

Reviews of Books

EUGENIA FOSALBA, *Pulchra Parthenope: hacia la faceta napolitana de la poesía de Garcilaso*. Madrid: Iberoamericana Frankfurt am Main Vervuert. 2019. 250 pp.

In *Pulchra Parthenope*, Eugenia Fosalba offers, with characteristic erudition, another glimpse at Garcilaso de la Vega's Neapolitan sojourn (1532–1535). This volume is a worthy companion to her writings on the subject in previous essays and edited collections, which place Garcilaso within historical, cultural and literary contexts as she explores his lyric production and traces his evolution as a poet in dialogue with his classical predecessors and his learned Neapolitan friends. *Pulchra Parthenope* is divided into six chapters. The first, 'Navagero en Toledo, 1525: esbozos del tapiz de Nise', serves as a handy guide for understanding Garcilaso's contact with Andrea Navagero, the ambassador to Venice, who lauded Toledo as a cultural centre for interactions between the Spanish nobility, writers and distinguished visitors. As Fosalba explains, Navagero's descriptions of Toledo in letters, writings and recitations on its landscape (with references to Virgil's eclogues) may have served as models for Garcilaso's own descriptions of the city in Eclogue III. Navagero may well have brought to his attention Pietro Bembo's significant *Prose della vulgare lingua* (1525). Fosalba reminds us that some of Garcilaso's sonnets written in Spain before his trip to Naples foreshadow his Neapolitan writings, since they contain details found in major works, such as Eclogue III and Elegy II.

The second chapter, 'Desembarco de Garcilaso en Italia', explains the circumstances of Garcilaso's presence in Italy before 1532, which may have facilitated his quick incorporation into Neapolitan cultural and intellectual circles. As in other chapters, Fosalba offers the reader a wealth of information. Highlighted here are his contacts in *tertulias* and academies with well-placed humanists and poets: Scipione Capece, who dedicated his edition of Donatus' commentary on the *Aeneid* to Garcilaso; Antonio Tilesio, to whom Garcilaso dedicated one of his Neo-Latin odes; and Girolamo Seripando, Augustinian friar and theologian, for whom he felt profound admiration and respect. Fosalba examines a manuscript housed in the Biblioteca Nazionale of Naples (XIII AA 63), which contains Neo-Latin odes by Garcilaso and an epigram dedicated to the death of Ariosto, which could be attributed to Garcilaso because of its echoes in his writings, notably Eclogue I and Elegy I, dedicated to Bernaldino de Toledo.

The third chapter, 'La epistolaridad', centres on the Horatian epistle and its influence on the epistolary practice in Spain. After a brief analysis of the Fourth Epistle, Fosalba examines Lope de Vega, one of the poets who best read Horace, and who (following Garcilaso) uses the metapoetic *figura correctionis*; she also gives examples where Lope moves away from Horatian irony and satire. A section on *sprezzatura* offers Fosalba an opportunity to expound on the 'descuido' that filters into Garcilaso's poetry, a subtle link to Horatian irony. She ends the chapter by placing Garcilaso's 'Epístola a Boscán', the first Horatian epistle in Spanish letters, within a Neapolitan classicizing context, especially his close ties to Girolamo Seripando, who took charge of the library of the classicist Aulo Giano Parrasio (1470–1521), and to Bernardino Martirano, who brought out a valuable edition of Horace's *Ars poetica* in 1531. The fourth chapter, 'La preceptiva de Antonio Sebastiano Minturno', places Garcilaso's Sonnet 24, dedicated to María de Cardona, within her celebration in sonnets by Minturno and Bernardo Tasso's *L'Amadigi*. The most valuable parts of this

chapter, however, are those that detail the influence of Minturno's *De Poeta*, with its strong Virgilian presence, on Garcilaso's eclogues.

The fifth chapter, 'Circunstancia y universalidad', discusses the autobiographical dimensions of familiar poems. Following the well-known practice of finding the presence of the poet behind characters of Virgil's eclogues, Fosalba finds in Garcilaso's eclogues an invitation to conjecture that multiple voices, Nemoroso's in particular, may allude to the veiled presence of the historical Garcilaso. She offers an exemplary historical backdrop to Sonnet 33, 'A Boscán desde la Goleta', and the Tunis campaign, including the sack of the city and the ruins of Carthage, to focus on witnesses who recorded the events: by official chroniclers, like Antonio Perrenin and Francisco de los Cobos, by the unofficial account of Paolo Giovio, and by the visual record of the Dutch painter Jan Cornelisz Vermeyen, among others. In the sonnet's tercets Garcilaso goes beyond history when the subject derives his voice from the lament of Virgilian Dido. In her reading of 'En tanto que de rosa y azucena', Fosalba finds the presence of Giulia Gonzaga, taking a cue from Bernardo Tasso's verses dedicated to her. One caveat: if a biographical reading is perfectly justified for the imperial sonnet 'A Boscán desde la Goleta', it is not as convincing for the eclogues and for the *carpe diem* sonnet. The sixth and final chapter, 'La carta de Bembo a Garcilaso', focuses on Seripando's role, on Bembo's flattery of Garcilaso, and a possible subtext of the letter, the 'Epístola a Boscán'.

We owe Eugenia Fosalba a debt of gratitude for her precise and rich exposition of Garcilaso's stay in Naples. Her knowledge of the material is deep and her skill in selecting and interweaving vital historical and cultural details is admirable.

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