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Introduction:

On behalf of the Editorial Board, I am honored to present the 53rd volume of *Mester*, the academic journal published by the graduate students of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of California, Los Angeles. This volume is organized into two complementary sections: a general dossier focused on the theme of Queer Resistance, and a special supplement dedicated to the representation of Trans and Travesti Struggles in cultural production.

Mester 53 explores emergent forms of resistance as articulated through literature, poetry, and visual culture, by drawing on interdisciplinary methods and critical frameworks such as performance studies, film theory, feminist theory, linguistics, sociology, and queer and trans critique. The articles included in this volume engage with texts from the Iberian, Latin American, Brazilian, Lusophone African, and Chicanx traditions, interrogating dominant epistemologies and the power structures that influence cultural and intellectual production. Situated within distinct historical and geopolitical contexts, the contributions foreground literature and the arts as critical sites for resisting and destabilizing normative regimes of gender, sexuality, and subjectivity.

Crucially, the volume's contributions are anchored in queerness not merely as an identity category, but as an analytical and epistemological framework. Drawing on Halberstam, Eng, and Muñoz's assertion that "queerness remains open to a continuing critique of its privileged assumption" (3), contributors engage queerness as both a critical methodology and a form of radical practice. This dynamic approach reconfigures how we understand desire, power, and relationality, highlighting the importance of Latin American and Chicanx queer imaginaries in contemporary debates within Literary and Cultural Studies, as well as broader Queer and Trans theory.

In this context, queer resistance emerges as a powerful, though often precarious, assertion of life against the intersecting forces of systemic erasure, state violence, and cultural marginalization. Achille Mbembe's concept of "necropower" suggests that "the lines of resistance and suicide" (40) often intersect, revealing the precariousness of marginalized communities, where everyday survival becomes a form of resistance. For

this reason, for queer and trans individuals, resistance takes shape not only through cultural production and activism but also through the lived embodiment of non-normative identities, reconfiguring life beyond the strictures of normative paradigms.

Our special supplement explores the representation of Trans and Travesti Struggles in cultural productions, underscoring the significance of trans studies and the lived experiences of trans people. Several articles critically engage with travesti identity in relation to U.S.-centric trans studies, emphasizing how it redefines normative femininity while recovering local histories of resistance. Other contributions examine how cultural works depict social and state repression against gender nonconforming individuals, demonstrating how these representations draw attention to systemic violence, discrimination, and the ongoing struggle for visibility and rights. Taken together, these articles not only foreground resistance but also gesture toward a broader transnational conversation that continues in the Supplement Section.

The General Section opens with "*Disuelta, Sostenida, Creada*: Cristina Peri Rossi's *Evohé* as Queer Feminism," in which Andrew M. Edwards brings feminist and queer theoretical frameworks into conversation through a reading of Peri Rossi's erotic poetry. Furthermore, Edwards argues that *Evohé* unsettles the conventional divide between these discourses, articulating an eroticism that resists fixed classification and moves fluidly between queer and feminist modes of expression.

Continuing with the exploration of resistance, Jesús Galindo-Benítez investigates the intersections of queer discourse and revolutionary thought in Latin America. His article highlights queer practices and gestures as expressions of collective consciousness and forms of dissent, particularly in response to the structural violence endured by sex-gender dissidents across both the Global North and South. In summary, Galindo emphasizes the disruptive power of queer expression to challenge normative structures and imagine alternative social possibilities.

Following this, is Javier Ramírez Franco with "Hijos homosexuales y sus madres en la filmografía de Almodóvar: patriarcado, sexualidad y capitalismo," which examines the mother-son dynamic in Almodóvar's films, using it as a lens to uncover mechanisms of patriarchy, particularly within the context of the Francoist era. Through an analysis of aesthetic

elements and character configurations, he reveals how these relationships represent a crucial alliance between marginalized groups.

Cristina G. Vázquez's article, "La figura de García Lorca: memoria y resistencia queer en *Bones of Contention*," turns to the symbolic and historical resonance of Federico García Lorca. Framed by the repression of the Spanish Civil War and the conservative hegemony of the Franco dictatorship, Vázquez situates Lorca's literary legacy and queer identity as central to LGBTQ+ struggles for memory, recognition, and justice in contemporary Spain.

The section continues with "En la encrucijada de opresiones: explorando *Native Country of the Heart* desde lo interseccional." In this article, Hamideh Falahasl's intersectional reading of Cherríe Moraga's autobiography demonstrates how Moraga's narrative articulates layered experiences of queerness and Chicana identity, positioning literature as a vehicle for resisting systemic oppression and reclaiming agency within historically marginalized communities.

