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IN
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NOTES

1. A. Tàpies, Memòria personal (Barcelona, 1993), 161. Subsequent references to this source will be bracketed in the text with the abbreviation MP.
2. 'In order to make an accurate measurement of position it is necessary to use light of short wavelength... But light of short wavelength consists of photons with correspondingly high momentum, and, when photons of high momentum are used to observe an electron, the electron necessarily recoils from the impact, carrying off some fraction of the photon's momentum. Thus the more accurately we try to measure the position of an electron, the less we know about the measurement about the electron's momentum.' Steven Weinberg, Dreams of a Final Theory (London, 1993), 57.
5. A. Tàpies, L'art modern i el nou esperit científic, Valor de l'art (Barcelona, 1993), 100
6. A. Tàpies, La dialèctica científica, Per un art modern i progressista (Barcelona, 1985), 58.
7. E. Naegli, ed., Nueva visión del mundo (Buenos Aires, 1951?).
8. A. Tàpies, La pintura i el buit, La realitat com a art (Barcelona, 1982), 102.
9. A. Tàpies, Comunicació sobre el mur, La pràctica de l'art (Barcelona, 1970), 125. Subsequent references will be bracketed in the text with the abbreviation CM.
10. A. Tàpies, Pintades i graffiti, Per un art modern i progressista, 13. Subsequent references will be bracketed in the text with the abbreviation PG.

PROTEAN PROSE: FLUIDITY OF CHARACTER AND GENRE IN ESTHER TUSQUETS'S SIETE MIRADAS EN UN MISMO PAISAJE

Siète miradas en un mismo paisaje is a challenging text even though what looks problematic at first glance -Tusquets's style, which Paul Julian Smith succinctly characterizes with reference to another work (El mismo mar de todos los veranos) as 'fluid syntax and fragmented exposition' - turns out to be surprisingly accessible, perhaps due to what Smith goes on to call 'the naturalistic register and plot devices of narrative realism'. What makes Siète miradas both exciting and troubling to read is its consistent refusal to confine itself within pre-existing boundaries of genre and gender. Both of these words are translated by the single Spanish word género and it is my contention that Tusquets exploits this dual meaning so that género in the textual sense and gênero in the sexual sense are not only problematized separately but are actually melted into one another. The interplay of textuality with sexuality is not Tusquets's invention - it can be dated back to before the Christian era2 - but perhaps more significant for present purposes is its presence as a device in the Spanish New Novel, such as the fiction post-1966 of Juan Goytisolo.3 Tusquets's style generally aligns her with the new novelists, but what sets her apart from them is her identity as a woman writer and in consequence, her different attitude to gender. Where she does break new ground is in the combination of the techniques of the new novel with questions of gender as these may be construed from a woman's position.4

Boundaries of all kinds have long been of psychological importance to us. They are enshrined, for example, in the Old Testament commandments still observed by Jews today. Many of the Biblical laws can be understood as having the drawing of boundaries at their heart. Milk must be kept separate from meat (Deuteronomy 14.21), for instance, but there are numerous other laws that seem analogous in design: wool must not be woven with linen (Deuteronomy 22.11) and in Deuteronomy 22.5 a gender boundary is unequivocally established in like fashion: 'The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment.'5 Sir James George Frazer's The Golden Bough records many similarly boundary-based taboos in tribal societies and Mary Douglas forges a suggestive link between such traditions and our own behaviour in twentieth-century secular society:

If we send the men to the downstairs lavatory and the women upstairs, we are essentially doing the same thing as the Bushman wife [who sticks a rod in the
ground to divide the home into male and female quarters]. They fear that if a man sits on the female side his male virility will be weakened. We fear pathogenically transmitted through micro-organisms. Often our justification of our own avoidances through hygiene is sheer fantasy.

