

CONCERNING MELIBEA'S BREASTS

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In her recent feminist study of the *carpe diem* theme in *Celestina*, Diane Hartunian cites (50-51) the two conflicting descriptions of Melibea's breasts--that of the erotically enthused Calisto whose paean in general "is representative of the Renaissance concept of beauty" ("la redondez y forma de las pequeñas tetas" [I: 54]) and that of the aggressively derogatory Areúsa which "exemplifies a much more vulgar, exaggerated form of imagery" ("unas tetas tiene, para ser doncella, como si tres veces hobiese parido; no parecen sino dos grandes calabazas" [IX: 145])--and then comments:

The shift in vocabulary is the result of what Bakhtin defines as the downward thrust of images. In *Rabelais and His World* Bakhtin describes this evolution in vocabulary as a reflection of the conceptual reconstruction of the medieval topography of the universe from vertical to the new Renaissance cosmos

¹ Green makes the point that there was a flexible medieval poetic for this type of description; it was the custom to include the breasts. He cites E. Faral's *Arts poétiques* as evidence: "pour le corps, le cou et la nuque, les épaules, les bras, les mains, la poitrine, la taille, le ventre (à propos de quoi la rhétorique prête le voile de ses figures à des pointes licencieuses), les jambes et les pieds" (255). Calisto interjects his own enthusiasm, going beyond mere inventory to erotic meditation.

which is horizontal. A shift from a vertical spatial orientation produces new imagery that focuses on the human being and on the body. This change from top to bottom occurs both in space and metaphor and as a result, produces both a rejuvenation of the biological individual, and an abundance of erotic images.

It is only natural that the author be eager to prove her point and thus validate her choice of critical approach, but I do believe that she has overstated her case, has made a leap from the specific to the universal without the necessary intermediate application of the means for better understanding of the text, means which she presents elsewhere in her book. It is this lapse which inspires what follows.

TETAS.

Certainly the reader of *Celestina* is confronted by two greatly divergent images which, in an attempt to maintain both accuracy and a semblance of propriety, I shall not translate: *tetas* and *calabazas*. It is a constant in Rojas's text that persons, words, and actions are not necessarily what at a given moment they may seem or are described to be: besides irony at work, perspectivism.² Lacking the guidance and putative objectivity of an omniscient narrator/narrative voice, the reader in search of Truth and/or Reality in *Celestina* must rely on his or her own exegesis based on what is, in essence, a virtual journalistic exercise: who is saying what to whom and why?³

² Hartunian also remarks on this: "Through the technique of 'perspectivism,' Rojas presents a creative, modern version of the same *carpe diem* theme used since antiquity. Perspectivism is the portrayal of characters as described by the characters themselves" (19)--as well as by others, I must add; she calls her readers' attention to Gilman's *Art of "La Celestina"*, pp. 57-58.

³ And how? The reader has the words and can attempt to decipher context and intention but must extrapolate tone and modulation, volume and emotion, perhaps using as clue the inferred physical movement of the speaker. The opening scene of *Celestina* makes a handy exercise, even in the classroom: how to read Melibea's few words "Pues aun más igual galardón te daré yo, si perseveras" (I: 46)? Irony, mockery? Coquetry? Civil admonition, glinting threat? Calisto's clear misunderstanding of *galardón* as a euphemism for copulation, Melibea's subsequent irate threats, and even her later self-doubts ("¿Y no me fuera mejor conceder su petición y demanda ayer a Celestina, cuando de parte de aquel señor, cuya vista me cautivó, me fue rogado, y contentarle a él y

While it is true that Calisto repeats clichés in his description "hecha [...] de acuerdo con los modelos del Arcipreste [de Hita], de Boccaccio y de otros escritores en boga" (Berndt 40), one must also take into account the full description which Hartunian apparently did not: "la redondeza y forma de las pequeñas tetas, ¿quién te la podría figurar? Que se despereza el hombre cuando las mira" (I: 54). Shortly afterwards: "Aquella proporción que ver yo no pude, no sin duda por el bulto de fuera juzgo incomparablemente ser mejor que la que París juzgó entre las tres Deesas" (I: 55), provoking yet another interruption from the none-too-silently suffering Sempronio, "¿Has dicho?"

