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Argentinian Folktales in the Latin American Context: Collections and Belief Narratives

María Inés Palleiro

To Manuel Dannemann,
In memoriam

This contribution focuses its attention on Argentinian belief narratives in the Latin American context. Following on from a panoramic overview of Argentinian and Latin American folklore studies, this article proposes an approach to belief narratives based on the flexible boundaries between folklore genres. It starts by offering a diachronic itinerary of the most relevant Argentinian folk narrative collections, noting the trends in Folklore Studies in each period, and goes on to present an example of how the focus of collecting folk narrative in Argentina can change, by making boundaries between tale types and belief narratives more flexible, taking into account the changed ones as well. This example, which connects tales and motifs ATU 332 “God-father Death”, and Thompson Z 111 “Death personified” with AIDS and Covid narratives, shows porous limits between folk narrative genres, establishing “belief narrative” as an umbrella term open to new itineraries for types and motifs.

Keywords: folk narrative, social beliefs, Argentina, Latin America, AIDS, Covid-19.

Argentinian Folk Narrative Studies in the Latin American Context

This first section presents a diachronic overview of Argentinian folk narrative studies in the Latin American context, to show to which extent belief narratives have been taken into account, and how they have been considered. Such diachronic approach will lead to proposition, in the second section, of a new approach which widens the framework of these collections, involving not only printed and oral texts, registered in rural contexts, but also

urban and digital, which need to be placed in a global context, nowadays affected by pandemic of Covid-19.¹

Latin American nations share colonial heritages, with Créole people, European immigrants and indigenous groups. Folklore studies in this context can be divided into three stages. The first one can be dated from the last decades of the nineteenth century – when the first collections were published and the first folklore associations were founded – to the 1920s in which national identities have been constructed (Fischman 2012: 267). The first folklorists, with philological or other scientific backgrounds, registered folktales and belief narratives such as legends with a criterion focused on the collection rather than on the interpretation of folk texts. In Argentina, the ethnographer and naturalist Juan Ambrosetti (1865–1917) published *Supersticiones y leyendas: región misionera. Valles calchaquíes, las pampas* [*Superstitions and legends, Misiones region, Calchaquí valleys and the Pampas*] (1917), a volume in which belief narratives were considered to be “superstitions”. During this period, the first folklore association in Latin America was founded in Chile in 1909. In 1911, the Folklore Society was also promoted in Panama, and similar associations were founded in Brazil and Venezuela (Fischman 2012: 268–269). The German folklorist Lehmann-Nitsche recorded Araucanian texts – historic narratives, myths, fairy tales, fables, songs and riddles, in vernacular language, and his studies of South American beliefs, which included mythology, culture and literature, were published in German in 1939. Also, Eric Boman (1867–1924), Swedish expert in Anthropology, dealt with the folklore of the pre-Hispanic cultures of Northwestern Argentina (Boman 1908), and the folklorist Adán Quiroga (1863–1904) studied local beliefs of the Calchaquí zone (Quiroga 2017/1897). In all these anthological works, belief narratives were presented as samples of different vernacular cultures, placed in local contexts.

In the second stage of Latin American Folklore studies, from the 1920s to the 1970s, the academic field of Folklore Studies in the continent was established mainly through conferences, where the International Folklore Congresses held in São Paulo in 1954 and in Buenos Aires in 1960 (Fischman 2012: 269) are particularly worth mentioning. Another relevant conference was the International Congress of Americanists held in the Argentinian city of Mar del Plata (1966) in which dialogue between folklorists from Argentina and the United States set off (Fischman 2004: 167, in Palleiro 2004a). In this period, Latin American scholars considered that folklore is comprised of material produced in a rural environment, and devoted their efforts at rescuing these expressions, aiming to preserve them from an imminent disappear-

¹ Gentle acknowledgment is due to Professor Terry Adrian Gunnell for his clever suggestions regarding the structure and contents of this article.

ance. Despite the romantic slant of this perspective, they carried out pioneering work in the reevaluation of folklore (Blache and Dupey 2007: 300–301), their main goal being to contribute to a reconstruction of the nations through the homogenization of their cultural traditions, as the Argentinian Ricardo Rojas has stressed in *The Nationalist Restoration (La restauración nacionalista 1922/1909)*. Rojas proclaimed the necessity of preserving Argentinian Créole cultural heritage as a result of the flood of immigrants that Argentina started receiving at the beginning of the 20th century, belief narratives being seen as part of such heritage.² Folk beliefs were closely associated with Créole traditions and considered to be symbolic resources against cultural cosmopolitanism. Among the researchers who followed this trend, it is worth mentioning Carlos Vega (1898–1966) and Juan Alfonso Carrizo (1895–1957), the first director of the Argentinian Institute of Tradition (Instituto Nacional de la Tradición), founded in 1943. Carrizo, author of the *History of Argentinian Folklore* (Carrizo 1953), stressed out that the aim of Folklore Studies was to favor national cohesion, and Latin American Folklore Studies at the time clearly shared this paradigm. In *Danzas populares argentinas [Argentinian Popular Dances]* (1986/1936), Carlos Vega focused his attention on Latin American traditional music and dances, the narrative dimension of which is found by the organization of the choreographic sequences. The musical rhythm is also organized sequentially and, thus, narratively. Folk expressions and folk beliefs have been thus associated with rural local contexts, and this trend was reflected in the 1921 Folkloric Survey.

In 1921, the Argentinian Council of Education sent a Questionnaire to the teachers of public primary schools, along with a brochure of instructions for collecting folk material, to be registered in a survey. This survey was conceived as part of an educational plan directed at reconstructing Argentinian cultural memory, founded on Hispanic and indigenous roots now threatened by the flood of immigration. That is why teachers were requested not to collect traditions from immigrants. The survey's format of a questionnaire, in which teachers had to address to their students and families, implied a polyphonic enunciator – that is to say, a choral ensemble of voices, which comprised not only the voice of the authorities of the National Council of Education, but also that of the teachers along with those of the “informers” whose oral testimonies were turned into a textual re-writing. Teachers were asked to collect all cultural products comprising crafts and games, beliefs and superstitions [sic], customs, rites, techniques, instruments, manufactures³ [sic], and decorative elements, as well as literary forms in verse and prose and,

² Following this trend, The High School of Argentinian Folk Dances was created in 1948, with the aim to unify national choreographies and to safeguard their authenticity.