Boundaries of this kind divide men from women, contributing to the social construction of gender and *Siete miradas* looks critically at them, as we shall see. However, at least as important in this work is the related set of issues surrounding the division between heterosexual and homosexual and in particular, lesbian versus straight woman and within the lesbian typology, divisions between butch-femme and passionate friendship configurations. The birth of the male homosexual is fairly recent, as Foucault and others point out: 1870, according to him; 1860 according to another scholar, Martin Danner. Prior to this, male homosexual behaviour was of course known, but men were not separated and considered a distinct subspecies for indulging in it. On the other hand, the status of the lesbian as a subspecies of woman is harder to trace back to a precise birth-date, since lesbianism has always been a more diffuse, less visible, definable phenomenon. The early nineteenth century (excepting a handful of curiosities of earlier date) has been cited by one scholar for the first appearance of the mannish lesbian who cross-dressed and was studied later that century and at the beginning of this one by sexologists as an identified deviant. Other types include the *femme damnée* (also with an early nineteenth-century birth-date and the partners within passionate friendships (dating back to the eighteenth century at least).

It is worth noting that a present-day authority like Monique Wittig is happy to pigeon-hole lesbians, albeit positively: 'lesbian is the only concept beyond the categories of sex (woman and man)' (1978). Ironically enough, she is here enclosing the lesbian within boundaries established on the basis of the lesbian's refusal to fit into other categories. This tendency to create new and by implication, equally limiting categories for something that defies inclusion elsewhere, rather than allowing and enjoying liminality, is prevalent in the textual domain of género as well as the sexual one and particularly relevant to a study of *Siete miradas*, the generic status of which sits on the line between short story collection and novel. Indeed, boundary-drawing seems to be an almost irresistible psychological temptation, a point highlighted and implicitly attacked in Tusquets's writing.

There seems to be no critical consensus on what *Siete miradas en un mismo paisaje* constitutes: a collection of seven free-standing short stories, or a fragmentary, elliptical novel, or something in between. Most surprisingly of all, however, many usually astute critics do not problemat-
this type of interlinkage. Most conclusive of all, though, is the matter of Sara's siblings or lack of them. In Giselle and Exiliados, she is an only child (7 and 140); in Los primos, she has a younger sister (35), and in En la ciudad sin mar, she has 'hermanos mayores' (81).

It seems clear that Sara cannot be the same character throughout in any realist sense of the notion. However, the common features shared by all the Saras suggest that it would be highly implausible to treat the protagonist(s) as seven wholly separate characters. This usage of characterization is a constant reminder that these are textual, not human beings, rather than trying to make us forget this fact, as conventional realist fiction does. Like other Spanish new novels of recent decades, Siete miradas rejects the ancient idea of art holding up a mirror to nature, preferring to exploit the literary text's freedom from natural law. Tusquets puts the device to different use, not by emphasizing the unreliability of narration, as Marsé does, nor by pouring scorn on realist convention as Goytisolo does; Tusquets's Sara invites a palimpsestic reading of the text with the reader sensing that a character is being created and re-created, written and overwritten, that creative options are being explored by the author. This interpretation is reinforced by the title of the work: the mismo paisaje could be understood metaphorically as the type of person Sara is and all the Saras are, as well as the type of textual, stylistic landscape in which she exists, in addition to the more obvious reference to the sameness of the sort of social world she inhabits. The siete miradas would then relate to the different ways of utilizing this foundation: seven explorations of the numberless permutations. Now, if the text is regarded as palimpsestic, then its seven narratives are more akin to geological strata than a linear succession of stories or the linear development associated with the novel form. The advantages of reading Siete miradas en un mismo paisaje in this way are several: first it resolves the logical problems mentioned above concerning the single or multiple identity of the protagonist. Second, it offers a textual realization of what the title proposes, enabling the seven component parts to occupy the same textual space and so exclude the well-worn journey metaphor for narrative. There is no destination reached at the end of the text, no definitive tying of the different narrative threads, no sense of journey's end with the satisfaction and repose that this evokes. This restless inconclusiveness marries well with the protagonist's own lack of psychological closure and satisfaction; by the end of the text, she seems no farther forward in establishing her identity than she was at the start. Thus, form and content blur indistinguishably into one another. Thirdly, and with specific reference to the question of género in the text, a palimpsestic reading forges a link between the sexual and textual connotations of the Spanish term, portraying Sara's sexuality as always subject to revision, always liable to be partially erased and reinvented, just as the narratives themselves seem to keep over-writing themselves.

