



## Castilian Romances of Chivalry in the 16th Century

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terminar, R. Warner analiza *España en el corazón* de P. Neruda, como ejemplo de arte políticamente comprometido. Warner concluye su minucioso ensayo diciendo que no puede ofrecer "general conclusions as to the work's poetic value" (p. 178).

La alta calidad de los trabajos desmiente la apariencia humilde del libro, en rústica y a máquina.

RICARDO ARIAS

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LÓPEZ ESTRADA, FRANCISCO, editor. *El Abencerraje: Novela y romancero*. Madrid: Cátedra, 1980. Paper. 205 pp.

This attractive pocket edition is divided equally between primary texts and commentary. The core of the book is the version of the *Abencerraje* found in Antonio Villegas's *Inventario* (1565). The spelling is sufficiently modernized to prevent the reading from becoming cumbersome, yet preserves some of the flavor of the period, e.g., *sospiro*, *captivo*, *oyo*, *hablar vos he*. Copious footnotes offer a variety of explanation and comment, ranging from history and ethnography to etymology, stylistics, literary influences, and some comparisons with other versions of the *Abencerraje*. The second part of the primary texts, comprising *romances nuevos*, is titled "Flor de romances escogida entre los de Abindarráez, Jarifa y Rodrigo de Narváez." Some *romances* are reproduced in their entirety, others incompletely; all are precisely documented.

In the discussion López Estrada traces the fortunes of four different texts of the *Abencerraje* and reconstructs a background on which the author(s) must have drawn, such as the theme of generosity toward the vanquished, as it appeared in Antiquity, Italian *novelle*, and historical and political accounts during the Renaissance. He shows some problems in matching the leading characters to those in the chronicles of the Narváez and Abencerraje families, expounds the question of fidelity to one's own religion, treats the diverse meanings of virtue, probes into possible *morisco* or *converso* origins of the unknown author, and asks whether the work might have been intended as a means of fostering tolerance.

The *romances* are most fruitfully read in conjunction with the commentary, which covers literary history and suggests hypothesis worthy of further study. López Estrada singles out *romances* that may have preceded the prose work, even though the large majority are of later date. The situations in some doubtlessly derive from the novel; in others only the names remain the same, while the plots involve entangled amorous attachments among several couples in the *capa y espada* manner. Still others retain the theme of the magnanimous captor of another faith, but deal with different personages. The shift in *romances* made for singing is, predictably, toward four-line stanzas and a preponderance of lyric elements, such as in a brief text featuring the refrain, "cautivo y enamorado," and a suggestive ending reminiscent of "Mora Moraima." While the late flowering of the *Romancero morisco* made its entry into folklore highly problematic, some *romances* of the Abencerraje cycle did manage to gain foothold in the conservative Sephardic tradition, of which two examples are reproduced in the present work. López Estrada rounds out the discussion with fascinating sidelights on *Romances* that, in contrast to the conventional

courtly glamor, portray the daily drudgery of the *moriscos*, or, again, represent a backlash against the idealization of the former enemy ("No Moslem nation glorifies our deeds!").

The book includes a bibliography of primary texts and selected criticism to supplement that of López Estrada's *Cuatro textos* (1957). This new edition of the *Abencerraje* suits, thus, various purposes: a text within the grasp of an undergraduate student, yet accompanied by enough documentation and erudite commentary to stimulate an advanced scholar, who doubtless has come to rely on López Estrada's expertise.

EDITH R. ROGERS

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EISENBERG, DANIEL. *Castilian Romances of Chivalry in the 16th Century*. London: Grant and Cutler Ltd., 1980. Paper. 112 pp. £4.80.

The author has prepared bibliographical items on Castilian romances of chivalry under the rubrics of Major sources, General sources, the Romances themselves, Texts and studies on chivalry Chivalric elements in early and Golden Age drama, and an Index of names. He has examined the individual Romances, directly or on microfilm, supplementing this direct examination by correspondence with pertinent libraries as well as research in a number of libraries. The numbering system is adequately explained and the reader has little trouble in finding his way through the system devised by the author.

An examination of the individual items reveals the author's thoroughness especially in the sections entitled Major sources and General sources. Obviously, these two sections determine the existence and examination of manuscripts and published editions of the individual Romances in question.

This section reveals the following structure. For example, the Romance *Amadís de Gaula*, Books 1-4, has comments regarding the unknown author, the fact that it was commented upon as a mystery with some frequency in Golden Age Spain. There follows a brief discussion of the actual fragments of a manuscript now in the Bancroft Library of the University of California and of a purported manuscript which no one except for an anonymous aristocrat has ever seen. There follow a list of contemporary editions, a partial list of Modern editions and finally Studies, some 107 items on this Romance alone.

This format is followed in the rest of the section devoted to the Romances, the number of items and the commentary varying with the availability of manuscripts or books. Thus, for example, under *Clarido de España* there is adequate treatment within a few lines of commentary, since the Romance "exists" only as mentioned by Vicente Salvá as a work sold in London in 1825.

The author plumbs the difficulties in establishing an "exhaustive" bibliography. He is frank in admitting some past errors in bibliography stemming from a variety of reasons. At times the poor state of texts has resulted in errors of fact, at times the unavailability of extant texts has not allowed a personal examination to clarify a doubtful point.

It is refreshing to read the commentaries in the individual entries on the Romances since they point out the sincerity of the author and the completeness with which he faced the task of compiling what is

certainly an adequate bibliography. However, like all bibliographies, additional contacts will be made in the future by possibly the same author or others.

