Spain of the Golden Age was a laboratory of experimentation and creation of the modern novel. From *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554) to devout and moralistic Fransisco Santos’ satires (1663-1697), narrative prose fiction was the subject of various formal and thematic evolutions. Alemán, Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Quevedo, Salas Barbadillo, Pérez de Montalbán, Vélez de Guevara, Castillo Solórzano, Zayas y Sotomayor, Zabaleta and Gracián, contributed in the construction of the novel genre. Concerned about pleasing a consumer readership, writers, whose activity was in the process of professionalization, proposed various productions combining various forms of literary expressions. According to Pedro Ruiz Pérez (2010:391), the second half of the 17th century was however a period during which the Spanish novel endured an exhaustion « *en sus argumentos picarescos y cortesanos* » and evolved to « *la pintura de usos y figuras, entre el costumbrismo y la moralidad* ». Óscar Barrero Pérez (1990:28) even assures that the moralisation and the *costumbrismo* were the source of the novel genre: the structural inversion of narration and ideological and moral speech, the reduction of the narrative thread to a slight one justifying the assembly of *exempla*, would be as many symptoms to the novel’s “decline”. From the mid-17th century, the widespread recession of the number of *princeps* editions and of narrative prose text’s reeditions show an exhaustion of
demand and suggest that the public turned to others esthetics and thematics propositions. Drama, poetry, historical and scientific treaties, the Novatores’ publication inspired by foreign cultural trends, would have gained more readership’s adhesion during the “European awareness’ crisis” theorised by Paul Hazard (1935). Thus Ofelia Rey Castelao (2018 : 7) signals that Spanish printers and librarians in the days of Charles II mainly sailed « relaciones de sucesos, libros de piedad, artes de bien morir o vidas de santos », « coplas e imágenes impresas », « textos de la administración y de las instituciones en el ámbito político, judicial, económico, militar, sanitario y religioso », « y muchas piezas de teatro, sueltas o en volúmenes cosidos ». Rey Castelao also emphasises the importance of the read theatre, « de modo que solo en tiempo de Carlos II se han controlado más de 340 ediciones ». For all that, the texts’ collections of the greatest prose writers, the numerous reeditions of Don Quijote, Novelas ejemplares, Sueños by Quevedo, El Buscón, the non-negligible success of the Santos’ pious novels, his complete works’ publication in 1723, confirm a prolongation of the interest for the novel form, in the last third of the 17th century and during the whole 18th century. The didactic elements of those texts stimulated their reading, when education was considered as the aim of all art. Diego de Torres Villarroel expressed, through his own fictions, his interest for the novels of the last century.

According to María Dolores Ángulo Egea (2016: 17), Diego de Torres Villarroel (1693-1770) was, indeed, one of the most famous representatives of this period « inestable, contradictoria, a veces antigua otras moderna » during which the empirical approach of knowledge encountered the refusals of the scholasticism. In his Viaje fantástico (1724), Torres divulged scientific knowledges with simplicity, to facilitate readers’ comprehension. In Correo del otro mundo (1725), the writer answered to imaginary letters from Hippocrates, Aristotle, etc., talking about medicine, philosophy, case law, astrology, and morals. In the three Visiones, y visitas de Torres con D. Francisco de Quevedo, por la Corte (1727-1728), the critics of the 18th century stood out from the great baroque satirist, adopting a moral point of view less pessimism about the society of his time. Through his romanticize life, Vida, ascendencia, nacimiento, crianza y aventuras (1743-1759), he exposed with irony and humor his fight against an ancient and aristocratic world, especially through the context of the city and the Salamanca University. Indeed, we may notice with Yves Bottineau (1993: 175-176), that if the Bourbons’ advent in Spain had constituted an important political change, baroque art followed its evolution until the second half of the 18th century. Authors like Francisco de Bances Candamo (1662-1704) participated in the birth of critical thinking. Catherine Désos-Warnier
(2016: 3) reminds that the Real Biblioteca Pública was created in 1711, under Philip V’s Jesuit relations’ drive, with the ambition to favor Hispanic arts and sciences’ progress. Otherwise, pious literature kept its first place. Francisco Aguilar Piñal (1991: 137) shows that the “best sellers” of the 18th century were piously texts written by religious people. The Teatro crítico universal (1726-1739) and the Cartas eruditas y curiosas (1742) from the Benedictine Benito Jerónimo Feijoo provoked violent reactions, which the most significance was those expressed by Salvador José Mañer in his Anti-Teatro crítico (1731), Father Sarmiento in his Demostración crítico-apologética (1732) and the Franciscan Soto Marne in his Reflexiones crítico-apologéticas (1748). Finally, during the last third of the 18th century, José de Cadalso (1741-1782) proposed fictions written in satirical proses, with Los eruditos a la violeta (1771) and his Cartas marruecas (1775) in which he attacked the scholastics, the teachers believing in Newton but teaching Aristotle, the impostors formed to excel in the fashionable tertulias thanks to a superficial erudition.

