

## REVIEWS

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*LA PÍCARA JUSTINA*. Edición de Bruno Mario Damiani. Potomac, Maryland: Studia Humanitatis, 1982. 498 pages.

This new and well-produced edition of what has been called *el apasionante fósil* fills an empty space of long standing on the shelf of undisputed major works of the Siglo de Oro. Besides the edition of the text the volume contains an introduction in which D. assists the reader in situating López de Ubeda's work within a literary kind, and among other books of that age. The passing in review, even at this date, of authors apart from Ubeda who have been surmised as using his name as a pseudonym, is required, but only perhaps because of the way in which the work impinges upon that of Cervantes, in the *Viaje del Parnaso* and elsewhere. Surely those names need never again be paraded. Another exercise in interpretation which is, one supposes, inevitable is the relating of *La pícaro Justina* to what the twentieth century has elected to call "the picaresque" (though very little may by now be left of that particular construct), at any rate to *Guzmán de Alfarache*, the protagonist of which intervenes in Ubeda's text. What in short is the book's -- and its main character's -- place on the good ship *La Vida Pícaro* portrayed in the frontispiece? These two topics are well discussed by D., though one is perplexed at his fondness for citing the forgotten works of hack literary historians -- Peres, Sánchez, Pinó, Suárez, even Northup -- even though they enlighten us not a whit. The theories of Marcel Bataillon (1969) and the French scholar's remarks on the incongruous morality of the work, are given due review even though nothing new is advanced in relation to them. Nevertheless, the introduction constitutes a good summary of current knowledge about *La pícaro Justina*. A few things are left unexplained: the nature of Ubeda's "censure of Malón de Chaide" (8), and the precise channel along which an alleged influence ran from Ubeda's work to Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (19). The number of translations into other languages is left doubtful. Are there eight (18)? Or four? Or five, using the Bibliography (22-24)?

*La pícaro Justina* is notoriously difficult to understand both with regard to its "plot" and to its minute details. Expert textual criticism and expert annotation are required if the reader is to be helped to penetrate the phraseological impasto. And here I believe that it must be conceded that D., although he claims that the work is now *fácilmente asequible* (28), has helped very little.

With regard to the text, D. explains: ". . . corregí y revisé según una más atenta lectura de la edición príncipe . . .". Yet what we have here, a comparison of this volume with the Medina del Campo edition shows, is Puyol's text with his often arbitrary emendations, and also his annotation in large part. Many notes are transcribed without much ado from Puyol, and difficult passages which Puyol neglected are also neglected by D. This is a pity, because Puyol can often be caught at mere guesswork: in

the matter of *leonesismos*, for example, no reference has been made by D. to the work of numerous later dialectologists and their fieldwork. Far too much of the annotation comes unashamedly from the *Enciclopedia Espasa* instead of from, say, the source works of its compilers. Some work on the text since Puyol's time is noticed, but too frequently the reader will be referred to a secondary volume or article without an attempt to summarize what topic is discussed in that item: "*Pinta el . . . mujer enojada*: cfr. Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 429" when there is no Bibliography to tell the reader what this work of Jones *a secas* could be, is incompetent annotation. Some specific bibliographical knowledge on the reader's part is then assumed, and yet that reader appears to have to be told who Caesar was (86), or Santa Teresa (*idem*), Carlos I (434) and Fernán González (125) -- not to speak of every Greek and Roman mythological personage, and every one from the Old Testament. This reader of *La pícaro Justina*, who must be presumed to be familiar with *Don Quijote and Guzmán*, still requires instruction in recognizing forms like *do*, *a fuer de* and *convernã*. The lack of an index to these notes makes it harder at this very moment to tabulate the very large number of these bits of elementary information. The very probable secondary meanings of practically every phrase in the book are seldom hypothesized with any conviction, yet that would be, as Bataillon showed in his day, the only way to penetrate to the meanings of *La pícaro Justina*. Finally there is a curious absence of parallel readings from annotated editions of contemporary authors, Cervantes, Alemán and Lope de Vega, and no sign that help was sought from the seventeenth-century translations into the other European languages. So that the celebrated wines of many a Siglo de Oro text, Rivadavia, Coca and Alaejos (463, also an allusion 154) go unnoticed except as toponyms, while Don Juan de Austria is glossed as "el emperador [?] Felipe II" (323).

The typographical errors are extremely few (250 *recte* "cosi cosi de Frómista" and the repeated phrase, to be deleted "a los pobres, dando primer lugar", 123). The text at the top of 406 should read:

"Respondía: -- No haber marido bueno sino ser morisco.