Sexual fluidity overlaps with the textual fluidity discussed above because one of the key aspects of Sara's protan character is her sexual identity. One reason why her sexuality is uncertain is that her whole self is so radically unsettled, to the extent that she is not even sure of her separateness as an individual. This can be simultaneously understood on two levels: in a realist mode, she is an insecure child and adolescent trying to establish her own identity. But at the same time we are reminded of her identity as a palimpsestic textual being who has every reason to doubt her selhood and her separateness from others.

Let us consider three examples of this sexual/textual fluidity in Sara's characterization: the first relates to the man-woman and self-other divide, the second and third to aspects of the hetero/homosexual one.

Exiliados contains a father who insists his son must cut his long hair and publicly display daring (he forces him to dive from a very high board). This is depicted as cruel to the boy as well as senseless, but perhaps more importantly, it upsets the protagonist, Sara, in a way that adults consider disproportionate to the event (she cries inconsolably after). The narrator interprets her distress as deriving from emotional fusion with the boy: 'de repente ella fue él' and the associated sudden sense of continuity with all of creation this triggers is called 'un descubrimiento aterrador', which indeed it is, for it amounts to a loss of Sara's belief in her own separateness as a person, to a dissolution in other words of the boundaries separating self from other. So here is an attack on conventions of masculinity and, more disturbingly, the suggestion that that most basic division between self and other may be perceived as uncertain, questionable and, given Sara's sympathetic treatment, perhaps unnecessary, even undesirable. Another reading of Sara's experience is also possible, and Jacques Lacan's understanding of the significance of the mirror stage in human development is pertinent here. Malcolm Bowie explains: when 'the young child...behinds its mirror image...this is the moment at which the child seems suddenly...to be able to formulate...the propositions "I am that" and "That is me". But as Bowie then observes: 'The identification of oneself with another being [presumably, the mirror image] is the very process by which a continuing sense of selfhood becomes possible.' In the light of this one might argue that Sara perceives the boy as akin to a new reflection of herself, differing from the image with which she had iden-
ified since infancy. It is this realization of the radical instability of self-image which could be understood as the source of her anguish.17

The second example is from En la ciudad sin mar. Sara and her boyfriend Eduardo break up temporarily and during this interim, or liminal, period, Sara has a lesbian affair with a woman called Roxana. When Eduardo returns to reclaim Sara - and it is depicted in this masculine-active, feminine/passive way - she tells him about the experience with Roxana and he breaks down. She finds his tears especially moving and more so than Roxana's, which she recognizes are equally sincere, precisely because they transgress gender-based social convention; indeed this is what clinches her return to him entirely on his terms, which include the betrayal of a promise to Roxana never to leave without saying good-bye. Here Tusquets implicitly questions the validity of two clichés of conventional attitudes: real men do not cry (so when they do, it is especially pathetic and meaningful) and homosexuality is morally wrong. Sara, though uncomfortable with these ideas, cannot help but endorse them by her behaviour, which opens an ironical gap between her mind-set and the contrary position the narrative itself invites us to adopt. As far as boundaries are concerned, there are two ways in which En la ciudad sin mar erases them in the domain of lesbian sexuality. First, Sara's relationship with Roxana is depicted as one experience amongst many, positioning her between the hetero-homosexual divide. She does not fit into any classic pattern: she is not the straight woman 'turned into' a lesbian by a confirmed one, for she returns to Eduardo; she is not a woman who thinks she is a lesbian until a 'real man' comes along and sweeps her off her feet, for she has already experienced a successful relationship with Eduardo prior to her acquaintance with Roxana. Roxana is equally resistant to categorization, being a mixture of elements from different set types of lesbian. The classic character who seduces the hitherto heterosexual woman is usually described as masculine in style whereas Roxana, although tall, partial to wearing trousers and no make-up (93-94), has a body defined in the language of traditional images of feminine beauty: 'un cuerpo fino y largo y liso, como de porcelana o de cristal' (96, my emphasis), she acts in a motherly way towards Sara, and trembles and weeps, taking her some distance from the mannish lesbian who would play her role in the classic configuration.18 Where two feminine types of lesbian have a relationship traditionally, is in the passionate friendship pattern, but Sara and Roxana do not fit this mould either, because it normally implies a certain equality, between partners, undermined by the clearly active role played by Roxana and the passive one played by Sara in En la ciudad sin mar. Thus, Tusquets critically highlights conventions of behaviour for women and men, rejects the hetero/homosexual boundary, and refuses to conform to sub-categories of lesbian types and the relationships they seek.

