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Electronic version

URL: <https://journals.openedition.org/ejas/7619>

DOI: 10.4000/ejas.7619

ISSN: 1991-9336

Publisher

European Association for American Studies

Electronic reference

"A.I. Bigalondo on L. Johannessen's *Threshold Time, Passage of Crisis in Chicano Literature*.", *European journal of American studies* [Online], Book reviews, document 12, Online since 29 July 2009, connection on 31 August 2022. URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/ejas/7619> ; DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4000/ejas.7619>

This text was automatically generated on 31 August 2022.



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- 1 Johannessen, Lene M. *Threshold Time. Passage of Crisis in Chicano Literature*. Costerus New Series 173. Rodopi: Amsterdam-New York, 2008. ISBN: 978-90-420-2332-1.
- 2 Borrowing from Bakhtin's notion of the "threshold chronotope", Lene Johannessen's *Threshold Time. Passage of Crisis in Chicano Literature* describes the ways in which six novels appoint and depict the Borderland from different temporal and spatial settings. The works analyzed by Johannessen are Maria Amparo Ruiz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don*, Americo Parede's *George Washington Gómez*, Tomás Rivera's *...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*, Richard Rodríguez's *Hunger of Memory*, Maria Helena Viramontes' *Under the Feet of Jesus* and Benjamín Alire Sánchez's *Carry Me Like Water*.
- 3 The introductory chapter proposes the methodological structure of the text. It defines the Borderland as a space which, born from the culturological crisis of 1848 and subsequently metaphorized, has since conveyed the memory of the border and its fragmented temporal continuity. Bakhtin's threshold chronotope, thus, defines this temporal and spatial terrain perfectly as "a moment of historical activation from which new cognitive frameworks come into being: (...) (It) is a time-space principle that denotes crisis, meeting, rupture and the like," and "has its place as a point of gravitation for discourse" (Johannessen 2008: 13).
- 4 Within this methodological context, where space, time and memory become protagonists, Chapters I and II situate the reader inside the history of the Borderland and Chicano literary history. Johannessen proposes a comprehensive overview of the literary production of the community since its origins, exposing the multitemporal and multispatial nature of Chicano artistic production and its subsequent complexity and multifaceted character. The author then moves on to the specific analysis of each of the six works which are the target of her study and which support this idea of diversity.
- 5 Maria Amparo Ruíz de Burton's *The Squatter and the Don*, studied in Chapter III, observes the time and space that arose right after 1848 to portray the complexity of the dialogue between self and other which is present throughout the novel. The double-

voiced narration illustrates the many difficulties involved in the cultural formation of Mexican-American identity. The novel is described as clearly illustrating the clash between two different voices and points of view—the Anglo and the Mexican—within a single space. It reinforces the theory of the origins of Chicano Literature as having been born in and speaking from the interstices and border spaces. In this sense, Ruíz de Burton's novel defines crisis and its subsequent futurizing, creative potential.

- 6 Chapter IV focuses on Americo Paredes' Bildungsroman, *George Washington Gómez*, which is set in a different time and space and portrays a definite moment of assimilation and acculturation, leaving little room for the voice of the Borderland. Thus, according to Johannessen, these two texts differ clearly in the way they relate to the threshold chronotope: Ruíz de Burton's novel conveys the aforementioned creative power of crisis while Paredes' novel presents a spatialization of time which ends almost with a finalizing step, thus exposing an urgent need for assimilation as a means of cultural survival. George Washington Gomez's story becomes a story of negotiation between the aims of the self and the demands of society, between individuality and communality, which ends with an act of appropriation and loss of memory as a reaction to this twofold identity.
- 7 Rivera's ... *And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*, the focus of study in Chapter V, takes the opposite position to this assimilationist tendency. Characterized by an obvious structural and temporal fragmentation, this novel is described by Johannessen as an icon of the Chicano cultural revival which has given presence and awareness to voices which formerly dwelled in the realm of forgetfulness and darkness. Here, Johannessen applies Victor Turner's notion of liminality, where "one finds in liminality both positive and active qualities, especially where that "threshold" is protracted and becomes a "tunnel," when the "liminal" becomes the "cunicular" (2008: 105). In this sense, Rivera's novel is seen as describing the inhabitants of the Borderland as those who redefine it as a space of possibilities and liveliness, thus provoking a vibrant resurrection of memory.
- 8 Johannessen's study moves on to analyse Richard Rodríguez's *Hunger for Memory*. Radically different from Rivera's novel, it is described as the author's particular "American story," rather than the representation of an entire ethnic group. The memory in the previous novels is precisely the memory Rodriguez wants to free himself from in order to pave the way for the representation of the writer's concern about the negotiation between private and public individuality, between the individual and the communal, between personal identity and bilingualism.
- 9 In Chapter VII, two works are analyzed: Maria Helena Viramontes' *Under the Feet of Jesus* and Benjamín Alire Sánchez's *Carry Me Like Water*. Both portray the importance of landscape as a metaphor of dispossession and fracture and the sense of disintegration among the inhabitants of the Border. At the same time, the meaning of this space as a refuge and a place that offers healing for the shattered is considered.
- 10 Johannessen's work ends, in Chapter VIII, with a comprehensive and comparative conclusion about the six novels analysed. By using a structure based on the temporality and spatiality of the Borderland, Johannessen offers an accurate depiction of how the memory of the Borderland is conveyed in the work of Chicano writers. In addition, she shows how its memory serves as an accurate and essential element for understanding the cultural, temporal and spatial complexity of a space which was born from crisis but has managed to turn that crisis into a futurizing, integrating notion.

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