

Robert L. Hathaway, ed. *Pedro Manuel Ximénez de Urrea. Penitencia de amor (Burgos, 1514)*. Exeter Hispanic Texts, 49, Exeter, U.K.: Univ. of Exeter Press, 1990. xxxv + 75pp.

Robert Hathaway is no newcomer to Urrea studies or to early Spanish theater. He previously edited Urrea's "La Egloga de Calisto y Melibea" (*Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica* [1978]: 314-330) and he is the author of the 1975 monograph, *Love in the Early Spanish Theater* (Madrid, Playor). Now he edits Urrea's other dialogued celestinesque piece printed the year after the "Egloga," "Penitencia de amor."

Hathaway acknowledges that "Penitencia de amor" is not a great work of fiction, but also quite rightly affirms that this "small book . . . merits wider circulation and an updated critical perspective so that it may take its place in the development of the novel in Renaissance Spain" (xxviii). He gives us an easy to read text, with sound editorial criteria at work, and this will help in the goal of greater circulation for "Penitencia," and the introduction and other critical apparatus amply provide for the updated critical assessment modern students of the novel in the sixteenth century will find welcome. The more "small books" like this that attract the attention of good editors and are made available, the less literary distortion there is likely to be in future appraisals of literary currents in the early years of the Iberian Cinquecento.

The volume under review begins with generous acknowledgments (v), an introduction (vii-xxviii), a statement of editorial criteria (xxix), a comparison of the 1514 and 1516 printings of the work (xxx-xxxi), additional notes (speculating on the Zaragoza 1507 edition of *Celestina* as the one Urrea doubtless handled, xxxii), reproduction of and notes on the original, illustrated title page (xxxiv-xxxv), the text (1-50), Variant readings from the 1516 ed. (51-52), a rich, fully-developed, section of notes to the text (53-67), and a list of works cited, some sixty-six in all (69-73).

"Penitencia de amor" is clearly one of the early offshoots of the immediate popularity of Rojas' *Celestina*. By the time of its 1514 printing, that is, a period of just fifteen years after the *¿Burgos, 1499? Comedia*, reading audiences had seen two additional printings of the *Comedia*; the Zaragoza 1507, the spurious "1502" editions published in Seville 1510-1513, as well as the Italian translation of 1506, all of these latter of the longer *Tragicomedia* version; plus a ballad, circa 1510, of Calisto and Melibea, and Urrea's own "Egloga" of 1513. Unlike the "Egloga," which re-uses Rojas' characters, the "Penitencia" cannot be said to be in the line of direct descent of *Celestina* since all its roles are played by the likes of "Darino" (=Calisto), "Finoya" (=Melibea), etc. It is both a derivative piece of fiction writing, best seen in its literary context, and a commentary on some of the literary and social concerns of the day

that preoccupied Pedro Manuel Ximénez de Urrea.

Hathaway's introduction does its best work in addressing the relationship of the "Penitencia" to the literary threads woven into it, and he is particularly interested in selecting out elements of Juan de Flores' *Grisel y Mirabella*, Diego de San Pedro's *Cárcel de amor* and, of course, Rojas' *Celestina*, in the discussion developed in the section titled "Love and Honor" (xviii-xxv). There are some interesting speculations ventured throughout the editor's preparation of the reader of this text. One concerns Eugenio Asensio's notion that Urrea may have been--like his wife--a converso: this leads Hathaway to link up--potentially--the two authors and the two works as sharing in a common rejection of societal values. A kind of related matter is the bitterness that Urrea may have felt at being the second son, or *segundón*, denied inheritance but prevented from entering commercial fields of endeavor; that is, the possessor of a latent resentment at the way things were that took its literary form in the "Penitencia" and various of his poetical works. These lines of psycho-biographical analysis are not everyone's cup of tea, to be sure, but they seem to serve a purpose in opening new lines of enquiry with a potential of enriching current understanding of the literary and cultural milieu of this period.

In this light, Hathaway had finished his edition and it was at press when Jesús Gómez' important reading, "Las 'Artes de Amores,' 'Celestina,' y el género literario de la 'Penitencia de Amor' de Urrea" appeared in print [*Celestinesca* 14.1 (1990): 3-16]. This latter critical view observes the dependence on *Celestina* in the later work for ideas and plot but finds the general development and literary stance much more in line with the sentimental romance than with Rojas' unique *modus operandi* (3-11). Hathaway, although able to label the "Penitencia" a celestinesque romance in the strict sense of the homage it pays to Rojas and his *Celestina*, is unable for reasons of the work's structure to accept it as a member of a group of fictional works called Sentimental Romance (xi). He posits the lack of true chivalresque codes of love and honor and assigns the form of love in "Penitencia" to the line of violent, rather than of frustrated love (this latter being the classification of P. Grieve [*Death and Desire in the Spanish Sentimental Romance (1440-1550)*, Newark, Del.: Juan de la Cuesta P, 1987, xviii]).

While the dialogue form is--all scholars agree here--taken directly from *Celestina*, Hathaway deems it worth a shot to wonder if Urrea's "Penitencia" qualifies as drama. The answer is simple enough ("No!"--Urrea does not break molds as does Torres Naharro in the *Comedia Hymenea*), but the deeper notion that insinuates itself is that of an Urrea without the ambition to offer more than this imitation of certain outward forms of *Celestina* and without the insights of a Rojas in the slow and careful revelation of character as the work moves from one phase to another: this

failing is especially acute in the presentation of female characters, Finoya in particular (there seems to be a pervasive misogynistic thread in Urrea's work).

Illicit love is punished in all the source works that provide examples for "Penitencia"—as it is, in fact, in Urrea's work (in which the two are caught *in fraganti* by Finoya's father and sentenced to separate lives in prison), but the mark of difference being that—throughout—the negative aspects of love are underscored more forcefully: Darino is methodical and calculating, thinking of Finoya as object; Finoya is a really unwilling beloved, taking no pleasure in what is nearly rape on the second and final visit of Darino, at which point her father discovers this treachery and makes quite literal the metaphor-allegory of the "prison of love."

I agree with Hathaway. The reading of "Penitencia de amor" can seem dry and the characters uninspired. It simply isn't a volume (slim though it be) that you plan to settle down with to while away pleasantly some free hours set aside for the purpose of escape reading. That said, it must also be affirmed that students of prose fictions in the Isabelline period, and *celestinistas* everywhere, will find much here to interest them. There is value in the work itself, of course, but, like all the progeny of Celestina's prolific literary line, it fulfills the added promise of illuminating how readers read, understood, and re-worked (each according to specific talents and ends) the themes that, in Rojas' masterpiece, seem endlessly—in the phenomenon of *la celestinesca*—to recombine.

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Celiso.

Fernando de Rojas

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# LA CELESTINA

Introducción de Víctor de Lama

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