-- No sé en que lo podía fundar, sino en que . . ."

On page 459 the missing line of verse may be supplied: "*La madrina muy aína / Vino a tocar a Justina / Fue el tocado barajado, / y el velado . . .*" On page 387 the meter is restored to the verse, *recte* "*Vanos jueces, (dice) apelo al Almirante, / . . .*". This is, however merely a selection resulting from an afternoon's random comparison with the relevant pages of the British Library's text of the princeps.

The presentation of the edition would have derived much benefit from a consultation of the article of Allaire and Cotrait (1979) and also, even though D. mentions it by name, the very perceptive dissertation of Sánchez Díez (1972), developing perhaps the concept of *roman-bouffe* theorized by the latter, a novel which is "intentionally emptied out, without source of coherence", and the former authors' notions of the permeability of the whole work to the power of *fisga*, or cynical and often obscene rallery. *El gusto me lleba* reads the inscription on the pennant of the ship *La Vida Pícaro*, and this work does constitute a dilution of what we may

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have understood as "the picaresque", but probably not, as D. would have it, because of any ironical stance taken towards, in particular, *Guzmán de Alfarache* by Ubeda; rather, for reasons of eutrapelia or of the psychic hygiene of the times, to temper the seriousness and moroseness which could set in after a reading of pessimistic literature.

There are a few things which spring to mind as worthy of investigation, after a reading of this edition of *La pícara Justina*. First the verses, talking about which as "de dudable calidad lírica y poco elegantes" (*dixerunt* Kane, Puyol, Pfandl) is not helpful at all. Both the poetics of these verses, and that of the entire work now require comparison with those of, for instance, Ubeda's fellow physician El Pinciano, or of Sánchez de Lima, perhaps of what we can infer from the practice of Cervantes. Second, the reasons for the special fascination of the *pícaro's* life for learned readers at the turn of the century, something which may have prompted Ubeda in making his protagonist a *pícaro* and not something else. Third, the whole question of the veiled references--if such they indeed are--to the Court, to the topography of León and Medina, now that the inference of the notion of *limpieza de sangre* is proving to be a *gan-súa* (Bataillon) which seems to open nothing of significance, and that the imputations here and there in the text to characters' predilections for Judaism appear to resolve themselves, as part of an arsenal of jokes, into the general climate of *fisga*. Fourth, the ludic component, with all its attendant feasting. What significance had, inside this text and outside it, the Bigornia? What was women's place in this carnivalesque phenomenon, since something like this seems to have governed the very feminizing of Ubeda's chief character?

Readers of *Celestinesca* will, of course, be curious to know what this new text adds to the tradition begun by Rojas's work. D. rightly points out that Justina's shared femininity is practically all one can point to when making a parallel with Celestina. One might go further than D. and propose that *La pícara Justina* owes nothing to the subsequent texts either, including *La lozana andaluza*. Ubeda's citations are: (a) "No es mi intención contar amores al tono del libro de *Celestina*. . . voy a la ligera, no contando lo que pertenece a la materia de la deshonestidad, sino a lo que pertenece a los hurtos ardidosos de Justina" and (b) "No hay enredo en *Celestina*, . . . chistes en *Eufrosina*, . . . cuya nata aquí no tenga y cuya quintaesencia no saque." Rojas's work evidently is not even seen as a sad and serious work which might require the remedy of laughter; merely the *enredo* interests, and it does seem, superficially, that certain minor characters in the work resemble the more disgraceful ones in *Celestina*. And it is of course possible that Pleberio's "¡Oh mundo, mundo! Me pareces un laberinto de errores, un desierto espantable, una morada de fieras," is echoed by Justina's "¡Oh mesón, mesón! Eres esponja de bienes, prueba de magnánimos, escuela de discretos, universidad del mundo, . . ." (119). This would certainly separate out very nicely the tonalities of the two works, and also conduct the reader into what one might call the metaphysics of innkeeping and inn-frequenting (cf. the new work of Monique Joly). *La pícara Justina* has its beginning in an inn, and Guzmán de Alfarache, *atalaya de la vida humana*, finds himself in the last pages whirled into

the nuptial route, once again in an inn.

"Una monumental burla a doble fondo, en cuyo sentido no se ha hecho más que empezar a penetrar": the verdict of Sánchez Díez would still seem quite valid. This edition of *La pícara Justina* will probably have many years' currency, and its introduction is commendable. The edition, however, renders the text only slightly more accessible, in spite of D.'s declaration.

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ARGUMENTO DEL VEINTIÓN ACTO

Illus. F. Ezquerro . . . . . Ed. Marte, 1968.