

por razones obvias, para leerla como lo hicieron los contemporáneos al escritor. Esto no es óbice para que entremos a saco en la obra y la adaptemos a nuestra percepción del objeto estético. Pero sólo siendo conscientes de que no llegaremos nunca a conocer por completo la intención de Fernando de Rojas, sino el producto artístico que nos legó, podremos abrazar su obra y no perdernos en el intento.

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**Burke, James F. *Vision, the Gaze, and the Function of the Senses in Celestina*. University Park: Penn State University Press, 2000.**

In his most recent book, James F. Burke offers us some new ways to consider the words and actions of the characters in *Celestina*. Using Jacques Lacan's «gaze theory» as a point of departure, Burke provides his reader with a thorough and useful review of theories - ancient, medieval, and modern - concerning the relationship between the individual and what s/he perceives in the surrounding world. Drawing on works from Aristotle to Juan Ruiz and the modern critics who ponder them, in Chapter One Professor Burke explains how the sensory fields (especially vision) were understood from the earliest times. Particular attention is paid to the fact that what a person sees with the eye must be related to what s/he sees with the soul, that is, the person's understanding of what is being glanced. Burke uses information such as this in subsequent chapters to explain, among many other things, Calisto's initial reactions upon seeing Melibea in her garden, her reaction to him, and so forth.

The second chapter deals more closely with the role that vision has in *Celestina*, beginning with Calisto's familiar first utterance «En esto veo, Melibea, la grandeza de Dios.» In the past many critics have concluded that the young man begins by considering Melibea's beauty as a means of attaining the spiritual - in the courtly tradition - and later opts for the purely physical aspects of the affair. Burke departs from this idea, believing instead that Calisto is solely interested in the physical realm from the start. Like other critics, he sees Calisto experiencing a descent throughout the work. However, the descent that Burke describes is not the decline from the spiritual to the physical, but from the highest of the senses (vision) to the lowest of them, touch and taste (exemplified, for example, by Calisto's likening Melibea to a bird who must be plucked before eaten). «His downward trajectory, which begins in real terms of the 'proceso de su deleyte destes amantes' ...and ends in a treacherous garden of delights...»(37). Burke goes on to explain that the author(s) of the work draw the character of *Celestina* as a kind of intermediary that translates what the lovers see into the baser inner desires, orienting them towards physical rather than spiritual desires.

Celestina therefore represents the negative aspect of the functions of vision. In Chapter Three Burke compares this paragon of the negative with its most positive representation, Mary Magdalene. The patron saint of lovers in the Middle Ages, Mary Magdalene earned her reputation for «the positive visual process» (51) by being the first person to see the risen Christ. Burke sees a double irony in Calisto's visit to her church. The conversion he and Melibea will undergo is toward evil, not good, and Calisto himself is not interested in seeing like Mary Magdalene, with its constructive spiritual implications. In addition, one must remember that the saint had been a prostitute, so comparison to Celestina, «this negative mother, this unreformed Magdalene» (55) is inevitable.

The power of the evil eye is the subject of the fourth chapter. Usually attributed to women, the evil eye was sometimes thought of as a rope or a cord that could bind the object of the curse. This is, of course, an important image in *Celestina*, and is represented by the thread that the old bawd comes to sell Melibea, as well as the young woman's own *cordón*. The working of the evil eye upon the thread is perhaps the only plausible explanation for Alisa's leaving her daughter with Celestina.

In Chapter Five Burke considers the sense of sound and how the characters in the work are affected not only by what they see, but what they hear from the mouths of others. Just as Celestina is associated with the baser aspects of sight, so is she with the baser sounds of the universe. Burke demonstrates «the poetry of sound» (91) with several examples: Celestina's conjuring of Pluto; her monologue in the street on the way to Pleberio's house, in which she takes the lack of barking dogs as a positive sign; the mention of Celestina's name to Alisa. The best example of the power of a named evoked in Melibea's reaction in Act 4, when Celestina pronounces Calisto's name for the first time and is verbally attacked for it. Burke reminds us at the end of the chapter that «[t]he evil eye and the evil tongue were thought of in the Middle Ages as functioning together» (102).

The last chapter of the book is entitled «The Banquet of Sense and the Garden of Delights.» Here Burke returns to the concept of descent in the work, which begins and ends in Melibea's garden of delights, which is finally turned into a garden of horrors. He reviews other depictions of gardens - Eden, Ficino's commentary on Plato's *Symposium*, Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights* - and demonstrates that the *locus amoenus* turned *hac lachymarum valle* is related to other models of the era.

As Burke observes early in his book, «[i]n its most basic structure, then, Celestina can be understood as an exemplum that demonstrates how two personages come to be overwhelmed by sensory perceptions» (44). This is the es-

sence of this original book, which takes the reader carefully through the process through which the senses were believed to influence an individual, and how this process operates in *Celestina*. Burke's thorough research and explanation of background material make this book interesting and useful not only for the study and understanding of *Celestina*, but as a manner in which other works of the era might be understood as well.

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Pablo Picasso. Ilustración de la traducción alemana de Fritz Vogelsäng (1989)

# Celestina,



Ende is een Tragicomedie van Calisto  
 en Melibea. In die welcke (vuyten haer gewuech-  
 lichen ende sueten sin) staet veel profaetliche ende  
 wisse sentencien oft spreekwoorden: en veel noot-  
 sakeeliche waerscouwingen bysonder voor lange  
 ghelicken betoonende haer merckelike geluck als  
 in enen claren spieghel dat groot bedroch vanden  
 pluwinstuckers \ van ontrouwen dienaers ende  
 vande Coppelersten. Nu eerst nieu getranslatert  
 wt den Spaensche in onser gemeynder Duytscher  
 spraken seer oorspoorlijck om lesende mach  
 wel te rechte gheeten worden den Spiegel  
 der verdoolder amouculer Jonckheit.  
 En bet is een onderwijs en leeringe allen men-  
 schen van wat state dat sij wesen moeghen.  
 Met Gratie ende Privilegie.