

The introductory material takes up some 50 pages of the book, the rest being dedicated to an edition of the Spanish text with a facing annotated translation in English. Given that the work has been unpublished in any form since the early sixteenth century, the authors of this very useful edition are to be congratulated on having brought Bishop Díaz de Luco's still now very readable text back to life, for an early twenty-first century audience. For, as the writer of the Foreword aptly notes: 'Díaz de Luco's clear call to faithful living, his focus on the care of souls, his articulation of the responsibilities and powers of privilege are not bound to the sixteenth century alone' (ix). Indeed they are not.

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VICENTE PÉREZ DE LEÓN, *Tablas destempladas: Los entremeses de Cervantes a examen*. Alcalá de Henares: Centro de Estudios Cervantinos, 2005. 287 pp. ISBN 84-96408-03-5.

Vicente Pérez de León's *Tablas destempladas* sets out to provide cultural and literary context for Cervantes's *entremeses*. In the first part of the book, attempting to answer the complex question of what is 'esencialmente cervantino' about the short plays, Pérez de León finds the answer in part: 'se puede apreciar en estas obras que una reflexión sobre las destemplanzas del ser humano aflora de las actitudes de varios de sus protagonistas' (16). In order to explore *destemplanza*, he turns to medical theorists such as Juan Huarte de San Juan, whose *Examen de ingenios para las ciencias* (1575) he draws upon extensively. He defines an *entremés de examen* as one in which 'una sucesión de protagonistas que confiesan alguna debilidad que se presenta ante otros que examinan su tendencia o destemplanza desde una posición privilegiada' (127). According to Pérez de León, Cervantes's short plays are unified by dramatizing the human endeavour to classify, study, and name human distempers and excesses, such as those studied by Huarte de San Juan.

In contrast to previous studies, such as Jean Canavaggio's *Cervantes entre vida y creación* published in the same series (2000), Pérez de León concludes that 'la mayoría de los entremeses de Cervantes no sólo no se cara-

cterizan tanto por pretender experimentar dentro de su género, sino que son más bien continuistas dentro de la línea del teatro breve en prosa' (21). The strength of this book is its synthesis of the influences of Lope de Rueda, the *commedia dell'arte* (drawing on the work of John Rotta), *entremeses* from the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth, and medical theorists, placing Cervantes in a concurrently reactionary and revolutionary theatrical context which makes his occasionally innovative use of characterization (subverting stereotype) and metatheatre stand out all the more (72-73).

Building a new *Itinerario del entremés* (departing from Eugenio Asensio's 1965 work), Pérez de León traces the 'degeneración' from didactic *entremeses* to burlesque farces: 'en el caso del entremés podemos sin duda hablar de degeneración, de desviación de un género que aportaba una diversión sencilla, torpe, fea y en muchos casos ejemplar hacia uno que aporta un humor cruel, despiadado y absurdo' (77). The author argues that, as Madrid expanded, the playwrights of Cervantes's day pandered to increasingly vulgar tastes, and popular entertainment such as *entremeses* gradually dumbed down. Cervantes is portrayed as a reformer, viewing contemporary drama as insulting to its audience's intelligence and devoid of educational value (45-46).

Spanning the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the surge of new styles and tastes in the theatre lead Pérez de León to explore how Italian troupes resisted the trend to perform in verse, finding it artificial and affected, and that a portion of the public would have been 'nostalgic' for plays in the old style as Lope de Vega's popular status grew (41). However, he downplays the critical tendency to view the *entremeses* as critiques of Lope's *comedia nueva* (21). Instead, he focuses on how other playwrights borrowed from and were inspired by Cervantes's work (65-80), mentioning that, though his plays were not performed in his lifetime, Cervantes's *entremeses* were (and are) staged after his death (Though Pérez de León here neglects an opportunity to provide some valuable performance history) (42).

