

CELESTINESCA

PAMELA S. BRAKHAGE, THE THEOLOGY OF "LA LOZANA ANDALUZA".
Potomac, Md.: Scripta Humanistica, 1986. 77 pp.

Defining theology as a given person's perceptions of God (pp. 9-10), this monograph purports to discover Delicado's theological stance in La Lozana andaluza. For Brakhage, Delicado is a Christian humanist in the Erasmusian mode who uses wordplay and ironic discourse to mask as well as reveal his ambivalent attitude towards Rome and its human counterpart, Lozana. Brakhage also examines the extent to which Delicado was influenced by contemporary apocalyptic and evangelical currents.

I doubt that a strong argument could be made for Delicado as a Christian humanist. In any case this book does not argue at all persuasively for such a connection. It is poorly organized and poorly written. The relevance of the topic under discussion is seldom clear, and in general the line of reasoning jumps from one topic to another without sufficient transition. Typographical errors are numerous, and documentation is inconsistent in format.

The jarring use of colloquialisms is but one of the book's stylistic infelicities. Thus, the misadventures that Lozana suffers teach her to "look out for Number One" (6). Delicado "tells it like it is" (18). And often the phraseology gives rise to unintentional humor: "Then, like Peter and Paul, she [Lozana] went to Rome, and like them, ran into a few problems" (58).

Brakhage's account of the work's plot at the beginning of Chapter I is a typical example of her approach to the text. The novel begins with the lineage [sic] and birth of the heroine much as the Gospel of St. Matthew relates the line of David down to Jesus, and the setting of his birth" (6). Lozana's persecution by Diomedes' father corresponds to "the period equivalent to trials and wandering in the wilderness" (7). Lozana's arrival in Rome and relationship with Rampín receives the following commentary: "The episode parallels the temptations of Christ, with seven hills instead of a mountain, and the temptor triumphant" (7). This biased plot summary leads the reader to expect some sort of statement regarding Lozana's life as a parody of that of Christ, but such a connection is not made until considerably later in the book. Instead, it leads us into a discussion of the work as a pre-picaresque novel. This, in turn, is used to support Brakhage's view of the book's didactic nature: "Since the picaresque is, at least overtly, didactic, and since La lozana andaluza is often classified as picaresque or pre-picaresque, La lozana andaluza must, therefore, be didactic" (8).

This book does little credit to its author or to the series that published it. With a list price of \$27.50 for such a slim volume, it cannot even be recommended as a sort of curiosity.

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