The third example - this one optimistic - comes from Giselle. Here the social taboo of homosexuality is not physically transgressed because Sara, the sixteen-year-old protagonist, bisects her adoration for a ballerina into an ethereal type of idolatry of the woman herself and a sexual relationship with the dancer's husband. The sexual contact between Sara and the husband and above all, the pleasure - rather than offence - that it gives Sara, shocks the reader. On seeking an answer to the question of why this should be so, one might argue that the shock is attributable to the fact that the turn of events is tantamount to a dissolution of boundaries between characters: Giselle and her husband are melded into a disturbingly androgynous entity. For Sara, Giselle's husband seems to represent part of Giselle herself, a part to which Sara can relate sexually and through which she can express her love for the ballerina. Simultaneously, the sexual contact with the husband realizes a fantasy for Sara of assuming the ballerina's identity, which melts away the further boundaries separating Sara from her idol. In sum, the episode emblematises the pleasure of bisexual, three-way merging of selves, beyond the twin binarisms of homo-heterosexual (Sara being in love with a woman but expressing this through sexual contact with a man) and self/other (Sara merging with Giselle by taking her place as the sexual object of her husband). It may be to this erasing of boundaries that the air of optimism pervading the episode is attributable: [Sara] se sentía ahora relajada y liberada, y con cómida, y advertía oscuramente que lo ocurrido aquí habia sido de modo confuso pero cierto relacionado con su amor por la bailarina... con su deseo tan vehemente de ser ella misma Giselle... Todo andaba extrañamente junto y mal revuelto, y estaba en definitiva bien que fuera así (32).19

It is important to acknowledge that social, political and in particular, class boundaries are also treated in Siete miradas en un mismo paisaje, having a central position in four of the seven narratives, Los primos, He besado tu boca, Yokainán, La casa oscura, and Orquesta de verano. Of these, the most interesting from the point of view of how these intersect with the genre/gender question is He besado tu boca, Yokainán, in which Sara has an affair with a man called Ernesto, who is beneath her in class and from a left-wing family, unlike her own. In a euphoric state after losing her virginity to him, she reflects on the class barrier that she believes she has destroyed in the process. However, it will become clear later in the story that this was a woefully unrealistic belief. Thus, the narrative looks at
the sociopolitical implications - or, more precisely, the lack of them - of sexual conduct and love, coldly observing that a personal sense of solidarity or oneness, no matter how important this may be emotionally and psychologically to the individual concerned, is very unlikely to be matched by any real-life change to the status quo. And the other narratives that deal with social class or political colour reinforce this message: low-class Ricardo’s love for upper-class Cecilia goes nowhere in La casa oscura; the political gulf between fascist Gabi and socialist Bruno in Los primos cannot be bridged by Sara’s love for both of them; and class differences prevent all but the briefest of holiday friendships between Sara and the musician’s family she loves in Orquesta de verano.