What in fact has Calisto *seen*? As for the well-skirted *bulto* we need spend no time in explanation but merely query, knowing how Melibea is depicted in the earliest *Celestina* editions, what there could be that might suggest with any accuracy the contours of any figure surpassing Aphrodite's.⁴ In the figures which illustrate this article, taken from reproductions in *Celestinesca*, one should inspect the necklines of those encompassing garments of Rojas's time: the most that is visible of any Melibeian breasts is only a partial quadrant of flesh of each and sufficient attendant bulk to prompt belief in their existence, and to delineate, albeit vaguely, the mammarian circumference. Of course, as Calisto points out, had he seen Melibea nude there would be no reason to waste time describing her perfections: "Y lo que te dijere será de lo descubierto; que, si de lo oculto yo hablarte supiera, no nos fuera necesario altercar tan miserablemente estas razones" (I: 54).

Calisto is a reader. Even Sempronio recognizes the literary nature of his master's excited volubility: "Vosotros los filósofos de Cupido [...]", "¿No has leído de Pasife [...]?", "Lee los historiales,

sanar a mí [...]?" (X: 153)) may give direction but only that, not definition.

⁴ For a review of the forms of skirts see Berndt-Kelley's illustrations. For contemporary representations of the nude, see as examples Raphael's "Three Graces" and Giorgione's "Venus" and "Concerto campestre"; the illustration of the Judgement of Paris in the *Recueil des histoires de troyes* (1495) by Raoul Le Fèvre (Ehrhart 214) is also interesting. Picasso's nude of--presumably--Melibea is *zaftig* but does not portray *calabazas* (*Celestinesca* 10.2 [1986], 16). For a literalist artistic rendering of Calisto's *tetas* description see the 1974 illustration by L. Goñi reproduced in *Celestinesca* 8.1 (1984), 54.

estudia los filósofos, mira los poetas", "¿No has leído el filósofo, do dice: «Así como la materia apetece a la forma, así la mujer al varón?»" (I: 50, 51, 52, and 55), and later "Lee más adelante; vuelve la hoja" (II: 75). Expressing himself with the vocabulary of the cancionero texts which shape his rhetoric, it is a Melibea-text, in effect, which Calisto is now (re)writing, perhaps subtly influenced as well by memories of iconographic presentations of that mythic standard of feminine perfection: a literate imagination at work. This is not unlike the moment--more comic because more sophomorically and, yes, bookishly passionate--when he receives the cordón from Celestina:

CAL.— [...] ¡Gozarán mis ojos con todos los otros sentidos, pues juntos han sido apasionados! ¡Gozará mi lastimado corazón, aquel que nunca recibió momento de placer, después aquella señora conoció! Todos los sentidos le llagaron, todos acorrieron a él con sus esportillas de trabajo. Cada uno le lastimó quanto más pudo; los ojos en vella, los oídos en oílla, las manos en tocalla.

CEL.—¿Que la has tocado, dices? Mucho me espantas.

CAL.—Entre sueños, digo.

CEL.—¿En sueños?

CAL.—En sueños la veo tantas noches, que temo no me acontezca como a Alcibiades [...]" (VI: 114)

Hartunian aptly refers to Mary Gossy's fascinating study of the hymen a a non-text (86), citing her statement that it "is simply a membrane-text, before, during, after, and irrespective of phallic narrative or interpretive action": "All it tells is that it is and it has nothing to do with the stories told about it" (Gossy 51). Breasts signify lactiferous glands, but by virtue of being to some degree visible they are also within the scope of the male phallogentric and eroticized gaze/interpretation which Hartunian has opportunely described, with appropriate references to Lacan, Freud, and Paul Julian Smith, an interpretation to which I refer as (re)writing.

This has more than a little to do with Calisto. He is defensive as he talks with Sempronio, more experienced in matters sexual



Iconografía de algunas Melibeas.

(albeit not sufficiently to be wiser and to lose his gullibility⁵) yet a "pseudo misogynist [who] needs the erotic attention Elicia provides him" (Swietlicki 8). Calisto is justifying not only love of woman but also his choice of beloved, his stance as a lover so ardent that the lady is his religion: "Melibeo soy y a Melibea adoro y en Melibea creo y a Melibea amo" (I: 50; cf. Gossy 26-28), hyperbole sufficient to make one wonder what indeed he really means--and why did he not add "a Melibea deseo" and be done with it? He does not initially seem to expect any assistance from his servant but is merely ventilating his hyperactive imaginings and neophytic yearnings. Sempronio does recognize the priapic (phallogentric) urge and concomitant reification which Calisto would prefer to idealize ([re]write) in terms of the *cancionero* poetry which has so obviously been his text-mentor (as opposed to his servant's instructor, the living, willing, and verifiably able Elicia).