³ In an etymological sense, *manufacture* refers to any object made with the hands.

among the latter, I. Tales or fictions, II. Legends, III. Cases and events⁴ [sic], IV. Traditions, and V. Explanatory Narratives or Myths. In these instructions, the beliefs of folk communities were classified as “superstitions”, separate from tales and legends. The folkloric paradigm on which this questionnaire was based, was that of William Thoms’ letter (1846), according to which the aim of Folklore Studies was to collect the customs of ancient times. The result was a collection of some 40,000 pieces, rich in folktales, legends and other belief narrative genres.⁵ This manuscript archive, housed nowadays in the Argentinian Institute of Anthropology and Latin American Thought (Instituto Nacional de Antropología y Pensamiento Latinoamericano), has now been completely digitalized.⁶ The first collection of Argentinian folklore, therefore, takes the form of a written survey in which beliefs have been associated with superstitions of rural communities.⁷

Starting the 1950s, the Argentinian Augusto Cortazar, in *Bosquejo de una introducción al Folklore* [*Outline for an introduction to Folklore*] (1942) formalized a theory, grounded in the functionalism of Bronisław Malinowski, that highlighted the relevance of folkloric expressions as a whole and emphasized the centrality of fieldwork. He characterized the folk group as a homogeneous, small, isolated community, located in rural areas, steeped in ancestral traditions and with simple technology. In *Los fenómenos folklóricos y su contexto humano y cultural* [*The Folkloric Phenomena and Their Human and Cultural Context*], Cortazar (1975: 53) also outlined eight traits, according to which folkloric phenomena should be popular, collective, traditional, oral, anonymous, empirical, functional and regional. Such characterization, used widely in Latin America, was based on the notion of a “folk society” – in the sense used by Robert Redfield in *The Folk Society and Culture* (1940). Like Ricardo Rojas, Cortazar considered folklore to be a tool that could be used to fight against cosmopolitanism, underlining the influence of Hispanic traditions. According to this theory, folk narratives and beliefs were cultural expressions of rural communities.

During this period, the dominant trend of collectionism – that is to say, the trend of collecting folk material without an interpretative analysis – encouraged scholars to publish several anthologies of folk tales, songs and

⁴ Even if these terms could refer to memorates and chronicates, the literal translation from Spanish to English is the one provided in the text.

⁵ Catalogues of this archive were published in 1925 and 1929.

⁶ The educational authorities promoted two other questionnaires, in 1939 and 1951, which resulted in a monumental compilation of Argentinian folkloric material which was used in publications aimed at developing contents in schools.

⁷ A reference to the contents of these manuscripts, available for pedagogical uses in schools, is given in a recent work by Marta Ruiz (2021). For further considerations dealing with the contents of this Survey, see Palleiro 2014: 67–104.

dances.⁸ Such a trend can be identified in regional collections such as *Cuentos populares de La Rioja* [*Popular Tales from La Rioja*] by Juan Agüero Vera (1965), with a preliminary study by Cortazar, and a tale type classification by Susana Chertudi. Other regional collections including a tale-type classification was *Cuentos de la Tradición Oral Argentina* [*Folktales from Argentinian Oral Tradition*] by Jesús María Carrizo and Guillermo Perkins Hidalgo (1948). All these lists of prose narratives, directed at reconstructing a universal model of which the different regional (rural) manifestations constituted versions and variants, followed the historic-geographic method.

In these times, similar nationalist ideologies were spreading elsewhere in Latin America. An exception was the Brazilian scholar Paulo de Carvalho Neto (1953) who, in *Folklore y psicoanálisis* [*Folklore and psychoanalysis*], attempted to provide psychoanalytical explanations of folklore materials, linking folk beliefs – such as those referred to witchcraft and popular medicine – with superstitions. While he attempted to go beyond the essentialist paradigm, his ideas were ignored (Fischman 2012: 270–272).

In this context, vernacular artistic expressions and local beliefs, either “spontaneous” or aesthetically recreated by élites, were still considered as being superstitions. Such orientations of Latin American studies have been considered in *Teorías del Folklore en América Latina* [*Theories of Folklore in Latin America*] edited in 1975 by the Chilean Manuel Dannemann. According to Fernando Fischman (2012: 274–275), this volume, which displayed similar notions influenced by the ideas of Cortazar, was the Latin American counterpart of *Toward New Perspectives in Folklore* (1972) edited by Américo Paredes and Richard Bauman, which presented innovative approaches, stressing the idea of differential identity as a distinctive feature of folklore (Bauman 1972).⁹ In the following years, there had been a systematic transla-

⁸ Folk songs – many of them, with a narrative development of the verbal plot – were collected in *Cancioneros* [*Songbooks*], such as those by Juan Carrizo (1926, 1933, 1934, 1937, 1942) and Orestes Di Lullo (1940). The collectionist method was also used to register folk dances, such as those collected by Ventura Lynch (1953), Jorge Furt (1923, 1925, 1927) and Carlos Vega (1950, 1986). Based on space limitations, no mention is made in this article to new editions of the works here mentioned.

⁹ When stressing the idea of differential identity as a distinctive feature of folklore, Richard Bauman (1972) focuses the attention on the process by which social life of a community constantly subdivides and reorganizes itself in social interaction, rather than on a homogeneous sense of community. He thus affirms that “as long as folklore is conceptualized as a self-contained realm of cultural products abstractly connected with some homogeneous body of people identified as folk and participating in it collectively, the use of folklore in situations involving differential identity will be obscured from view.” Therefore, “once the necessary reorientation is made it becomes apparent that folklore may be found in both symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships; members of particular groups or social categories may exchange folklore with each other on the basis of shared

tion of scholarly works published in English into Spanish, although no substantial translations were made from Spanish to English.

During this period, in Argentina, Susana Chertudi stood out for her research into legends and folktales. She also studied other expressions connected with vernacular beliefs such as popular devotions (Chertudi & Newbery 1978) from the perspective of the historic-geographic method. As Martha Blache and Ana Dupey (2007: 304) underlined, Chertudi acquired her experience in fieldwork, which allowed her to notice the limitations of transcribing the texts outside their narrative context, thus anticipating the relevance of a communicative approach to folklore. In 1960–1964 she published *Cuentos Folkloricos de la Argentina (1960–1964) (Argentinian Folktales)*, a work in two volumes in which she included narrative material from the Folkloric Survey of 1921, as well as versions collected in fieldwork and yet others recorded by different collectors. These volumes comprised one hundred narratives each, classified, according to AT thematic parameters, into “animal”, “marvellous”, “religious”, “human” [realistic] and “formulaic” tales. Covering all Argentinian regions, Chertudi provided readers with an anthology of folktales which privileged the selection of versions rather than analytical interpretation. Comments and notes dealt with the structural and poetic style of folk narrators, illustrating the gap between a paradigm based on the collection of folk material and a paradigm centered in the communicative performance of the folklore message. With an innovative criterion, this scholar considered the legend as a narrative genre, which refers to an extraordinary event regarding periods, persons and places that are considered as truly happened (Chertudi 1957), and she studied specifically the “belief legend” (Chertudi 1975), underlining the relevance of beliefs when classifying folklore genres.