I commend this particular bibliography to the Hispanist whose interests turn him to this epoch knowing he can depend upon an author who has adequately compiled those items that are indispensable for an intelligent study of the Romances in question. In addition, the author has left open to future bibliographers in this area a number of items that can be explored in the endless task of an "exhaustive" bibliography.

RAYMOND E. BARBERA

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RICAPITO, JOSEPH V. *Bibliografía razonada y anotada de las obras maestras de la picaresca española*. Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1980. Paper. 613 pp.

Joseph V. Ricapito's *Bibliografía razonada y anotada de las obras maestras de la picaresca española* is a useful book. For the student of literature, of the picaresque in particular, it provides a reliable and accurate survey of the critical works that have been written about the Spanish picaresque novel in general and about three of the major examples of the genre: *Lazarillo de Tormes*, Mateo Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache* and Quevedo's *El Buscón*.

The bibliography derives from Ricapito's 1966 doctoral dissertation and therein lies its only flaw. While two appendices list works published since 1970, these are not commented upon. Another anachronism in the body of the text is the listing as "in progress" of dissertations which were published in 1969-1970. Thus for practical purposes the *Bibliografía razonada y anotada* is outdated by a decade despite its 1980 date of publication. For a review of the most recent criticism of the *novela picaresca*, the reader is forced to fall back on his own resources.

This limitation aside, Ricapito has done an excellent job of carefully and thoughtfully surveying the tremendous body of works written about the *novela picaresca*. His text is arranged thematically rather than chronologically or alphabetically, thus making it more helpful for the student who comes to the subject with no prior acquaintance or for the specialist who is seeking certain specific information. In publishing his bibliography, Ricapito seems to have been reacting to some degree to J. L. Laurenti's *Bibliografía de la literatura picaresca desde sus orígenes hasta el presente* (Metuchen, N. J.: Scarecrow Press, 1973), which he criticizes for its chronological ordination, limited annotations and lacunae. Indeed, his own work is far more thorough, accurate and comprehensive.

In the first section, Ricapito deals not only with the bibliography of the literary manifestations of the picaresque, but also with that of the etymology of the word "pícaro," "pícaros y picardía," and the picaresque in relation to "problemas didácticos, morales, filosóficos y religiosos, el pensamiento erasmista y la Inquisición." He catalogues works written about the fortunes of the *novela picaresca* outside of Spain and about the *picaresca* and classical literature, theatre, mysticism, social satire, etcetera. His scope is extremely broad. To facilitate classification, criticism is listed by numbers and capital letters. This leads to a lot of page turning in the thematic section, where references are limited to these number

and letter combinations rather than full title listings, but the system is nonetheless very accurate.

Ricapito's commentaries on the works reviewed are clear, concise and complete. He cites not only the text, but, where extant, reviews, reprints and other citations. His cross-references to other works by the same author are very helpful. Most of Ricapito's notations are non-evaluative, but in some cases, works are qualified as excellent or fundamental studies.

In sum, Ricapito has done a great service to scholars and students of this important body of Spanish literature. His bibliography will undoubtedly become the standard reference work on the subject of the *novela picaresca*, and will add to the appreciation of a genre which, according to the prologue written by Joseph Silverman, already "está en la cumbre de toda buena fortuna."

BARBARA N. DAVIS

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BRANCAFORTE, BENITO. *Guzmán de Alfarache: ¿Conversión o proceso de degradación?* Madison, Wisconsin: The Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, Ltd., 1980. viii + 229 pp.

The reader of Professor Brancaforte's difficult but rewarding book is challenged not only by its subtitle, but by the range of its scholarly intentions, which embrace comparative literature, history, literary criticism, mythology, psychology, theology and, of course, *la picaresca*.

The book is doubly unique. Its primary purpose is to show that Guzmán was an alienated sociopath whose pragmatic religious conversion only furthered his (and Alemán's) degradation, as opposed to the conventional critical notion of Alemán as a digressive moralist. Secondly, Brancaforte treats the novel's structure in terms of Proteus (capable of assuming many forms) and its rhythm in terms of Sisyphus (who was condemned by Zeus to push a rock repeatedly up a hill, only to have it mysteriously roll down again before reaching the top.)

The first two chapters pursue the above structural and rhythmic analyses, while the other four deal with Guzmán's resentful acceptance of his immutable *converso* status as reflected in the phrase, "la sangre se hereda, y el vicio se apega."

Using a psycho-social rather than a religious-historical viewpoint, Brancaforte sees Guzmán's conversion only as a manifestation of the insecurity of the *converso* who wants to join a society that rejects him before and after his conversion. The subtitle of Chapter III, "¿Cristo se detuvo en Eboli?," suggests a cultural parallel: Guzmán is no better off than a disenfranchised *cafone* in Carlo Levi's book on Sicily, while the old Christians are like the *galantuomi*, or landholding Christians, who took rather un-Christian advantage of the poor *cafoni*. The author further concludes that Guzmán was probably a homosexual, an undeniable decadence in Alemán's day, yet Guzmán felt powerless to avoid it, since his father was the same way (*la sangre se hereda, . . .*). Since Brancaforte sees the novel as psychological-metaphysical rather than theological, it can never be understood using such concepts as original sin, grace, etc. It is, in fact, a parody on Christianity and the names and ideas associated with it.

The many "double" characters (each with an opposite number), ambiguities (at times Guzmán is the