So it is that on a thematic level, Tusquets’s narrator - in contrast to the naïve Sara - gives worldly wise, even pessimistic recognition to the indestructibility of sociopolitical boundaries, as well as culture-based gender divisions, but at the same time, the intensely introspective angle of the discourse, looking out at the world from Sara’s innermost self, allows the author to show the terrible discrepancy between inner and outer realities: from the point of view of Sara’s psychology, social, political, and gender-based boundaries are not merely unimportant, but actively cruel, violent and disconnected from her own understanding of herself and others.

The unforgettable image of Sara and Ricardo naked in the midnight sea (from La casa oscura) lyrically illustrates and summarizes the idea of flux in gender and genre: the traditionally feminine sea-water principle and the naked boy next to her excite Sara in a way that cannot be separated out into homo- or heterosexual desire, into self-gratificatory or reciprocal pleasure-giving or seeking and the image of the waves washing and re-washing over the beach as well as the characters provides an arresting image for the palimpsestic nature of the text and its protagonist:

se dormían por la noche escuchando el sucesarse de las olas sobre la arena... una noche en que estaban solos los dos... salieron desnudos y entumecidos en el agua negrísima, que les golpeaba el pecho y se les escurría entre las ingles y les cortaba el aliento de puro y recién aprendido placer (219).

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5. The Authorized King James version is quoted here.
10. ‘One Is Not Born a Woman’, in The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader, 103-09 (108). By contrast, T. de Laurels asserts that Gertrude Stein’s “somagrams” “strove to obliterate the boundaries of gender identity” and a further point of contact between Stein and Tusquets emerges in the claim that sexuality and textuality fuse in these works by Stein. ‘Sexual Indifference and Lesbian Representation’ in The Lesbian and Gay Studies Reader, 141-58 (144-45).
11. Women Writers in Contemporary Spain, 165.
14. Another example is from La casa oscura and Orquesta de verano, when Sara is thirteen and eleven respectively. In both stories, she is forced to confront the inequalities of the class system and yet the former does not call to mind her experience in the latter.
15. Tusquets does something similar in her trilogy of novels with the recurring names Elia and Clara. P. J. Smith regards this as a ‘feminist subversion of identity’ (Laws of Desire, 92). However, since we are dealing with three full-length novels there, rather than seven short narratives as here, the effect is less overwhelming in the trilogy, though no less significant. The simultaneously singular and plural protagonist[s] will henceforth be referred to as Sara to avoid the unwieldiness of giving singular and plural alternatives at every mention.
In the context of the decades of the 1960s and 1970s, the Chicano movement emerged as a significant social movement in the United States. This movement was centered around the idea of empowerment and self-determination for Mexican-American communities. The Chicano movement sought to address issues such as poverty, discrimination, and the lack of representation in the political and social spheres. It advocated for the use of the Spanish language, the celebration of Mexican culture, and the recognition of Chicano identity.

The Chicano movement was influenced by various factors, including the civil rights movement in the United States and the cultural and political changes that occurred in Mexico during the same period. The movement was also shaped by the experiences of Mexican-Americans who were often marginalized and oppressed by institutional discrimination.

One of the key figures in the Chicano movement was Cesar Chavez, who founded the United Farm Workers (UFW) to advocate for the rights of farm workers. Chavez's efforts to organize farm workers led to significant victories, including the recognition of collective bargaining rights and the establishment of fair wages.

The Chicano movement also had a profound impact on the arts, education, and literature. Chicano writers and artists began to explore themes of identity, culture, and resistance through their work. This artistic expression helped to raise awareness of Chicano issues and contributed to the broader social and cultural changes that were occurring in the United States.

In summary, the Chicano movement was a pivotal moment in the history of the United States, and its legacy continues to shape the lives of Mexican-Americans today. It is a testament to the power of collective action and the resilience of marginalized communities.