To sum up, as Blache and Dupey (2007: 304) affirmed, in this period, the experience of over two centuries allowed Argentinian folklorists to approach oral narrative with a more refined theoretical background, paving the way for directing folk narrative analysis towards the social context. However, folktales and belief narratives remained considered as separated folk narrative genres, still associated with rural communities.

According to the aforementioned period-classification, the third stage of Latin American folklore studies runs from the 1970s up to the present days (Fischman 2012: 276). While until the 1970s, folklore had been seen as being anonymous, oral and rural, in this decade scholars attempted a rup-

identity, or with others, on the basis of differential identity” (Bauman 1972: 38). This idea of differential identity is also underlined by Alan Dundes (1983), when he stresses that identity depends as much upon differences as upon similarities, being connected with forms of social behaviour. Thanks to this process of differentiation between social groups, folklore acts as a marker of belonging of community beliefs and norms (Bronner 1998).

ture with this paradigm, and opened up for the consideration of semiotics, communication and the study of social context. In previous works, Palleiro (2004a, 2004b, 2008a) dealt with these trends of folklore studies, the first being based on thematic, structural and stylistic similarities between different folkloric expressions. Thematic similarities correspond to historic-geographic, evolutionist, diffusionist, functionalist, psychoanalytical, and mythic-archetypal methods; compositional regularities refer to formalist and structural studies based on the proposals of Propp, Barthes and Greimas; while stylistic regularities deal with the epic laws of folk narrative established by Olrik (1992/1909). Once similarities in Folklore Studies have been demarcated, one can see a change of paradigms towards considerations of contextual variation reflected in theoretical trends. Such trends followed Boas's guidelines regarding historical particularism,¹⁰ and were first developed as part of the ethnography of speech pioneered by Dell Hymes, continued in Richard Bauman's studies regarding verbal art as performance, and nurtured as well in Hermann Bausinger's contributions to considerations of the theory of contexts.¹¹ According to Hymes (1972, 2000/1975), Folklore Studies made a valuable contribution to Sociolinguistics because while linguists studied the grammatical dimension of speech, folklorists connected expressive forms and their organization with genres, which were influenced by social beliefs and cultural contexts in which they take shape.

In Latin America, the study of folklore developed several new theoretical approaches headed by the Chilean Manuel Dannemann (1976), who affirmed that folklore was behavior in which each person participated in a certain context. Starting the 1980s, these new orientations began to spread in Argentina, where folklore began to be associated with knowledge about situations and contexts, in which a group, from its interaction with others, attains a sense of differential identity (Fischman 2012: 276). Following Dannemann's break with aprioristic definitions of the folk group, the Argen-

¹⁰ The approach of historical particularism developed by Franz Boas affirms that each society has its unique historical development and must be understood based on its own specific cultural context. Such approach considers fieldwork as a method of cultural analysis and tends to gather information from individual informants, considering such data valuable enough for cultural analysis (Darnell 2013).

¹¹ Contextual theories consider not only textual interpretations to understand folklore events, but also the context of their development. Hermann Bausinger focused the attention of the contexts of utterance of folklore events, and he distinguished between the textual context (for instance, a storytelling communicative act), the situational context (the circumstances in which such act takes place, the group of belonging and the group with whom the narrator interacts), and the societal context, referred to the relationship with the main society to which all the participants of the communicative act belong. For an interesting application of Bausinger's categories regarding contexts to a corpus of Argentinian folk narrative, see Coto 2009.

tinian Martha Blache, along with the semiotician Juan Magariños de Morentin, also broke away from essentialist conceptions, characterizing folklore as a social discourse focused on behaviours, valid for those who shared a code in a specific context (Blache & Magariños de Morentin 1980, 1993). They underlined the relevance of the historic dimension involved in the notion of tradition, something understood as the process by which folkloric behaviors can be modified over time in terms of form, meaning and performance.¹² Unfortunately, as Fischman (2012: 278) wisely pointed out, these scholars never put their works together in a volume that would have placed them in a dialogue with contemporary trends in folklore studies. However, as Blache and Dupey (2007: 311) pointed out, these trends have since been enriched by the contributions of Ana Dupey, in charge of the Folklore Section of Buenos Aires University; Fernando Fischman (2005), in his works regarding performance and social memory; and María Palleiro (2004b), in her analysis of belief narratives. Significant contributions were also made by César Quiroga Salcedo, first director of the Institute of Linguistic and Philological Research of the National University of San Juan, nowadays headed by Aida Gonzalez. Under her direction, the Berta Vidal de Battini Fund (Fondo Berta Vidal de Battini – FONVIBA), which keeps original manuscripts of the questionnaires used by Vidal de Battini in her research, was organised.

Berta Vidal de Battini (1900–1984) was both a researcher in Dialectology at Buenos Aires University and a Supervisor of Argentinian Primary Schools, a role which allowed her to obtain aid from educational institutions with regard to collecting folk narrative throughout the Argentinian territory. Her work *Cuentos y leyendas populares de la Argentina [Folktales and Popular Legends of Argentina]* (1980–1995) is the largest Argentinian corpus of folk narrative, containing more than 3000 versions and variants, all ordered on the basis of a criterion which privileged register rather than interpretation of folklore texts, collected in anthologies.¹³ This collection of ten volumes focused on two genres: folktales and legends, the latter involving social beliefs. In spite of being published at this time, the method used to classify folk narrative here corresponded with that in the 1921 survey, which had used the questionnaire as a pre-text for collecting folk material. Like Chertudi's, Vidal de Battini's collection was organized according to a typological criterion, providing different versions along with a general comment of each tale-type, as well as maps of geographical distribution. In line with a personal interpreta-

¹² As Blache and Dupey (2007: 311) underlined, these proposals regarding the cultural construction of tradition were later developed by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983).

¹³ I deem anthological criterion the one focused on registering texts and putting them in collections rather than offering an analytical interpretation of the texts selected. Such criterion is stuck to the aforesaid collectionist paradigm.

tion of AT parameters, she classified folktales in terms of animal, marvellous, human [realistic], cumulative, and moral tales; and then tales about popular characters, jokes, riddles, *novellae*, and indigenous narratives. When classifying legends, she deployed criteria based on vernacular parameters, referring to places, stones and hills, lakes and rivers, lost cities, hidden treasures, plants, animals, and Heaven. While Chertudi's had been a neat and narrow collection classified in line with precise thematic categories, Vidal de Battini provided a larger corpus, the distinctive feature of which was a huge quantity of narratives, flexibly classified.