The description of Melibea does not reflect the "Renaissance concept of beauty" (Hartunian 52, emphasis added); he is mouthing the words of the praises of beauty in the terms of the late medieval *cancioneros* where indeed a beloved as physical presence is not even necessary as a point of departure for poetic creation: "El poeta, más que un enamorado de veras, es un *representante* de la pasión amorosa; que la *represente* bien es lo que vale, ya la sienta de verdad, ya se precie de sentirla, ya la finja " (Salinas 33, his emphases).⁶ Melibea is fine--"mujer moza, muy generosa, de alta y serenísima sangre, sublimada en próspero estado" ("Argumento": 45)--so all else must be fine, including those *partes* to which, however much their existence may inflame Calisto's imagination, he has never been privy and about which, for now, he can only dream of claiming as a *gloria* of his own--and "own" in the sexually possessive sense. It must be insistently pointed out that Calisto's dreams and imaginings (and Melibea's: see below) are of and directed toward gender: Melibea is woman because the text (including the mammarian chapter) says so and it is

⁵ I refer of course to the moment when Elicia believes that she can trick him with the truth, that "Un mi enamorado" is the cause of Crito's footsteps heard upstairs in Celestina's house (I: 57).

⁶ Cf. Baena: "e otrosy que [the poet] sea amador, e que siempre se precie e se finja de ser enamorado; porque es opynion de muchos sabyos, que todo omme que sea enamorado, conuene a saber, que ame a quien deue e como deue e donde deue, afirman e disen qu'el tal de todas buenas dotrinas es doctado" (15).

woman, with the constituent genitalia thereunder pertaining, that is Calisto's principal and overriding interest and goal as a man--if he can ever figure out how to get to where he wants to go.⁷ Sempronio's intervention is crucial to the turn of the plot:

Del elogio por Calisto de su amada como superior a toda la creación e inalcanzable por lo tanto, la acción de LC salta abruptamente a la decisión del protagonista, instado por Sempronio, de solicitar la ayuda de Celestina para que le traiga a Melibea 'hasta la cama,' lo cual basta para negar la idealización anterior de aquélla y desvía la acción hacia la consumación del *deseo*, gracias a la intervención de la trotaconventos, sin que en ningún instante se piense en el matrimonio como el vehículo más a propósito para saciar aquél. (Rodríguez-Luis 340)⁸

And this *deseo* is as well the case with Melibea herself even though at the moment of Calisto's praises the reader does not know it; she will learn of it only later in the course of her self-doubting monologue: "¿Y no me fuera mejor conceder su petición y demanda ayer a Celestina, cuando de parte de aquel señor, cuya vista me cautivó, me fue rogado, y contentarle a él y sanar a mí [...]?" (X: 153).

⁷ Castells studies the Bakhtinian "decline into grotesque realism" (12) operative in *aucto* I and aptly characterizes Calisto's quandary: "The contrast between appearance and existence, the living and the painted, and the shadow and the real underlines his central conflict between the uncertain reality which surrounds him and the visions that haunt him" (14).

⁸ Once copulation seems possible or later has been achieved Calisto can leave behind the pose of a thwarted lover of *belle dame sans merci* and vaunt his incipient virility, as when he dismisses Celestina's possible punishment for her intervention, "cumpla conmigo y emplúmenla la cuarta [vez]" (II: 77), or when in the *Tragicomedia* he finds himself close by that "dulce puerto" (XIV: 191) once more and callously states "el que quiere comer el ave, quita primero las plumas" (XIX: 222).

Of interest in determining Calisto's character (though I doubt that it be directly applicable) is an explication of Sallust's *Concerning the Gods and the Universe* (ca. 363): "In [his] psychological allegory of the Judgment [of Paris], the choice-of-lives theme is viewed from a [classical] Neoplatonic perspective. Paris [=Calisto] represents the soul who cannot transcend sense perception and is thus blind to all but beauty, represented by Aphrodite [=Melibea]" (Ehrhart 22-23).

Hartunian correctly notes that Rojas introduces the *carpe diem* injunction to each sex through the character of Celestina herself, but misinterprets it as leading to erasing sexual distinctions: "The ungendering of the *carpe diem* call [...] is highly significant in terms of the feminist struggle, the main goal of which is to deconstruct the denigrating fundamental binary opposition, masculine/feminine. Rojas achieves this through his androgynous *carpe diem* call, implying that the warning to enjoy youth and the fear of the brevity of life are inclusive of both sexes" (80)--but both sexes as sexes, I maintain, as genders, distinctive and yet equally open to *jouissance* in the fashion of each.⁹ Recall that Melibea, begging Lucrecia to keep secret her dealings with Celestina, offers as justification "porque goce yo de tan suave amor" (X: 161).

