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Defining Marginality in Hispanic literature

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This year we celebrate the seventh anniversary of Lucero, with this issue dedicated to the special topic of "marginal" literatures. This theme was suggested to us by the Townsend Center group "Otras voces, otros ámbitos," with whom I worked closely last semester (Fall 1995). This study group emerged from the concerns that various students had regarding the marginal status of their homeland literatures within the field of Latin American cultural studies. Its members soon learned nevertheless that each one held quite different interpretations of "marginality". For some, this terminology seemed synonymous with a historical "under-representation" or lack of "recognition", for others it simply meant a region or group currently "under-studied", and for those who found a political implication in the word marginality, it stood for anti-hegemonic ideology. The group managed to resolve these differences by accepting each other's interpretations of marginality and by agreeing that the concept of "marginality" could encompass the divergent interests of its heterogeneous members.

Even though we have left the term "marginality" still open to debate, we are more hopeful than before because a quintessential part of exploring "marginality" is the willingness to interact and communicate with others as well to recognize the possible differences among "us," the marginalized. We hope that this issue will stimulate our readers to participate as well in this kind of communication, interaction and recognition.

Notes

1Here the term Hispanic literature includes Spanish, Latin American, Portuguese, Catalan, Galician literatures.