To sum up, one can consider the field of Folklore Studies in Latin America to have been shaped between the 1920s and the 1970s. Some collections in this period reflected a break with the earlier paradigm focused on collecting rather than on interpreting folk material. Scholars began to pay attention to narrative analysis, and the result of this analytical turn was a shift from the study of thematic similarities to that of contextual variation and performance. Following these guidelines regarding the flourishing of Folklore Studies, an Argentinian law introduced by Senator Magdalena Odarda in 2019 now guarantees the right to receive education in folklore in all Argentinian schools.

However, a focus on collection still persists at present in those institutions devoted to teaching "folk" dance and music, seen as expressions of "genuine" folk culture. In fact, essentialist notions affirming the inward, or essential nature of folk culture as invariable, reappeared since the 1990s under the concept of intangible heritage, aimed at preserving the "genuine" legacy from the past threatened by globalization (Fischman 2012: 281). In fact, globalization has been considered by those who follow such trends as a serious peril for vernacular cultures, which deserve to be preserved as invariable expressions of genuine tradition. Belief narratives and other discursive expressions circulating in the media, as the ones analyzed in a following section, are still deemed as spurious manifestations that threaten genuine tradition.¹⁴

Once the monumental corpus of Vidal de Battini came to be published, the trend of Argentinian collections began to be focused more on regional contexts, as had previously been done by Carrizo, Perkins Hidalgo and Agüero Vera. Contemporary scholars opened up interest in contextual variation and focused their attention in the texture and the discursive strategies used by the narrators. Blache's works were an example of this change. Although the main part of her contributions dealt with theoretical proposals, she also provided a collection of folk narratives *Estructura del miedo. Narrati-*

¹⁴ For further considerations regarding "genuine" and "spurious" tradition, see Handler & Linnekin 1984.

vas folklóricas guaranícas [*Structure of fear. Guaranytical Folk Narratives*] (Blache 1991/1982), based on her PhD thesis defended at Indiana University in 1977 under the supervision of Richard Dorson. This consisted of a corpus of legends recorded from Paraguayan migrants in Buenos Aires city, which served as a means of understanding contextual social beliefs. In this pioneering work, Blache adopted a new analytical approach to folk narrative texts, grounded on semiotic studies.

A contemporary local collection that exemplifies the tension between different paradigms is *Cuentos y leyendas de La Pampa* [*Tales and Legends from La Pampa*] by Nélica Giovannoni and María Inés Poduje (1988), organized according to classification parameters similar to Vidal de Battini's ones, based on the Aarne-Thompson Tale Type Index.¹⁵ Like those of Vidal de Battini, these authors registered folktales and legends in accordance with an anthological criterion, that is to say, a criterion based on the collection of selected texts rather than on an analytical interpretation. As in earlier collections, animal tales were the first category, this collection also including marvellous, religious and moral tales. In the Prologue, the authors nonetheless highlighted the gap between universal categories and vernacular narratives. Similar to the format of Chertudi's collection, the versions were based on re-writings of manuscript texts of the 1921 survey, along with new ones recorded in fieldwork which showed an interweaving with belief narratives, those transcribed in the 1921 survey being corrected to fit with "pure" classificatory categories. The vernacular category of *lo pampeano* ("all that what belongs to La Pampa"), used as a taxonomic parameter regarding legends, was, for example, bound to local beliefs.

Other collections are the ones authored by María Palleiro, researcher in Hispanic Philology and Argentinian Folklore, whose main interest has been the intertwining between folktales and belief narratives in different contexts and channels of discourse. Such collections contained the results of more than twenty years of fieldwork carried out in rural and urban Argentinian contexts. The first two anthologies, *El escondite mágico y otros cuentos*

¹⁵ The Aarne-Thompson-Uther Index is a catalogue of folktale types, in which folktales are classified, according to thematic criteria, with a tale type number. The tale type index, first created by the Finn Antti Aarne, and then revised by the American Stith Thompson, author of the *Motif Index of Folk Literature*, provides a short thematic description of each tale type. Published in 1928, it has been expanded firstly in 1961 (named since then AT Index) and most recently in 2004 and 2011 by the German Hans-Jörg Uther (lately named ATU Index). It is worth pointing out that the description of each folktale, product of a comparative work of different folktales of the most distant parts of the world and of different historic periods, is a generalization based on thematic features. When Vidal de Battini published her collection, the last updating of the Tale Type Index by Uther was not yet made, so her classification follows AT parameters. For further considerations regarding the classification system into tale types and folk matrices, see Palleiro 2019.

folklóricos riojanos [*The Magic Hiding-Place and Other Argentinian Folktales*] (1990) and *Los tres pelos del Diablo* [*The Three Hairs from the Devil's Beard*] (1992), included marvellous tales, while the third, *La fiesta en el cielo* [*The Heavenly Banquet*] (1998), comprised of animal tales. Along with these anthologies, Palleiro edited five critical editions. The first two (Palleiro 2004b, 2011) included both marvellous and religious tales along with belief narratives, while the third one (Palleiro 2016), *El cuento folklórico riojano: una aproximación a la narrativa oral* [*Folktales from La Rioja, Argentina: An Approach to Oral Narrative*] comprised animal, marvelous and realistic tales, all of them classified according to AT and ATU parameters. Such parameters are based on the thematic concept of *tale type*. Thompson (1946: 415) defined the tale type as “a traditional tale that has an independent existence” that may be told “as a complete narrative and does not depend for its meaning on any other tale”. Each tale type may consist in only one or on a combination of thematic minor units or ‘motifs’, which are the building blocks within the plot-patterns, repeated in different folktales of different times and places. The fourth collection, *La dama fantasma. Los laberintos de la memoria en el relato folklórico* [*The Lady Ghost. Labyrinths of Memory in the Folktale*], encompasses only belief narratives (Palleiro 2018), while the fifth (Palleiro 2020) contained animal tales intertwined with belief narratives.¹⁶ The main critical edition, which was the first one *Fue una historia real. Itinerarios de un archivo* [*It was Real: A Dossier with Different Itineraries*], contained diverse versions of the matrix “Meeting Death”, which shares thematic features with the motif classified by Thompson in his *Motif-Index of Folk-Literature* (1955–1958) with the number 332.3.3.1, The Vanishing Hitchhiker, in different contexts and channels of discourse (Palleiro 2004b, 2018). Using the theoretical guidelines of semiotics, performance (Bauman 1975), and French genetic criticism which deals with registering the process of writing (Grésillon 1994), reformulated for the textualization of oral discourse, the aim was to provide both a register and an interpretative analysis of folk narrative texts, highlighting their fictionalization processes and the relevance of social beliefs. The concept of *narrative matrix*, as a classificatory issue, served to put together folktales, legends and other belief narratives under the same pattern, including not only thematic types and motifs but also compositional and stylistic features. Such concept of narrative matrix adds to the thematic features of tale types, structural and rhetoric ones identified by intertextual comparison of different narrative versions. Thus characterized, each matrix constitutes a pre-textual pattern stored in the memory of folk narrators. Such pre-textual patterns, comprising thematic, compositional and stylistic fea-