We are left, then, with *tetas* only as an imprecise categorization (even with the adjective *pequeñas*), a gender-laden word chosen more for its carnal or sexual denotation than for specificity of actual objects.¹⁰ They have not been wholly seen and therefore

⁹ Smith discusses one of the *Emblemas morales* of Sebastián de Covarrubias (1610), "a bearded lady, standing solemnly in front of a rural landscape. The motto reads 'Neutrumque et utrumque' or 'Neither and both', and the verse reads in translation: 'I am *hic*, *haec*, and *hoc*. I decline myself. I am man and woman, and I am a third which is neither one nor the other, and it is not clear which of these things I am'" (16). In *Celestina*, by force of the ever-present *carpe diem* (I believe Hartunian might agree), there is only *hic* and *haec* and the prospect of pleasure.

(I would feel more secure in my argument had Rojas allowed us to learn Melibea's thoughts about the *bulto* she might have perceived on Calisto's person, but he did not completely plumb the cause of her libidinous attraction. The woodcuts do not provide us with sufficient evidence to treat this matter beyond a footnote parenthesis: Calisto is depicted wearing anything from a mid-hip-length tunic to an ankle-length overgarment [see Berndt-Kelley, *passim*]. Hartunian here is influenced by Lacan's "Of the Gaze as *Objet Petit*": "The eyes are the instruments with which the subject executes his [I add: or her] drive. The eye is therefore both an organ of perception and of pleasure [...] and the gaze perceives a fantasy" [78]; Smith notes that "female sexuality [...] is auto-erotic" [20]. And of course we have seen Rojas cite Aristotle: «Así como la materia apetece a la forma, así la mujer al varón» [Sempronio in I: 55].)

¹⁰ In the 1499 *Comedia* the only other use of *teta* is in the singular, when Melibea localizes the pain of her new infirmity: "la izquierda teta es su aposentamiento" (X: 156), apparently an anatomic reference devoid of sexuality. Covarrubias makes no stylistic distinction between *teta* (which he likens to the

cannot be accurately quantified, perhaps only affectively so; they are imagined according to a poetic/artistic canon and are thus qualified in the terms of an ideal of beauty praised though not perceived: a pleased fantasy.

CALABAZAS.

Hartunian accurately describes Areúsa as "a spontaneous, natural, and sensual being who pays special attention to the care of her body and thus reveals graphically the *carpe diem* theme" (26). Her outburst comes in a scene fraught with the social friction which is so much a part of *Celestina* (Rodríguez-Luis, *passim*). In the house of the *alcahueta* are congregated the *mochachas* and Calisto's servants, Pármeno now one of the company by virtue of his dalliance with Areúsa. Sempronio makes the mistake of praising his master's beloved, "aquella graciosa y gentil Melibea" (IX: 144): "La menciona ante las dos rameras, y defiende su punto de vista sin darse cuenta de picar en las telas que más nublan la mirada femenina. La reacción es como un martilleo estratificador de impresiones revulsivas e imágenes estropeadas" (Gariano 4). Elicia explodes with envy and spite: "¡Jesú, Jesú, y qué hastío y enojo es ver tu poca vergüenza!" (IX: 145). The principal theme of her tirade is that Melibea has advantages as the daughter of a monied merchant; her words call forth her colleague's agreement:

ELIC.—[...] Aquella hermosura por una moneda se compra en la tienda. Por cierto, que conozco yo en la calle donde ella vive cuatro doncellas, en quien Dios más repartió su gracia que no en Melibea. Que si en

Greek theta "a la qual la teta de la muger tiene mucha semejança, por quanto es en forma redonda y enmedio tiene el peçón semejante al punto de la dicha letra" [960b]) and *seno* ("también significa el pecho" [933b]) though this latter word is not defined in any mammarian sense but only as "la parte anterior del animal desde la garganta hasta el vientre" (858b). Areúsa refers to her breasts as *pechos* as does *Celestina* (VII: 127).

