



Textual Confrontations: Comparative Readings in Latin American Literature

Alfred J. Mac Adam

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In this masterful experiment in truly comparative literary criticism, Alfred J. Mac Adam establishes Latin America's place in the Western literary tradition. By juxtaposing Latin American and Anglo-American texts, he shows how Latin American literature has gone beyond the context of Hispanic letters to borrow from, exploit, and finally extend the Western tradition.

Mac Adam describes the changes that have taken place in Latin American literature since the time of Modernismo (roughly 1880-1920), when Spanish American writers tried to update their literary language by imitating foreign, mostly French, literature. Since then, as he demonstrates, Latin American writing has achieved a pioneering status by means of a different kind of imitation—parody—whereby it gives back to the former centers of Western culture their own writing, now distorted and reshaped into something new.

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