

El lago en las pupilas

The Lake in Their Eyes



UK panel's choice Year 2013

Author: [Luis Goytisolo](#) [1]

Publisher: [Ediciones Siruela, S.A.](#) [2]

Language: Spanish

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Genre: Literature

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Investigating their respective family histories, Gloria and Marcel meet in Riofrío, a small mountain town which in the past was not spared the turmoil of civil war. Richard is a journalist covering an economic summit taking place in the exclusive Swiss town of Locarno, while he maintains an erotic relationship that is a carbon copy of one that unfolded in the same place in the 60s, and was the root of the problems that Gloria and Marcel are facing. El Moro, now a responsible businessman, fills his spare time in retirement by writing a memoir that is to cleanse the controversial role he played in the old days of Riofrío. Four narrative strands that are interwoven and complement one another to give a narrative as humorous as it is disconcerting, sharply outlined and highly thought-provoking.

UK panellists opinion:

Our panellists agree that *El lago en las Pupilas* has good potential to work very well in the UK and Luis Goytisolo is considered by all of our panellists to be extremely interesting and appealing.

This novel is split up into four sections, not quite narratives, interspersed throughout the book:

Gloria

Gloria is the owner of a hotel in a small town called Riofrío in Spain. (...)

Marcel

Marcel is a Swiss guest at the hotel and has come to Riofrío in search of a Doctor Santiago, whom he suspects to be his father. (...)

El Moro

El Moro is ninety-six years old and his account starts out with his memories of being a Marxist ideologue and arguing with his wealthy father. (...)

Richard

This section isn't at all connected to the rest of the book, and eventually we find out why. Richard is a young journalist/writer covering an economic/social/political conference organized by the International Association of Knowledge Lovers. (...)

*The writing in *El Lago...* is clean, direct and unemotional, although some of the subject matter is violent, sexual, or*

bordering on the picaresque. The characters' voices develop distinctively more through what they say than how they say it.

The book is well organized and thought-through and has a very satisfying 'ah-hah' payoff towards the end. The scenes are masterfully drawn and paced and linger in the mind. Some have a cinematic quality to them, replete with throwaway visual jokes such as a wedding cake proudly bearing the form of an erect penis; "What's that about?" asked Marcel/ 'It's a trend' replied the baker matter-of-factly, without taking her eyes off the frosting." This is a good read from an excellent and important author. (From the reader report by Kit Maude)

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Additional information **Prizes and reviews:**

'Goytisolo always writes just the novel we were missing.' (J. Ernesto Ayala-Dip, El País)

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