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ACLA 2023 Charles Bernheimer Prize: Honorable Mention

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Jonathan Culler (Cornell)

Vedran Catovic, for the dissertation “Narrative Satire in Context: The Journey and Wisdom in West and East Europe” (Michigan University)

In “Narrative Satire in Context: The Journey and Wisdom in West and East Europe,” Vedran Catovic provides an account of literary satire that ranges widely across European languages and literary periods, encompassing canonical and non-canonical examples from many languages, particularly English, French, Russian, and Serbian. Exemplary in its clarity, intellectual passion, and precision of thought, his dissertation distinguishes what he calls “narrative satire” from satire in verse and from novels with satirical effects, offering a reading in which the fundamental structural principal of the journey is the necessary path to unfolding insight, where authority is ridiculed through instantiation rather than argumentation, and where utopian impulses are effectively deflated. Analyzing his principal examples -- Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, Voltaire’s *Candide*, Nikolai Leskov’s *The Enchanted Wanderer*, and Radoje Domanović’s *Voyage Back Home: Nothing There* – he combines close reading with generic and historical contextualization in a rich model of comparative literary analysis.