In "Resurgimiento queer: resistencia política y cultural en las representaciones artísticas y literarias latinoamericanas," Waldo N. Díaz reflects on the ongoing cultural and political violence faced by queer communities in Latin America. By analyzing a range of artistic and literary works, Díaz traces the emergence of queer resistance as a critical response to exclusion and as a space from which new imaginaries are forged.

Closing the section is Jesús Duarte's linguistic study, "Phonetic Characteristics of Lesbian Speech: Creakiness in Spanish," which fills a gap in the literature on queer speech by examining phonetic markers in Spanish-speaking lesbian women. His findings reveal that, like their English-speaking counterparts, lesbian Spanish speakers exhibit distinct phonetic features such as creakiness, contributing to the understanding of queer speech across linguistic contexts.

The Supplement Section of *Mester* volume 53 brings together essays that examine trans and queer resistance through cultural, literary, and performative perspectives in the Latin American context. This section opens with Raúl Romo's "Cuerpo y archivo en movimiento: actos corporalizados y resistencia trans* en *Quebranto* (2013)", in which Romo analyzes Roberto Fiesco's documentary on Coral Bonelli—a transgender

woman, dancer, and sex worker from Mexico City. Drawing on Diana Taylor and Sarah Pink, Romo explores how archival material, oral testimony, and spatial dynamics produce an embodied, affective narrative. He argues that these formal strategies challenge documentary conventions and offer a nuanced representation of trans subjectivity.

Daniel Martínez-Gonzalez expands the focus to literary production in "Estéticas de la desidentificación en tiempos de biosociabilidad," and this article analyzes two recent novels, *Inacabada* by Ariel Florencia Richards and *Tapizado corazón de orquídeas negras* by Évolet Aceves, to explore how contemporary travesti-trans writers reconfigure the body and trans subjectivity. Through the critical categories of disidentification and biosociobility, Martínez showcases how both texts disrupt normative discourses and generate alternative hermeneutic frameworks grounded in affective and symbolic rearticulations.

Shifting to performance and vernacular culture, Ribamar José de Oliveira Juniors's "Tradiciones translocales? ReXistencias en las actuaciones culturales del Boi Estrela en Quiexaramobim-Ceará/Brasil" investigates how queer subjectivities intervene in traditional cultural forms through the performances of Boi Estrela in Ceará, Brazil. Focusing on the contributions of transgender artist Laura Karielly, Oliveira Junior introduces the concepts of *transloca* and *reXistence* and argues that these performances act as both aesthetic and political interventions, embedding trans epistemologies within popular culture as well as enabling intergenerational resistance and transformation.

Continuing the exploration of narrative strategies, Luiz Henrique Moreira Soares and Cláudia Maria Ceneviva Nigro, in "A escrita de um obituário em 'Los claveles de Jennifer' de Iván Monalisa Ojeda," examine how Ojeda's short story constructs an obituary for Jennifer, a murdered Honduran transvestite sex worker. Engaging Judith Butler's concept of the "obituary" from a decolonial perspective, the article explores how the narrative inscribes Jennifer within a space of discursive legitimacy and interrogates the normative boundaries of humanity in relation to sexual and gender dissidence.

To close this section, Bilal Choudhry analyzes Afro-Brazilian artist Linn da Quebrada's work, particularly in the documentary *Bixa Travesty* (2018). This essay argues that Quebrada's performances function as

epistemological interventions that critique the intersecting forces of classism, racism, and heteronormativity in Brazil. Rejecting commodification, Quebrada asserts transvestite and Afro-Brazilian identities through politically engaged artistic expression.

This volume of *Mester* concludes with my interview with Oaxacan writer Antonio Pacheco Zárate, titled "Oaxaca, más allá de una postal." In our conversation, Antonio reflects on his creative process, his engagement with the dynamics of gender and sexuality in rural contexts, and his dedication to portraying lives and experiences often excluded from the landscape of contemporary Mexican literature.

Bringing this volume together has been a collective effort. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the *Mester* Editorial Board, our guest editors, associate editors, and current Editor-in-Chief, Ícaro Carvhalo, for their dedication throughout this process. I am especially grateful to former Editor-in-Chief Cristina G. Vázquez, whose continued presence and care have left a lasting imprint on this publication. Furthermore, I extend my sincere thanks as well to Professor Jorge Marturano, Faculty Advisor for Volume 53, for his generous guidance, and to Maarten Van Delden, Chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, for his steadfast support. I also wish to thank our layout editor, Oscar Galindo, for his thoughtful and creative work.

Finally, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the authors, whose intellectually rigorous and critically engaged work gives this volume its resonance, urgency, and enduring relevance.

José F. Galindo- Benítez
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