¹⁶ Owing to limitations in length, only individual works are mentioned here, while works published as an editor and collective works are not listed.

tures stabilized along the diachronic process of oral (and written) tradition, are transformed with the addition, suppression, substitution, or displacement of these changing details, generating alternative itineraries in different communicative situations. The matrix served in fact as a pre-text for alternative narrative itineraries, similar to the ones of a virtual hypertext (Palleiro 2004b: 54–55). This concept is aimed to open the one of tale types based only in a thematic classification to other aspects, such as the structural and rhetoric construction of folk narrative texts. It is also oriented to highlight the relevance of contextual transformations, including those connected with social beliefs. As it will be explained in a following section, such transformations include new environments and channels of discourse, such as urban and virtual narratives.¹⁷

Another trend in Argentinian collections at this time is that of registering indigenous narratives, some of them in bilingual editions, in both Spanish and the vernacular languages. An antecedent of this approach is Berta Koessler Ilg's *Tradiciones Araucanas [Araucan Traditions]* (1962), printed in 2006 under the title *Cuenta el pueblo mapuche [The Mapuche People Tell]*. The work of this German folklorist, who became the wife of a medical doctor who worked in a Mapuche community, includes folk narrative texts, organised into three volumes: the first containing "traditions", the second, "myths and legends", and the third, "tales and fables". Koessler Ilg provided not only a Spanish version of the Mapuche narratives but also ethnographical information about the cultural representations and vernacular beliefs of this aboriginal community from Southern Argentina and Chile. An analytical approach was also used in the pioneering work of Else María Waag, doctor in Anthropology and university professor, *Tres entidades weküfu en la cultura mapuche [Three Weküfu Entities in the Mapuche Culture]* (1965), centered on the study of the cultural representations of evil entities and other local beliefs of the Mapuches. This study is based in a fieldwork experience regarding vernacular beliefs among Mapuche people. *Cuentan los mapuches [The Mapuches Tell]* is another anthology of indigenous narratives in Spanish put together by César Fernández (1995), doctor of Literature whose main interest is the study of Mapuche culture. His work also included a preliminary study dealing with Mapuche poetics and beliefs. An outstanding bilingual collection is that by Ana Fernández Garay, doctor in Linguistics and professor at Buenos Aires University. This collection, whose title is *Testimonios de los últimos ranqueles [The Testimonies of the Last Ranqueles]*, provides different level of transcription ranging from Ranquelin Mapuche to Spanish, a method also followed by Marisa Malvestitti, whose doctoral thesis, *La variedad mapuche de la línea*

¹⁷ A first approach to classification problems, connected with Argentinian folk narratives circulating on the Internet, has been included in Palleiro 2003.

sur [*The Mapuche Language Variety of the South*] (2005) was supervised by Fernández Garay. The Mapuche language and culture were also studied in *El pueblo mapuche: poéticas de pertenencia y devenir* [*Mapuche Folks: Poetics of Belonging and Becoming*] (2006) by Lucia Golluscio, a work containing a foreword by Claudia Briones, PhD, Professor of the University of Río Negro, located in Argentinian Patagonia. Lucía Golluscio is an expert in indigenous linguistics, and Claudia Briones is a researcher whose main research field deals with indigenous Mapuche culture. These collections, the main goal of which was to register the linguistic variants of indigenous languages facing extinction, reveal the impact of the new communicative approach to folklore, based on the aforementioned ethnography of speech. In most of these works, folk beliefs are taken into account along with folktales, as narrative expressions of these vernacular communities, mainly placed in rural areas.

Another innovative collection was *Cuentos de las tres abuelas* [*Tales of Three Grandmothers*] by Silvia García and Diana Rolandi (2000/1995), the distinctive feature of which is a recording of the different phases of textualization of folk narratives. While the first part included contextual information, the second provided references to vernacular beliefs, both parts then being rewritten in the format of “tales for children”, which are now classified into “marvellous”, “animal” and “human” tales. Although these tales have been written in Spanish, most of them originally circulated in the Quechua language. The hallmark of this work, accomplished by two anthropologists of the Argentinian National Institute of Anthropology and Latin American Thought, was once again that of including different stages of transcription of oral material, mirroring the intertextual gap between orality and written culture. Such intertextual gap shows the rhetoric work of recreating vernacular narrative expressions; whose texture reflects not only the voice of folk narrators but also the voice of the collectors who transform the spontaneous oral discourse into a text.

All of these trends have been reflected not only in folk narrative collections but also in those of folk music, such as that by the Argentinian Isabel Aretz (see Aretz 1952, 1978), who followed Cortazar’s ideas regarding traditional culture produced in rural areas, and served in Venezuela as a director of the INIDEF (Instituto Interamericano de Etnomusicología y Folklore). Similar guidelines were followed by the researcher in *Chamamé* folk music Rubén Pérez Bugallo (see Bugallo 1996). Contextual paradigms, meanwhile, were followed by the ethnomusicologist Ercilia Moreno Chá, whose outstanding research into the spontaneous musical folklore of Argentina and Uruguay was published in 2016, and by Nilda Castelluccio (2015), who dealt with aesthetic recreation of Argentinian folklore in musical expressions such as *Zamba*. The Colombian Carlos Miñana Blasco (2000), meanwhile, record-

ed traditional music in fieldwork collections in the 1960s, underlining the relevance of the *Nuevo Cancionero* movement, in which singers recreated folk expressions now contextualized in political discourse (Fischman 2012: 280). In Argentina, Ricardo Kaliman (2003) and Carlos Molinero (2011) published the results of their research dealing with the recreations of folk motifs and folk patterns in poetic and political songs of the 1970's, the words of which expressed social beliefs. Folk music collections reflect the tension between the trend of collecting folk material in rural areas and the aesthetic work of recreating folk motifs in political or artistic musical discourses, performed as well in urban contexts.