The second part of the book treats each of the *Ocho entremeses* in turn, focusing on the nature of the *examen* in each short play. He argues convincingly for the inclusion of *El hospital de los podridos* in the Cervantine

canon, using the notions of *destemplanza* and the *entremés del examen* to compare it with *El juez de los divorcios* (121). Throughout the monograph the author retains a conservative approach, placing Cervantes in the context of a theatrical milieu in which he is only one writer among many others. At times Pérez de León runs the risk of overplaying Cervantes's direct use of the writings of Huarte de San Juan (108), but the book is commendable for its ability to unify the short plays through their mutual use of *exámenes*, showing how arbitration and examination confronted social maladies. In his carefully researched book, Pérez de León demonstrates how Cervantes's plays serve to *tomar el pulso* of a theatre and society under *examen* (186).

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ANTONIO PONZ, *Viaje fuera de España*. Edited by Mónica Bolufer Peruga. Alicante: U de Alicante, 2007. 865 pp. ISBN 978-84-7908-910-8

Antonio Ponz was not a man with simple wanderlust or an exile from his country in search of excitement in foreign lands. On the contrary, the impetus for his major travels was his suggestion to Campomanes that Spain's artistic and architectural patrimony needed to be inventoried, a suggestion that resulted in his monumental 18-volume *Viaje de España* (1772-1794); the *Viaje fuera de España* was the result of a 6-month trip taken in 1783, in which he attempted to catalogue and comment on some of the artistic treasures of France, England, and the Low Countries. From his letters we learn that he enjoyed travel, took interest in international affairs, cultivated many powerful and influential friends (Campomanes, Mengs, Arteaga, Pérez Bayer, Cavanilles, the future Carlos IV), was wise in matters of art, and opposed the Jesuits. Mónica Bolufer's substantial introduction to her new edition of the *Viaje fuera de España*, based on the original publication, brings together much of what is known about Ponz and much that was previously unknown. As she sees him, he was 'buen hijo y estudiante aplicado en su juventud, célibe piadoso, austero en sus costumbres, amigo de sus amigos, de trato festivo y amable, erudito entregado al estudio, apóstol del "buen gusto

artístico, reformador pragmático y constante y patriota obsesionado por el buen nombre de su país' (14). Ponz himself reveals little of this directly in his travel compendia; rather, reserved and reticent to discuss friendships, local customs, women, politics, entertainments, or his personal life, his portrait emerges from subtle hints dropped and clues left behind for the perceptive reader. And Bolufer is that ideal reader, for in her well-documented and lively introduction she brings Ponz's views alive while comparing them with those of other travel writers of the eighteenth century. She takes due note of his dry style, his uneven opinions, and his lack of irony, but recognizes the immense utility of the work (utility was, after all, his very enlightened goal) and coaxes out of it a rich portrait of Ponz and the period.

In 1776 Ponz was named Secretario de la Real Academia de Bellas Artes de San Fernando, a post he kept until illness forced him into retirement in 1790. His descriptions of the art treasures he saw abroad could be tedious, and his foreign language skills left something to be desired, but what he notes in *Viaje fuera de España* of the artistic and architectural patrimony of the cities and towns visited provides us with valuable information about collections, design, perceived value of a work, and comparisons among the countries' various approaches to art collecting. We discern that he likes Classical art, the work of the Italian Renaissance, and the Neo-Palladian architecture of Great Britain, but dislikes medieval art and has a positive aversion to the Baroque. Elitist, and a defender (of course) of 'buen gusto', Ponz reveals himself to be a supporter of a 'reformismo pragmático, moderno y muy vinculado al poder' (58). His views on France are predictably defensive (Masson's attack in the *Encyclopédie méthodique* had just appeared), and while he is skeptical and diffident with regards to France, he cannot help admire much of what he saw in the French cultural world. The Low Countries evoke mixed reactions, but the English thrill him. Clearly, he felt a great affinity for the British, and, as we discover from Bolufer's fresh research, his friendships with Lord Grantham and the Count of Chichester opened up new worlds for him. He was deeply impressed with the British people, the gardens, the manufacturing industriousness of the country, and

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