelevant and shallow passions with a self-endowed authority, showed their intellectual indigence and lack of imagination through their vilification of dissident writers. But even where ideological criticism was not involved, Spanish critics, said Goytisolo, revealed an accumulation of imperfectly digested readings rather than literary experience.

In a more universal context, Goytisolo refutes the need for literary criticism, since communication between author and reader lies through a text which belongs to their joint linguistic community. When the experience is not identical, as in the case of foreign literature, an intermediary may serve a useful function, but one should normally avoid exposing a work to subjective judgments and special tastes. Moreover, a literary work contains within itself various levels of interpretation of an ambiguous, multi-partite nature. Regardless of the method of critical inquiry or hermeneutics, critics who follow a specific aesthetic creed address the text with a series of preconceived suppositions which lead them to select and choose and thus to reduce the very work they are attempting to interpret. Goytisolo discounts those who feign intellectual objectivity in dissecting a writer's work by utilizing surgical or supposed scientific precision, for they are attempting to interpret something which is both criticism and creation, literature and discourse on literature. In any event, readers who do not forgive writers their mixture of passion and irrationality automatically accept a critic's subjectivity.

About 1965, Goytisolo disavowed his early dogmatic and monolithic support of social realism found in *Problemas de la novela*. There he had insisted on the importance of portraying society as it really existed and had contended that ethical and social considerations outweighed aesthetic niceties. Theme determined technique; the novelist might interweave life and experimentation and style but not substitute for reality. Goytisolo rejected as fraudulent the psychological novel and criticized intellectual fiction for its lack of social concern. For a time, he flirted with objectivism, maintaining that a novelist might attempt to establish distance between reader and object, but he could not accept uncommitted description because of his belief in social action. Gradually, as he changed his mind on the subject, he criticized objectivists for their lack of aesthetics and lack of unity of form and content.

As Goytisolo came to appreciate the infinite possibilities of artistic creation, he discarded the importance of verisimilitude, preferring the term "realist illusion" to realism. He wanted to introduce the unreal, unleash the subversive power of the imagination, and utilize capricious rather than traditional signs and symbols. As he accepted the divorce