

# CELESTINESCA

## PREGONERO



". . . los bienes, so no son  
comunicados, no son bienes."  
*CELESTINA*, auto 1

Since the last number of *Celestinesca*, we have received the news of the death of two Latinamerican scholars, each of whom worked with *Celestina*. We are all saddened by the passing of Prof. FRIDA WEBER DE KURLAT of Argentina, long associated with the work of Buenos Aires' Instituto de Filología. And also by the demise of Prof. MIGUEL MARCIALES of Venezuela (see the note by K. Whinnom elsewhere in this issue).

*Retirement of PETER E. RUSSELL from Oxford.* In anticipation of the official retirement of Peter RUSSELL from the Oxford Chair of Spanish, which he held for twenty-eight years, in October of 1981, a group of his friends and colleagues gathered in July at a seven-course banquet to mark the occasion and to render homage to his impressive achievements as teacher and scholar.

Presented to Russell on the festive evening was a special collection of papers in the form of a *feestschrift*: MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE STUDIES ON SPAIN AND PORTUGAL. The fifteen studies are mostly by former students of Russell, and three of them reflect his abiding interest in Rojas' *Celestina*. Each of them is an important contribution to our understanding of Rojas, the world he lived in and the art of the *Celestina*, as their titles suggest:

Douglas J. GIFFORD contributes "Magical Patter: The Place of Verbal Fascination in *LC*." The article of Nicholas G. ROUND deals expertly with the theme of "Conduct and Values in *LC*," while Keith WHINNOM offers a truly provocative study on "Interpreting *LC*: The Motives and the Personality of Fernando de Rojas." It is a handsome volume and a dignified tribute to Russell who--in Spring of 1982--will be Visiting Professor at the University of Virginia (and teaching a course on celestinesque literature). The editors, Profs. Hodcroft, Pattison, Pring-Mill and Truman, have done a splendid job.

NEW STUDIES ON *CELESTINA*: In addition to the three studies included in the above notice, the following have appeared since the ninth supplement to my *Celestina* bibliography (I will provide annotations in my now-in-progress survey of *Celestina* studies: 1930-1980):

ARBEA, G. "Una fuente latina ignorada del suicidio de Melibea," *Revista chilena de literatura*, no. 14 (1979), 55-73 (On H. Pisani de Parma's *Philogenia*).

- CORONADO, Juan. "Celestina: imagen de una batalla en campo de plumas," *Plural*, no. 118 (1981), 28-31 (Eros triumphant).
- DIAZ-SOLIS, Ramón. *Tarde en España: de LC y otros renacientes* (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo, 1980). 201 pp. (This will be reviewed in the May 1982 *Celestinesca*.)
- GALLARDO, José Luis. "Hacia una interpretación 'otra' de LC," *Boletín Millares Carlo I* (June, 1980), 167-78 (Semiotics).
- GRIFFIN, Julia Ortiz. "Class struggle in LC," *Homenaje a Humberto Piñera* (Madrid: Playor, 1979), 187-95.
- HUGHES, John B. "Orígenes de la novela picaresca: LC y *La lozana andaluza*," *La picaresca: Orígenes, textos y estructuras* (Madrid: Fundación Univ. Española, 1979), 327-34.
- LEMARTINEL, Jean. "Sobre el supuesto judaísmo de LC," *Hommage des hispanistes français à N. Salomon* (Barcelona: Laia, 1979), 509-16, (Rojas' converso status is superfluous to an understanding and appreciation of the work).
- MCCORMICK, Robert. "New Approaches in Literary Criticism. Maeztu's *Don Quijote*, *Don Juan* y *La Celestina* and Psychohistory," *Basque Artistic Expression* 2 (1981) (not seen).
- MCPHEETERS, D. W. "La 'dulce ymaginación' de Calisto," *Actas del Sexto Congreso Internacional de Hispanistas* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto, Dept. of Spanish & Portuguese, 1980), 499-501 (an analysis of Calisto's act 14 soliloquy).
- MONTAÑES FONTENLA, Luis. "Un análisis bibliográfico de las modernas ediciones de LC," *El libro español*, no. 270 (June 1980) and no. 271 (July 1980) (on 28 modern editions from 1912 to 1977).
- MORO, Donatella. "El Buscón de Quevedo a la luz de LC y de *El Lazarillo*," *La picaresca* (see HUGHES entry, above), 689-704.
- SAMONÀ, Carmelo. "Una reminiscenza della *Celestina* nell' *Auto de los desposorios de Joseph*," *Aspetti e problemi delle letterature iberiche: Studi offerti a F. Meregalli*, ed. Giuseppe Bellini (Rome: Bulzoni, 1981), 353-58 (parallels and verbal echoes of Pleberio and Alisa's parental conversations about Melibea).
- SEVERIN, Dorothy S. "Parodia y sátira en LC," *Actas* (see McPheeters entry, above), 695-97 (high and low levels of humor in LC).
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Aristotle's *Ethics* and LC," *La corónica* 10:1 (1981-82), 54-8.