In addition, in the 17th century and the first quarter to the 18th century, the Spanish creativity inspired French translators and writers such as Chappuys, Oudin, de Rosset, d’Audiguier, Chapelain, Sorel, La Geneste, Scudéry, Scarron or Lesage as show Christian Péligry, Alexandre Cioranescu, Jean-Frédéric Schaub, Annie Cointre, José Manuel Losada Goya and Frank Greiner’s works. With the dynastic change in Spain, one assisted the importation of French novels as evidenced by the multiple Spain translations of the Aventures de Télémaque by Fénelon (Paris, 1699). Its first Spanish version was published in 1713 in La Haye, where there was an important delegation mandated by Philip V on the occasion of the negotiation of the treaty of Utrecht. The enthusiasm was so huge that several republications of this translation were made in Madrid in 1723, with several modifications. A certain number of republications of this version were reprinted all along the century in Paris, in Barcelona and in Antwerp. At the same time, the Spanish novel inspired British authors. According to Brean Hammond (2009: 96, 98), “the 1720s have been a period of exceptional interest for Cervantes”, in England. If the drama was one of the domains where the fascination became the most apparent “the biggest influence of Cervantes in the 18th century was in the narrative prose” as evidenced by the Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe (London, 1719) and the Gulliver’s Travels by Jonathan Swift (London, 1726).

Also, this meeting proposes to revisit the thesis of a first huge crisis of the novel between the second half of the 17th century and the 18th century, in the different Europeans and Americans spaces, from the Spanish case.
Three study axis can develop our reflexion.

Axis 1: The evolution of the formal and thematic propositions

What narrative prose fictions did the writers propose from the second half of the 17th century until the middle of the next century? To what formal experimentations did they try their hand at that? To what horizon of expectation did they try to answer in their publications? To what tradition did they conform to or resist? What place did they give to the *ingegno*? How did the thematics evolve from allegorical dialog – *El Criticón* (1651-1657) by Gracián, *El Rey Gallo y discursos de la Hormiga* (1672) by Santos –, to the epistolary novel – *Les Lettres persanes* (1721) by Montesquieu, *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (1782) by Choderlos de Laclos, *Cartas Marruecas* (1789) by Cadalso –, passing by heterogeneous stories – *Les Aventures de Télémaque* (1699) by Fénélon, *Robinson Crusoé* (1719) by Defoe, the Gulliver’s Travels (1726) by Swift? To what extent did the omnipresent moral influence the fictional writing during this period?

Axis 2: The circulation of the texts in Europe and America

During a period of weak creativity of the narrative prose fiction, republications permitted to prolong the fictional offer on the book market. What circulation’s networks did the novels take in Europe and America – religious institutions, booksellers’ associations, savants’ network, academies, diplomats, collectors, simple privates, traffic? What was the part of the translations (such as picaresque and the Spanish short stories in France, the bilingual and polyglot editions in the Iberian area)? What were the roles of counterfeiting in the diffusion of those writings? To what extent did the writings contribute to passing those cultural objects?

Axis 3: The novel facing the literary concurrence

At the turning point of the 17th and 18th centuries, the narrative prose knew diverse rewritings’ modalities: abbreviations, versifications – *La Vie de Lazarille de Tormes, ses fortunes et ses adversitez* by Sieur de B*** (Paris, 1653), l’*Algouasil burlesque, imité des Visions de Dom Francisco de Quevedo* by Sieur de Bourneuf (Paris, 1657), le *Fata Telemachi* (Berlin, 1743) –, parodies – *Maximas de vertude e formosura* by Teresa Margarida da Silva e
Orta (Lisbon, 1752) –, adaptations – *Le Roman comique* et *Les Nouvelles tragi-comiques* by Scarron (Paris, 1651-1655), *Le Diable boiteux* by Lesage (Paris, 1707-1726), *Il Telemaco* de Scarlatti (Rome, 1718). What relations did the novel maintain with other literary genres such as drama, poetry, treaties – devotion, politics, history, geography, sciences –, or essays from the *Pre Ilustración – Teatro clásico universal* by Feijoo (Madrid, 1726), writings by Diego de Torres Villaroel. In the manner of the controversy between *La Télémacomanie* by Faydit (Eleutélope, 1700) and the *Critique du livre intitulé La Télécomanie* by Rigord (Amsterdam, 1706), how the fictional genre was received and what debates did it arouse?

The propositions (title and summary of 300 words in French, Spanish, Portuguese, English or Italian) should be considered for a communication of twenty minutes and would be submitted to the organizing committee no later than November, 15th 2021 by mail in PDF format at romanlille2022@gmail.com.

**Bibliographical suggestions**


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