



A MARGINAL CELESTINA PLAYLET: FREDERICH FUENTES
LA CELESTINA (BARCELONA, 1899)

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In a recent article¹ we described a shadow play of 1865 with a *Celestina* title that has patent connection to the rebirth of interest for *La Celestina* in the Barcelona area after 1840. Between 1865 and the end of the century, in addition to various Madrid printings, *La Celestina* is published again in Barcelona in 1886 (Palau 51173).² It is possible that the aforementioned shadow play could have had numerous amateur performances in the later years of the 19th century. Indeed, the one-act play now in question (see illustration) may draw as much from the shadow play of 1865 as it does from the text of the original.

The *Celestina-juguet còmich*, premiered in December of 1899, has a less than brilliant plot. A young *tripla*, Aurora Ignocent, mysteriously disappears from Barcelona, the newspapers suggesting foul play. She has in fact only run away because of a lover's misunderstanding. In nearby Sant Gervasi she takes a job as a maid, calling herself Celestina Ros (rubio: de color rojo: Rojas?). At one point there is a curious angry exchange between Celestina and the mistress of the house which might be construed to have a double meaning, referring, perhaps simultaneously, to Celestina's beauty spot and to blemishes on the face of Celestina, the crone of Rojas' original. The mistress refers disdainfully to Celestina, "una cambrera que te una pica aprop de nas." Celestina's sharp retort defines the *pica* as a natural, not cosmetic, beauty spot: "Al menos es natural y es meva." In any event, this Celestina is a most attractive young woman. The men of the house, young and old, are excited by her presence and make various propositions, which Celestina turns down. When the mistress of the house finds jewels in Celestina's room with the initials A.I., all assume Celestina has murdered the Barcelona singer and made off with her valuables. All is happily resolved when the "jutge interino" brought to apprehend the servant Celestina turns out to be Aurora's estranged suitor.

The connections with the namesake of the novel are those of carnal intrigue and of valuables as motive for murder. The connection with the shadow play of 1865 is that of the disguise of a virtuous young

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girl ironically using the name *Celestina* (1865: "angel bajado del cielo"/1899: Aurora Ignocent) for reasons of love. In both plays we only learn of true identity toward the end, thus allowing the connotations of the name *Celestina* full rein. The author of the *juguet cómich* would appear to know the original novel and the implications of disguising his heroine under the name of *Celestina*, but he also appears to have followed the pattern of the shadow play in terms of the ironic disguise used up to the denouement.

The forging of new dimensions to the name *Celestina*, perhaps begun with the shadow play of 1865 and promulgated because of its popularity, seems to be confirmed by this otherwise insignificant playlet of 1899.

NOTES

¹"*Celestina o Los Dos Trabajadores: A Shadow-Play of 1865,*" *Celestinesca* 10, no. 2 (Otoño 1986): 17-24.

²*La Celestina. Tragi-comedia de Calisto y Melibea*, Biblioteca Clásica Española, Barcelona: Daniel Cortezo y C^{ia}, 1886. 289p.



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Frederich Fuentes (fill)



La Celestina



Juguet còmic en un acte y en prosa

Estrenat ab aplauso en lo Teatre Catalá (Romea)
la vetlla del 11 de Desembre de 1899



BARCELONA



Imprempta d'en Joaquim Collazos

Plassa de la Igualtat, 3

1900

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NEW FOR SUMMER OF 1988

Seneca and *Celestina*

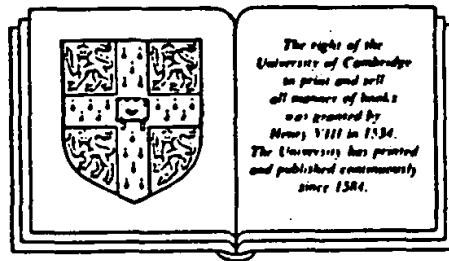
LOUISE FOTHERGILL-PAYNE

Seneca and *Celestina*

This book examines the reason and intent behind the many Senecan and pseudo-Senecan quotations in Fernando de Rojas' masterpiece *Celestina* (1499), which enjoyed enormous popularity in sixteenth-century Europe.

The author considers the importance attached to Senecan thought in the oral, scholarly and literary traditions of fifteenth-century Spain, and demonstrates how readers' tastes and sensibilities were shaped by it. The main themes of *Celestina*, such as self-seeking, friendship and love, pleasure and sorrow, gifts and riches, greed, suicide and death, are shown to be rooted in this intellectual background. The Senecan tradition, albeit treated in a satirical vein, is also seen as underlying the later additions and interpolations to the text, with a shift towards Seneca's tragedies in response to changes in fashion; Professor Fothergill-Payne reveals that even the Petrarchan quotations in *Celestina* have Senecan sources.

Seneca and 'Celestina' thus offers an entirely new perspective on the literary and intellectual sources that shaped this famous book.



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