NEW DOCTORAL DISSERTATIONS: Two new 1981 dissertations on *Celestina* have been finished and for our readers the abstracts follow. The first, by Patricia S. FINCH, was completed at Catholic University (Washington, D. C.)

under the direction of Bruno Damiani. It is titled: MAGIC AND WITCHCRAFT IN "CELESTINA" AND ITS IMITATIONS:

"What differentiates *Celestina* from previous literary figures such as *Trotaconventos* is her unique relationship with the world of the occult. One of the constant elements that runs like a thread from the *Celestina* through all of its imitations is the recourse by the characters to magic and witchcraft. This dissertation takes up the question of how magic functions in the *Celestina* and seven of its imitations: *Segunda Celestina* by Feliciano de Silva (1534), *Tercera Celestina* by Gaspar Gómez de Toledo (1536), *Lisandro y Roselia* by Sancho de Muñón (1542), *Tragedia Policiana* by Sebastián Fernández (1547), *Comedia Salvaje* by Romero de Cepeda (1554), *Lozana Andaluza* by Francisco Delicado (1528), and *La Dorotea* by Lope de Vega (1631).

"As a prelude to the examination of magic and witchcraft in the *Celestina* and its imitations, Chapter I provides an historical survey of the nature and social and political significance of magic and witchcraft in classical antiquity and in the Middle Ages, and its assimilation in Spanish Renaissance and Baroque literatures. This provides a perspective on the religious and social climate and the literary tradition in which the *Celestinesque* works were produced.

"As an authentic *bruja*, *Celestina* is a servant of Satan, but she is also a Christian, and supposedly a servant of God. Chapter II includes a definition of magic and takes up the distinctions between magic and religion. The instances of religion and magic in the eight works are discussed as to their validity as "pure" magical or "religious" acts. It was found that what appear to be "religious" acts, as performed by *Celestina*, are in fact as "magical" as her practice of magic. This symbiotic relationship between magic and religion is another of Rojas' strokes of genius which sets his work apart from its successors.

"The social function of magic and witchcraft is studied in Chapter III, which examines the many occupations of the witch in Renaissance Spain and the societal attitudes toward witchcraft, including that of the Inquisition.

"The esthetic function of magic and witchcraft is examined in Chapter IV: its participation in the causal relations of the plot, its use to characterize and to justify otherwise implausible character changes, its relationship to style and, finally, the use of magic for achieving *admiratio* while retaining a tenuous hold on verisimilitude. It is clear that Rojas' use of magic anticipates a standard Renaissance prescription for the achievement of *admiratio* within the bounds of verisimilitude, and that the ambiguity as to the efficacy of *Celestina's* *conjuro* provides an almost perfect reconciliation of these two opposing artistic goals.

"The last chapter deals with the moral function of magic and witchcraft. It takes up the questions of the efficacy of the *Celestinas'* magic and the alternative explanations for the changes in the characters. In the appraisal of the didactic intent of the author, the question of whether the witchcraft is viewed as efficacious and evil (the demonic) or as

essentially fruitless and perhaps comic (satire and ridicule) is taken up. In contrasting the comic works with the tragic ones it becomes evident that only in the latter works, where the magic is taken seriously, it is a significant element in the moral lesson."

The second new dissertation is by Olga DELLA CHIODI and it was done at UCLA under the direction of Enrique Rodríguez-Cepeda. Its title is PASADO Y FUTURO EN LOS PERSONAJES DE *LC*: CAUSA Y EFECTO and the abstract is as follows:

"The present study focuses on two important aspects of *La Celestina*. First, the past of the characters and its influence on their present behavior and secondly, the manner these two phases of their lives relate to the principle of causality.

"To a greater or lesser extent, all the main *dramatis personae* are concerned about their past histories. However, the reactions to and interpretation of past events strictly depend on the idiosyncrasy of the individual. In this respect Sempronio's attitude has to be defined as entirely negative. In his opinion, only the present moment can be viewed as valuable since all occurrences, whatever their magnitude, are divested of their importance and relegated to total oblivion by the passage of time.

"Celestina's point of view in this matter opposes that of Sempronio's. For the old bawd, the usefulness she derives from her past is two-fold. On the one hand, she manipulates her own memories and those of Pármeno's mother, Claudina, to partly subjugate the young man's will-power and assure herself of his cooperation while she manages Calisto's love affair. On the other hand, her past can also be a haven where remembrances of the happiness and prosperity of times long past act as a protective device against the dreariness and impecuniosity of her present-day life.