As this diachronic overview has shown, philological and historic-geographic approaches dominated in the earliest collections in a period during which the main goal of folklorists was that of recording texts rather than analyzing contextual performances. Contemporary work, on the other hand, reflects the impact of performed-centered paradigms focused on the discursive construction of the narrative message, something that includes work on belief narratives. Others, meanwhile, have focused on recording indigenous narrative genres facing extinction, some adding information regarding the social beliefs of vernacular communities. While the first collectors used questionnaires to document a wider range of narratives in the whole country, nowadays folk researchers tend to restrict their work to specific contexts, using an accurate methodology of registering and analyzing a smaller range of narrative texts.

Among other things, this overview has revealed the richness of Argentinian folk narrative that mirrors the distinctive features of different local contexts. One of these distinctive features is the particularly Argentinian multiethnic profile, which is connected to the convergence of vernacular indigenous groups, European migrants and Créole cultures. The overview has also shown how belief narratives, previously reduced in the first collections to minor categories such as "superstitions", have now gained new space in more contemporary works, illustrating how the *a priori* criteria of collectionism has now been gradually replaced by performance-centered ones.

Although "belief narratives" have been taken into account in some of these approaches and folk narrative collections, a different approach, aimed at widening the framework, is still needed. Such new approach would involve not only printed and oral texts registered in rural contexts, but also digital and urban ones, placed in global contexts.

To provide an example of how belief narratives, neglected in the main collections, deserve to gain even more space in Argentinian Folklore Studies, the next section will deal with narratives that circulate in contemporary urban environments, not only told orally, but also passed around digitally.

From “Godmother Death” to Contemporary Legends: Belief Narratives in Argentinian Urban Contexts

An example of how some tale types classified in Argentinian folk narrative collections as fictional folktales also pass around in modern urban contexts in the form of belief narratives related to disease and conspiracy theories, is the one of Aarne-Thompson (AT) 332, “Godfather Death”.¹⁸

In the fourth volume of her collection, the abovementioned Berta Vidal de Battini had versions 948 to 952, titled “Godmother Death” (*La muerte por madrina*), mainly recorded in rural contexts, and classified as “Tales of magic”. She added a “Note” to this group of versions, underlining the thematic relationship with AT 332, stating: “Death at the feet of the sick man: Death is at first tricked by the man, and then avenges herself by tricking the man.” In this “Note”, Vidal de Battini highlighted as well the connection of these versions with the Hispanic tradition.

Contemporary versions, such as the one whose title is “Welcome to AIDS club”, recorded in fieldwork in Buenos Aires in 1990 by Palleiro from Nando, a young university student aged 19, in a dialogue with Paula and Mary, aged 19 and 20, have been classified under the matrix “Meeting Death” (Palleiro 2004: 156–158). As explained below, this matrix shares thematic features with the aforesaid AT and ATU tale types, along with other structural and rhetoric features, some of which are similar to the ones described by Vidal de Battini in her “Note” referred to the group of versions she dealt with. In this version, the protagonist, a foreign young girl infected with AIDS who has sex with a local young man, is presented as a metaphor of Death personified and as a symbol of external dangers transmitted to local people:

Nando: The following was told to my sister. That a guy went...

Paula: He met a girl...

Nando: He went to Brazil, he met a Brazilian girl, a *garota*. He invited her to a hotel, they spent the whole night together, they had sex, everything OK. And the morning after, when he woke up, the girl had disappeared, and in the mirror, he found that she had written: “Welcome to AIDS club”.

Mary: It is also said that in European beaches, some advertisements can be found, fixed to syringes put in the sand, saying: “Welcome to AIDS world”.

¹⁸ As affirmed in a previous study (Palleiro 2020), the thematic description of AT tale type 332 is actually more similar to South American versions than the later ATU type 332, whose description is: “A poor man (...) wants a (just) godfather for his newborn son (...) and chooses death (angel of death, plague) because he treats everyone alike”.

In this narrative, the young girl who transmitted this disease through a sexual rapport is associated with dangerous foreign places, such as Brazil or Europe (Palleiro 2004b: 327–342). Interestingly, the thematic content has common features with ATU and AT 332, “Godfather Death”, the climactic point of which is the recognition of the lively love affair as a deathly threat. Moreover, this oral version, told by the narrator as a belief narrative, shares as well thematic features with the motif described and classified by Thompson (1955–1958) as Z 111, “Death personified”. Along with these thematic features, it presents as well structural ones such as a sequential development involving the combination of the following episodes: “The (erotic) encounter” between a guy and a young woman, “The farewell” of the couple; “The quest” for the woman who has enticed the guy; “The finding” of her grave (or her deathly message); and “The recognition” of the erotic encounter as a deathly one (Palleiro 2018: 9–10). The rhetorical structure involves the antithetical dynamics of erotic and deadly forces, along with the metaphorical personification of Death, represented by the (foreign) Brazilian girl. The contextual transformations of the matrix, as described in Palleiro (2004b: 327–343; 2018: 9–10) are here directly connected with AIDS threat. Apparently irrelevant details, such as the mention of the Brazilian girl or *garota* are discursive markers that provide an interpretation of this single event as a representation of a global threat to local identities such as that of the Argentinian one. As analyzed in previous works (Palleiro 2004b), the rhetoric construction of this and other similar narratives is based on a synecdochic logic, connected to global apocalyptic threats to local cultures (Briggs 2001, Briggs and Mantini-Briggs 2003). In fact, the synecdoche is a rhetoric strategy dealing with a dynamic tension between the part (the local case) and the whole (an entire nation). This and other versions associated with such social beliefs can be seen as examples designed to warn local audiences about global perils.

Belief Narratives in Covid Times

The message noted above can also be recognized in versions of more recent legends dealing with the Covid-19 infection. In recent times, conspiracy theories regarding a Chinese threat to local security are associated with the spread of Covid all over the world. Fear of infection has dominated since 2020, and humanity has been compelled to develop new habits. City streets have been emptied because of this pandemic, and the infection has become a dominant semantic field in all forms of discourse, ranging from everyday conversation to newspapers and TV news. Conspiracy rumors, such as those noted above, have provided simple explanations for this complex situation.

