

CELESTINESCA

LA CELESTINA. Edición, introducción y notas de Humberto López Morales. Madrid: Cupsa Editorial, 1976. 254 pags.

The need for adequate editions in many fields of Spanish literature is severe, often obliging the instructor to opt for dissatisfying texts allegedly prepared for the future scholar. Recently, however, choosing a good Celestina text has been made a less arduous task by the work of three careful scholars, who have made available several altogether attractive texts. The newest of these is edited with introduction and notes by Humberto López Morales.

Professor López Morales has prepared a lucid, well-written introduction in which he examines the textual problems and describes the extant editions. Throughout, he has referred to the work of Norton, Scoles, Herriott and others to construct a useful guide to the maze of textual problems that continue to perplex scholars. Furthermore, he has sifted through much criticism to provide the reader with copious notes as an aid in understanding the assorted divergent opinions on such problems as authorship, sources, textual alterations from one edition to another, and Rojas' biography.

A well-chosen bibliography follows the introduction. Although a sample check revealed some reporting inaccuracies, they do not appear to be the kind that would render the list useless as a guide. For example, on p. xxxv, the first page of the "Bibliografía citada," one finds M. J. Bayo's article "Nota sobre LC," in Clavileño V (1950), 48-53. The correct volume number for that year is I. Also, for some entries, the most recent editions are not given. Thus, F. Castro Guisasola's Observación sobre las fuentes literarias de 'LC' is given only as 1924, omitting notation of its having been reissued in 1973. The list includes many of the significant studies in LC criticism, although D. S. Severin's Memory in 'LC', an important recent monograph, is not included. Nevertheless, compared to two other recent editions (Damiani, 1974, and Severin, 1969 and reissues through 1976), López Morales offers a very extensive bibliography.

For his edition Professor López Morales has chosen Burgos 1499 for Acts I - XII, XX - XI, and in part Acts XII and XIX. Acts XIV - XVIII and the interpolations follow the 1514 Valencia edition of the Tragicomedia, which is also the base text for both Damiani and Severin. The orthography of these two editions (1499 and 1514) is followed, and the necessary modernizations (principally punctuation) are noted and explained. Both the Damiani and the Severin editions use modernized spellings, except for those which render more faithfully the pronunciation of the period. The printing in the López Morales edition alternates between Universal for 1499 and Italics for 1514 to keep the reader on course. When obvious errors are corrected, these are indicated by an asterisk and the original reading is provided in the notes. Asides are not set off in parentheses as they are in the Severin and the Damiani editions--a feature of those editions that is worthy of imitation.

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The footnotes in the López Morales edition comment on relevant portions of the critical literature, often providing contrasting views on a given point in the same footnote. Thus, the reader has ready access to varied critical observations on particular problems--a distinct advantage of this edition. The notes in the Damiani and the Severin editions are geared more toward explaining difficult lines and defining words. Furthermore, López Morales has systematically cited critical works by author's surname, year of publication and page number for easy consultation in conjunction with the "Bibliografía citada." In addition, many of his notes correct and amplify those of Cejador y Frauca by means of specific, comparative reference to more recent research (e.g., p. 70, n. 16).

The text is improved considerably in this edition over Cejador's, which also uses 1499 and Valencia 1514. Resolving u- as v- and using y instead of e according to modern usage is the norm for López Morales' edition, as distinct from Cejador's. Some of López Morales' readings correct the text to incorporate recent views on certain dubious lines; the most notable of these is 'Minerua con el can,' which he interprets, following Otis Green's suggestion, as 'Minerva con Vulcán,' (Aucto I, p. 28, López Morales; p. 45, I, Cejador y Frauca). López Morales' spellings generally adhere more closely to the original; thus, whereas Cejador spells "¿Escocióte?," López Morales reads "¿Escozióte?" López Morales uses punctuation that is much more sensible than Cejador's. For example, Cejador reads (I, p. 57) "¿Sabes que hacen? Cosa, que es difícil entenderlas." López Morales makes more sense with this arrangement, "¿Sabes que hacen cosa que es difícil entenderlas?" (p. 30).

The López Morales edition is not as attractively printed as are the Damiani and the Severin editions, and it would have benefited from more careful proof-reading. Typesetting errors are found on page xiv, where 'Guillet,' should be 'Gillet,' as it does in note 13 on the same page and in the "Bibliografía." On page 186, 'jyzio' should be 'juyzio,' and Aucto VIII and Aucto XVI are incorrectly numbered V and XV respectively at the top of each of their pages.

These three editions have much to recommend them. Each has advantages that make them useful for different purposes. The introduction to the Damiani edition has features that make it especially useful for undergraduate classes, such as a section on the special nature of the Spanish Renaissance and another on the use of language in the Celestina. The Severin edition is introduced by Stephen Gilman, who has reworked his study entitled "Rebirth of a Classic: Celestina," in Varieties of Literary Experience (New York, 1962) especially for the purpose. Thus, the student has at hand a compact introduction to the use of dialogue in the Celestina, the theme of the fall of Fortune, and the social ambience of the work. This edition is also complimented by excellent explanatory notes, a separate section of notes dealing with variant readings, and a chronological table relating Rojas' life and work to his cultural, literary, artistic, and historical environment. The López Morales edition offers many features that make it extremely attractive for graduate students: the bibliography, the detailed notes incorporating contemporary criticism on the Celestina, fidelity to original orthography in general, and an introduction that treats many of the difficulties that characterize the evolution of the text of the Tragicomedia.