In a passage influenced by Calisto's description, Juan del Encina's *Égloga de Plácida y Vitoriano* has Vitoriano also enthuse: "¡Y qué pechos / tan perfetos, tan bien hechos / que me ponen mil antojos!" (342); rather more forthright is the *aguador* in the *Farsa llamada Ardamisa* (1530?) by Diego de Negueruela when he sees the lovely Ardamisa: "¡Quien se pudiesse frotar / en esos tan lindos pechos!" (10).

algo tiene de hermosura, es por buenos atavíos que trae. Ponelos a un palo, también diréis que es gentil. Por mi vida, que no lo digo por alabarme; mas creo que soy tan hermosa como vuestra Melibea.

AREU.— Pues no la has tú visto como yo, hermana mía. [She describes Melibea's toilette.] Las riquezas las hacen a éstas hermosas y ser alabadas; que no las gracias de su cuerpo. Que así goce de mí, unas tetas tiene [etc.]. (IX: 145)

It is certain that Melibea can buy for herself perfumes and powders which may be unavailable to the *mochachas*, and to be sure, given the family wealth, she can purchase whatever *atavíos* she may fancy and they cannot afford. But if Elicia wishes to wipe the reference from Sempronio's lips and mind, thus to protect her own self-image, so also does Areúsa wish to belittle Melibea's *gracias* by enlarging her breasts to *grandes calabazas*, a keenly ironic process. Melibea cannot be what she seems because Areúsa wishes to seem what she is not, one of the *buenas* instead of one of the *públicas*--which technically she is despite her concubinage with but a sole provider.

He has just left her, but his treatment of her has had special meaning as she tells Celestina: "Sabes que se partió ayer aquel mi amigo con su capitán a la guerra. [...] Que me da todo lo que he menester, tiéneme honrada, favoréceme y trátame como si fuese su señora" (VII: 128).¹¹ She initially tells Celestina that she does not want to admit another lover, her relationship with the *amigo* and her own *pundonor* given as reasons: "¿cómo quieres que haga tal cosa, que tengo a quien dar cuenta, como has oído, y si soy sentida, matarme ha? Tengo vecinas envidiosas. Luego lo dirán. Así que, aunque no haya más mal de perderle, será más que ganaré en agradar al que me

¹¹ The unseen *amigo*, given the accommodation he has provided, might be an *alférez*; the phrase "con su capitán" does not sound to me like a captain/common soldier relationship. One should recall in this context Swietlicki's comment: "In contrast to most authors of his day, Rojas does not treat women as a moral issue, and he sees them as social beings. Moreover, his female characters serve in a wide variety of social functions, with some of them showing individual reactions to the standards of behavior imposed on them by their social status. [...] Areusa and Elicia use the world's oldest profession as a means of independence. In these 'mochachas' and in Lucrecia one finds some resentment of the wealthy class, as well as a tendency to ape them" (8-9).

mandas" (VII: 129). In the *Tragicomedia* text she adds "no soy de las que públicamente están a vender sus cuerpos por dinero" (VII: 131). And yet she does admit Pármeneo even though the prospect of material gain could not be much less satisfactory, given what we know of his earnings in Calisto's service (and even were the tale true of monies from his father guarded for him by Celestina, Pármeneo has just promised them all to the bawd if she can procure Areúsa for him: another keen irony).

Areúsa's comments on makeup may be telling if one listens as well to Gossy: "Makeup works to play into fantasies of what makes a woman desirable, so that the woman can gain power through attracting and marrying a man, and thus perhaps reach some position of security. She rewrites herself so that he is willing to read her. The makeup covers who she is underneath; it paints the label *object* on a subject" (50: her emphasis). At the end of her comments Areúsa adds "No sé qué se ha visto Calisto, porque deja de amar otras que más ligeramente podría haber y con quien más él holgase" (IX: 145).¹² It does not seem to me to distort the text to infer that she may here be referring to her own fantasy of attracting, if not Calisto, someone like him. Realizing the impossibility of this--Melibea has done what she cannot--also prompts her to lash out in sweet vengeance:¹³ what must be *pequeñas tetas* as Calisto warmly

¹² The sentence goes on in the *Tragicomedia*: "sino que el gusto dañado muchas veces juzga por dulce lo amargo"; it continues the malevolence but has no effect on my interpretation. Areúsa returns to the topic of Melibea later, and less violently: "no juzgues [to Sempronio] la bondad y hermosura de Melibea por ser eso que afirmas" (IX: 146).