As Anastasiya Astapova (2015) affirmed, such rumors fall into the category of contemporary legends which are based on older traditional themes, these modern motifs that circulate orally being told as if they were true or at least plausible. The same structure of the narratives dealing with AIDS, with the synecdochic connection with global external attacks to local identities, can also be found in those legends dealing with Covid. The United States President Trump in particular demonstrated hostility towards Chinese government, assigning it the responsibility for spreading Covid. Asian people living in the US soon reported signs of hostility towards them, and the spread of a discursive net of rumors, fake news and virtual messages was obviously aimed at finding a target responsible for the global threat, reference being made in particular to the habit of people buying living animals such as bats at open markets. It was presented as the mechanism that spread the lethal virus from animals to humans. It was principally associated with Asiatic cultures, as can be seen in the following testimony:

The fucking Chinese dirty habit of buying living animals in open markets, so dangerous, without any care, provoked this damn pandemic. The whole world has to suffer the consequences of this fucking habit¹⁹ (Stella, aged 50, Buenos Aires, September 2020).

The repetition of the adjective “fucking” attributed to Chinese people who are also said to have “dirty” habits such as that of buying living animals in open markets “without care”, shows their stigmatization, according to synecdochic logic, according to which a single case is linked to the whole community of an entire nation.

Other testimonies, like the one that follows, show the same tension between the local and the global:

I believe that this virus has been the result of an experiment made in a local laboratory, which has gone largely beyond the limits of what expected, crossing all national boundaries (Eugene P., aged 50, Argentinian, December 2020).

This testimony, introduced by the modal verb “I believe”, places the interpretation about the conspiratorial origin of Covid virus clearly within the area of a belief legend.

¹⁹ In the Spanish original: “La puta sucia costumbre de los chinos de comprar animales vivos en ferias al aire libre, tan peligrosa, sin ningún cuidado, provocó esta maldita pandemia. El mundo entero tiene que bancarse las consecuencias de esta puta costumbre.”

Memes and short videos circulating throughout the internet, such as the following ones, recorded in Argentina via WhatsApp, also mirror these ideas:

Hello, how are are you? I am acquainted with your carelessness.

[...] Since you don't believe in the virus, you are telling your friends that it doesn't exist.

[...] Hello, how are you? I am Covid-19, I have been created by Chinese people, I am a lethal virus.

[...] Hello, how are you? Today I praise your imprudence, and I want to infect you right now.

(Sent by Argentinian citizen Silvia Chevel, aged 62, in January 2021)²⁰

The video that accompanied the first sequence of this narrative has a colourful background in green and yellow, and a red icon of a personified Covid, pursuing a man who is walking freely down the street without any mask, an antithetical image compared to that of a mother and child, who are shown to wear masks. After the encounter with the virus, the climactic sequence shows Covid entering through the mouth of the man who collapses, but crashing ineffectually against the masks of the mother and child.

This text, which contains an apparently innocent warning message, also alludes to the Chinese people as having created the lethal virus. Such message can be considered to be a micronarrative, whose pre-text is the abovementioned matrix of "Meeting Death", also seen in the oral account regarding AIDS. In a way similar to the AIDS version, the personified virus has an encounter with a healthy person, which turns out to be an invitation to meet Death, something emphasized by the repetition of the greeting formula "Hello, how are you?". The virus can thus be said to take the role of a metaphor, focusing on meanings dealing with a global disease, the lethal effects of which are intensified by the use of words relating to the idea of infection.²¹ As suggested above, the matrix shares thematic features with Thompson's motif Z 111 "Death personified", the climactic point of the story being the episode in which Death, in the shape of a Covid icon, infects the man. The rhetorical construction seen here involves an antithetical tension between activities relating to daily life, which are shown to have deathly consequences, and the threat of infection. In the same way as in the previous version regarding AIDS, such rhetorical structure involving the antithetical dynamics of erotic

²⁰ This verbal message was linked to the video film noted above.

²¹ For further considerations regarding metaphors and rhetoric of disease, see Palleiro 2016 (in Krmpotic and Saizar 2016).

and deadly forces, along with the metaphorical personification of Death, is also a distinctive feature shared with Stith Thompson's motif Z 111, "Death personified".

A central point in these narratives is that of believability (Astapova, 2015; Palleiro 2008b). In a lecture dealing with belief narratives based in part on research made in Iceland, Terry Gunnell (2021) has pointed out that the semantic field of belief deals with "trust", "acceptance" and "persuasion". He also underlined that to believe is to accept a statement as being true on the grounds of authority, testimony or logical inference, adding that "trust" and "acceptance" highlight that more than one party is involved, and that belief can be seen as a form of knowledge.²² From a semiotic perspective, belief is a modal expression of certainty, that is to say, a subjective (or intersubjective) expression in which the true value of a statement depends on an interpersonal agreement or social consensus (Greimas and Courtès 1982). With regard to social beliefs, Gunnell also affirms that, although being naturally contestable, beliefs provide a sense of identity and connection with a community. Being the true value dependant of a social consensus, it is easy to understand that believability can be contestable, but it is also evident that the agreement about such true value provides a connection with those who share such consensus. These affirmations can be applied to narratives discussed here, in which the acceptance of a form of discourse as being true can help reinforce a sense of local security being threatened by external forces. Narratives dealing with conspiracy theories which explain the origin of AIDS or Covid as a being the result of global activities, are based on forms of social agreement, in which statements made by interlocutors, be they politicians or common citizens, are presented as undeniable truths in order to obtain consensus from a wide audience.²³ Such narratives are often based on real life events and real life behavior, a typical feature reflections of living beliefs, prejudices, values, and stereotypes (Kalmre 2013: 131). All these aspects are also contained in messages contained in the AIDS and Covid narratives. They are stereotypical account of happenings experienced as real, a typical feature here being that of the suspicious "Chinese people". To summarize, the axis of all these discourses is the element of believability. Considering belief as a social consensus about certainty, these narratives can be seen as being constructed as warning messages against illness such as AIDS and Covid, which are both presented in the form of threatening biological conspiracy weapons.

The versions considered in this section show the intertwining of folktales and belief narratives, already studied in a previous work (Palleiro

²² For further conceptualizations regarding belief narratives in folk discourse, see Valk (2012): 350–368.

²³ Further discussion regarding rhetorics of truth in virtual narratives dealing with AIDS and Covid-19 has been included in Palleiro 2021: 82.

2004b), here revisited, in which AIDS was considered as a global pest affecting local identities such as the Argentinian one, threatened by “Brazilian” or “European” external groups. In the same way as in the versions classified by Vidal de Battini under AT 332, in which Death is personified as a woman, in the AIDS version, the Brazilian girl is a metaphor of Death personified. Apparently irrelevant details, such as the mention of the *garota* (Brazilian girl), are discursive markers that provide an interpretation of this single event as a representation of a global threat to local identities, such as that of the Argentina. As Jan Mukařovský (1977: 180) pointed out, details are the basic semantic units of folk messages, providing new meanings, in this case dealing with the metaphoric force of AIDS, here associated with the global “world” of infection, nowadays represented by Covid, whose origin has been associated with exogroupal Chinese people.