"As for Pármeno, he establishes a correlation between past and present and views the former as a source of knowledge from which to gain a better understanding of the latter. He considers it a learning tool which properly used can successfully guide the decision-making process.

"A high degree of pessimism distinguishes Fernando de Rojas' work from beginning to end. And it is reflected in the world he has created for his personages to live in. It is a place ridden by injustice and deceit and arbitrarily ruled by laws of cause and effect that seem to lie beyond human comprehension. Within this framework, the characters of the *Tragicomedia* set about the almost impossible task of understanding reality in order to take advantage of every propitious occasion that might bring forth positive results. They all have in common the desire for personal success, whether represented by money or love, and will stop at nothing to attain it. Ironically, such a highly developed sense of self-realization leads to a highly developed individualism which in turn tends to accentuate their feelings of isolation. In *La Celestina*, life has become synonymous with strife and Calisto and Melibea as well as Celestina and her allies, are combatants engaged in an ever losing struggle. They are destined to failure, for even death--a possible escape--offers no solution since it entails the destruction of their own identities.

"This failure partly stems from their inability to fully understand the world; change according to the circumstances and accept the consequences of their actions. For those who do (Elicia and Areusa), there is a gleam of hope; for the others, utter solitude; as Pleberio says, "in hac lachrymarum valle."

CELESTINA ON STAGE. In June and July of this year, Pierre Laville's *Celestina* was presented to audiences in the garden of Paris' Petit-Palais (see a review of this production by Jacques Joset elsewhere in this issue). Laville's version is new, based on the one directed by Marcel Maréchal earlier (and produced for the Comédie-Française [1975]). It was directed by Jean-Claude Amyl with sets by Jean-Guy Lecat and Hortense Guillemard, the latter of whom also designed the costumes. The performance of Judith Magre as *Celestina* was widely acclaimed. Others appearing were Michel Robbe (Calisto), Monique Brun (Melibea), François Clavier (Sempronio), Emmanuel Dechartre (Pármeno), Catherin Hubeau (Areúsa), Sylvie Orcier (Elicia) and Emmanuèle Stochl (Lucrecia). After the Paris performances, the production travelled to the summer festivals at Sarlat and Carcassonne.

An additional note on the CELESTINA of Alfonso SASTRE, reported on earlier in PREGONERO and in the bibliographic sections of this *boletín*. In a wide-ranging interview printed in *Hispania* 64 (1981), he comments on his adaptation, which debuted in Rome. Here is the relevant excerpt:

QUESTIONER: ¿Por qué tienes interés en *La Celestina*?

A. Sastre: *LC* a mí es uno de los libros en ese proceso de reconsideración con la literatura. . . . Deslumbró sobre todo su prosa, ya que su estructura dramática es una estructura bien complicada.

Q.: ¿La consideras una obra dramática, principalmente?

AS.: Sí. Ya sé que sobre eso hay grandes discusiones, y ahora alguien dijo que en la Universidad del Sur de California un profesor Sackett está trabajando sobre lo que él llama las novelas dramatizadas. Pone "novela" como sustantivo y "dramáticas" como adjetivo--las novelas dramáticas. . . . El sustantivo para mí está en que son dramas, dramas de estructura muy compleja; pero me parece que Rojas se adelanta genialmente a las concepciones, por ejemplo, de Bertolt Brecht, cuando habla de un teatro narrativo. Un drama narrativo está hecho en *La Celestina*, y claro, yo encuentro que es una obra maestra, una de las grandes obras de nuestra literatura.

Q.: Estabas hablando de tu interés en *La Celestina*, y fue, dijiste por el lenguaje, y no por la estructura.

AS.: Sí, el lenguaje. La estructura en el sentido de que era una estructura libre, no tanto en que fuera una estructura bien conseguida, en la medida en que no es fácil bien determinar dónde empieza y termina la obra de Rojas. . . . Hay un autor colectivo en cierto modo aparte de Rojas; hay unos tratamientos posteriores, unas interpolaciones de este de Proaza, y una serie de cosas que hacen que el texto reaparezca como demasiado abigarrado. . . . Desde el punto de vista teatral podría hacerle a uno pensar en hacer una adaptación de *La Celestina*. . . . Y era sobre todo eso. Y