¹³ I offer with trepidation a very precarious hypothesis: when younger, Areúsa might have been a serving girl in Pleberio's household, and mistreated to boot. Evidences of such a past vocation?: her scathing criticism of *señoras* in the ninth aucto [148-50]; her exclamation in the *Tragicomedia* text, "¡Oh tía, y qué duro nombre y qué grave y soberbio es «señora» continuo en la boca!" (149); and her decision to live "en mi pequeña casa, exenta y señora, que no en sus ricos palacios sojuzgada y cativa" (IX: 150). One of the topics *señoras* throw in the face of criadas is their *tratos amorosos*; Areúsa gives two examples in the *Tragicomedia*: "¿Estás preñada?" and "¿Cómo te va con él?" (IX: 149). The diatribe has the flavor of experience but of course there is no link to Pleberio's household. (Were it possible to place her there as camarera to Melibea, what credence then would need be given her comment on *calabazas*, what great changes in *Celestina* exegeses!)

imagines, must be *grandes calabazas* or something similar as Areúsa also indulges her imagination, but caustically deforming them, and that prize-winning *bulto* as well: "El vientre no se le he visto; pero, juzgando por lo otro, creo que le tiene tan flojo, como vieja de cincuenta años" (IX: 145).¹⁴

What in fact has Areúsa *seen*? Nothing more nor less than Calisto, some glimpse of upper bosom and a voluminous skirt which must cover something. If the hymen is "simply a membrane-text" to which is assigned meaning, then so also is a *bulto* defined or (de)constructed according to its location above or below the beltline, a "*pecho-text*" and "*vientre-text*" for each viewer-exegete to interpret, to (re)write. In a manner akin to that of Calisto, who writes Melibea's body as better than that of the pagan goddess and thus perfectly suited for his erotic fantasy if not his sexual pleasure, Areúsa writes it in accord with her intent to bring her down from feminine perfection, to reduce her to the base level of oft-serviced breeder, or worse.¹⁵

One does, then, encounter the Bakhtinian "downward thrust of images" and "decline into grotesque realism," but certainly not for reasons which approach either the universal or the cosmological. Whinnom's thought about the author's implied purpose provides a timely comment: "his egalitarianism levels by pulling down, not by raising up, by demonstrating, that is, the baseness of the aristocracy rather than the dignity of the commoner" (66): Calisto sees in Melibea

¹⁴ "El abultamiento somático es la medida del resentimiento," writes Gariano, and a few lines later fashions the statement that "la más bella mujer queda convertida en un monstruo dentro de un contexto humano y ambiental que forma un foro apropiado: esto es, el banquete de una proxeneta patrocinadora junto con la canalla y la putalla hermanadas en el gusto y la perversidad" (4). In his closing paragraph Gariano states that it seems that "la pensativa sonrisa hebraica de Fernando de Rojas captara con simultánea ambivalencia el sentido ideal del amor sublime y el contrasentido real del pragmatismo erótico" (13).

¹⁵ Round ends this comment by citing Thomas Middleton's *Women Beware Women*: "Areúsa's crudely-worded abuse of Melibea's physical charms brings her to the level of the girls in the brothel. The effect of this reductive movement on the book's presentation of value is familiar to us from Jacobean tragedy, at the disturbed and questioning latter end of the Renaissance experience:

Lust and forgetfulness has been among us,
And we are brought to nothing." (51)

a high-born *doncella* as a sex object with the *pequeñas tetas* (hedonism and sexuality) which befit the beckoning image he conjures up; in somewhat parallel fashion the vindictive and class-conscious Areúsa reduces Melibea to perhaps no better than a slut and concomitantly her breasts become *grandes calabazas* (multiple procreation and lactation).

In sum, I believe that the two passages which prompt Hartunian's remarks have more to do with the inner world of Fernando de Rojas's *Celestina* than with the Bakhtinian vision of the Renaissance world without.



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Celestina. De la capa del t. I de *Literatura española. Textos, crítica y relaciones* (Madrid:Alhambra, 1985)

Fernando de Rojas

Born in 1465, Fernando de Rojas is now known to be the author of *La Comedia de Celestina y Melibea*, better known as *La Celestina*. De Rojas was the child of Jewish parents forcibly converted to Christianity. De Rojas was at pains to conceal his authorship of the book, of which the surviving edition dates from 1499, by presenting it as the unfinished work of an earlier writer which he merely transposed and completed. In 1502 he published a new edition in which the original 16 'acts' were extended to 21. The most important character in the book is the old bawd Celestina, around whom revolve the amusing and licentious scenes of low life which give the book its appeal. Its popularity is attested by at least 60 reprints in the 16th century alone. It was translated into English in 1631 by James Mabbe as *The Spanish Bawd*. De Rojas died in 1541.



Programa (detalle). Ver pp. 135-138.