Turning to the initial discussion concerning belief narratives in folk narrative collections, although belief narratives have been put to one side in the main Argentinian folk narrative collections such as Vidal de Battini’s one, due to the aim to make the collected texts accommodate types and motifs, the same narrative patterns can be identified in contemporary narratives, not only dealing with ghosts and spirits, but also with AIDS, Covid and conspiracy theories. Even if in the most of the first Argentinian folk narrative archives and collections the topics of belief narratives have been considered and classified as “superstitions”, some monographic studies associated them with cultural representations of local groups, connected with indigenous or rural cultures. However, similar narrative patterns can be recognized in contemporary narratives circulating in urban contexts, not only orally but also digitally, in a tension between local and global.

Urban and digital versions, connected with belief narratives, which have been neglected in the main Argentinian folk narrative collections studied in the first part of this article, mirror this dynamic tension between local and global. These days, it seems that such a dynamic is the clue of the life of folk narrative, whose flexible patterns can be adapted to different places, times and historical contexts.

Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to provide both a general overview of Argentinian folk narrative studies in the Latin American context, focusing the attention in belief narratives not included in the main Argentinian collections, and to offer an example of how these belief narratives of various kinds nowadays pass around not only orally but also digitally. Many of these narratives, which circulate not only in rural but also in urban environments, are organized around the same narrative patterns upon which folktales have

been classified in Argentinian folk narrative collections. These discursive expressions are transmitted not only through printed and oral messages, but also via email, WhatsApp and Internet, opening the boundaries of local communities towards the global context, nowadays threatened by the Covid-19 pandemic situation.

In the context of the Covid infection, global threats and conspiracy theories acquired special relevance. Not only narratives regarding ghosts and spirits, but also legends relating to disease and global intrigues have gained space both in rural and urban environments, and the digital world has proved to be a channel of discourse in which these narrative expressions circulate widely. Many of these narratives use folk motifs such as that of “Meeting Death” as pre-texts to construct discursive messages. This and other thematic patterns can be found in the earlier folk narrative collections bound to a concept of Folklore connected with small communities that tended to include only motifs registered in rural contexts. Nowadays, new formats such as belief narratives of the kind discussed here seem to provide extensive shapes, suitable to incorporate topics such as global threats and global diseases. Belief narrative is evidently an umbrella concept, which makes the boundaries between folklore genres more flexible since, as Gunnell (2021) affirms, these narratives deal not only with different degrees of openness to persuasion, but also with the world and others around us. Such openness is often expressed through narrative patterns that can also be identified in fictional folktales. Perhaps the future of Argentinian collections might be the incorporation of belief narratives, merged with folktales in a bendable combination.

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Abbreviations

AT: Aarne, Antti & Stith Thompson. *The Types of the Folktale: a Classification and Bibliography*.

ATU: Uther, Hans-Jörg. *The Types of International Folktales: a Classification and Bibliography, Based on the System of Antti Aarne and Stith Thompson*.

INIDEF: Instituto Interamericano de Etnomusicología y Folklore [Inter-American Institute of Ethnomusicology and Folklore].

Relatos folklóricos argentinos en el contexto latinoamericano: Textos, colecciones y narrativa de creencias

María Inés Palleiro

Resumen

Este trabajo propone una aproximación a las colecciones de relatos folklóricos argentinos desde la perspectiva de las conexiones con la narrativa de creencias, en el contexto latinoamericano. A partir de un breve recorrido por los estudios y colecciones de relatos folklóricos argentinos, en el contexto de los estudios latinoamericanos de Folklore y narrativa folklórica, el artículo subraya las interrelaciones entre cuentos folklóricos y narrativa de creencias, como punto de partida para una reflexión sobre los límites entre géneros narrativos folklóricos. La primera parte ofrece así un itinerario diacrónico por las colecciones y archivos más relevantes de narrativa folklórica argentina, en el marco de las tendencias y paradigmas de los estudios folklóricos en Latinoamérica. La segunda ofrece un ejemplo concreto de las interconexiones entre cuento folklórico y narrativa de creencias, a partir del comentario de versiones contemporáneas de la matriz “El encuentro con la Muerte”, en las que pueden reconocerse elementos del tipo temático folklórico ATU 332, *Godfather Death* (“La Muerte por padrino/madrina”) y del motivo Z111 de Thompson, *Death personified* (“La Muerte personificada”). Los itinerarios de la matriz tienen que ver con la introducción de tópicos tales como el SIDA y el Covid-19, tanto en versiones orales, como en el espacio virtual de Internet. El trabajo traza una línea de continuidad entre registros de colecciones reseñadas en la primera parte y los nuevos registros, para poner de manifiesto transformaciones e interrelaciones con la narrativa de creencias. La narrativa de creencias es considerada como un “concepto paraguas” (*umbrella concept*) que evidencia la apertura de tipos y motivos folklóricos estereotipados hacia la nuevos tópicos, formas y estilos, en el contexto argentino contemporáneo.

Palabras-clave: Relato Folklórico, Narrativa de Creencias, Argentina, América Latina, Sida, Covid-19.

Аргентинске приповетке у латиноамеричком контексту:
Збирке и предања

Марија Инес Палеиро

Резиме

У овом прилогу пажња је усмерена на аргентинска предања у латиноамеричком контексту. Полазећи од панорамског прегледа проучавања фолклора у Аргентини и Латинској Америци, у раду је понуђен приступ предањима заснован на флексибилним границама између фолклорних жанрова. Рад отпочиње хронолошким прегледом најзначајних збирки аргентинске народне прозе, указујући на правце развоја у проучавању фолклора у сваком периоду, и затим на примерима показује како фокус у сакљупљању народне прозе може да се мења кад се границе између типова приповедака и предања учине још еластичнијим, при чему се узимају у обзир и они већ измењени. Пример у ком се спајају приче и мотиви ATU 332 "Godfather Death" („Кума смрт“), и Thompson Z 111 "Death personified" („Персонификована смрт“) с причама о сиди и ковиду, показују порозне границе између приповедних жанрова, чиме се предање успоставља као кровни термин отворен за нове путеве кретања типова и мотива.

Кључне речи: народне приповетке, друштвена веровања, Аргентина, Латинска Америка, сида, ковид 19.

Prof. Dr. María Inés Palleiro
Buenos Aires University, National Council
for Scientific Research (CONICET)
E-mail: marinespalleiro@gmail.com

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