también los caracteres, no tanto los caracteres . . . como el carácter de la Celestina--gran descubrimiento, el personaje. Yo estaba así cuando en Italia me encargaron hacer una versión de *La Celestina*. "¿Por qué no hace Ud. una versión de *La Celestina*?" Entonces, yo dije: "Creo que sí"; porque claro, yo tenía mucho honor. Pero al estudiarla, llego al punto de que me gusta mucho, prácticamente todo, menos las interpolaciones. . . . Me daba mucha pena hacer un trabajo que consistiera en una reducción del texto, que es lo que generalmente se ha hecho con *La Celestina*. Hacer una nueva versión no me pareció un proyecto interesante. Entonces yo estubo a punto de decir que no; y después pensé que podría muy bien hacer la cosa; y era--dejar *La Celestina* tal como es, no tocarla . . . hacer otra obra a propósito de *La Celestina*. Una *Celestina* mía . . . en la que Calisto es un señor bastante viejo; Melibea es una jovencita. Calisto es un fraile que se ha salido del convento; es un hereje, discípulo de Miguel Servet, que está perseguido por la Inquisición. Todo es un invento. Entonces, al venir de la Inquisición, le consiguen que lo acepten en un convento de monjas para estar refugiado allí, en Salamanca. . . . Entonces Calisto conoce en el convento a la madre abadesa del convento, que es Melibea. Es una mujer que ha sido prostituta; se arrepiente hoy y entra en la religión. Ella entró en la religión cuando él se había salido de la religión por su herejía. Pero son dos mundos incommunicables; el amor es imposible. Hay una razón mucho más fuerte en esta obra para que este amor sea imposible que en la obra de Rojas, quien no nos dice por qué, ni siquiera en forma de clases. . . . En algunas momentos hay unas citas literales de *La Celestina*, porque yo pongo la acción un siglo después de la acción de *La Celestina* de Rojas; y estos dos personajes ya conocen la obra de Rojas. . . .

CELESTINA ON THE PROGRAM OF PROFESSIONAL MEETINGS. In a former PREGONERO, I inadvertently omitted a paper on *Celestina* read at the 16th International Conference on Medieval Studies (Kalamazoo, May 1980): it was "Evaluative Point of View in *LC*," by Antonio C. M. Gil of the Ohio State University. The paper dealt with the well-known *perspectivismo* of *Celestina* and the need to understand the literary technique in order to appreciate Rojas' fine ironical sense.

More recently, Anthony Cárdenas presented his "The Arcipreste de Talavera's 'complisiones de onbres' and the Males of the *Celestina*," at the 31st Mountain Interstate Foreign Language Conference at Eastern Kentucky University, October, 1981.

At the Modern Language Association of America meetings in New York, December 27-30, 1981, the following presentations are scheduled: in session 79 (Spanish Sentimental Romance) Patricia E. Grieve will be reading her study, "'Nunc Scio Quid Sit Amor': Love as Destroyer in *Grisel y Mirabella* and *LC*," at 8:30-9:45 a.m. in Royal B (Sheraton) on December 28th; later, in session 199 (Spanish Medieval Language and Literature) in the Regency Foyer (Sheraton) at 1:45-3:00, also on the 28th, María Eugenia Lacarra of Occidental Coll. (California) will present "*LC*: El fracaso del amor cortés en la sociedad mercantil y urbana."

CELESTINERÍAS! A few issues back, our colleague Hensley WOODBRIDGE (Southern Illinois Univ.) wondered how deeply the impact of *LC* had been on the Spanish language? By far and away the most pervasive noun has been the

name of the bawd, as in "ella es una celestina." Woodbridge contributed "celestineo" which he'd run across in a 1972 text by F. Bravo Morada [see *Celestinesca* 4:2 (1980), 41-42]. Another noun to be found in Miguel Herro García, *Estimaciones literarias del siglo XVII* (Madrid: Voluntad, 1930) is 'celestinería': "Góngora sorprendió también este matiz [la mentirosa religión de las mujeres] de la celestinería" (p. 45).

To illustrate, I located two seventeenth-century strophes which, while not ostensibly modeled on *Celestina*, do present vivid images of the *celestinería* that went on in her literary wake. The first one is an *octavo* from José de Valdivieso's very long poem *Sagrario de Toledo* (1616) which describes the worldly temptations facing the young (San) Ildefonso:

Halló del plazer torpe las terceras  
 Que perturbaron las honestas casas,  
 Y las ya descartadas hechizaras,  
 fuelles que encienden dormitadas brasas:  
 De sus cuerpos no escasas las rameras,  
 y del dinero incasto siempre escasas  
 con ellas las lascivas dancadoras  
 de venereos engaños inventoras.

The second is an "epitafio" added to the third printing of Alonso Jerónimo de Salas Barbadillo's *El sagaz Estacio*:

Esconde esta tierra fría  
 una muger bien lograda,  
 de sus amigas amada,  
 aunque a todas vendía.  
 A los ollereros y ollereras  
 muy útil a ser vendrá,  
 que es la tierra que aquí está  
 buena para coberteras.





Medina del Campo, 1530-1540(?)