

Enrique Fernández, *The Image of Celestina: Illustrations, Paintings, and Advertisements* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2024).

Divided into three chapters that cover, respectively, illustrations, paintings, and advertisements of Fernando de Rojas's book, *La Celestina*, Enrique Fernández's original contribution to *Celestina* foregrounds the visual culture associated with Rojas's procuress, witch, go-between, and wizened woman, Celestina. As Fernández points out in his introduction, *La Celestina*'s illustration history differs from that of other canonical works, such as *Don Quixote* and versions of *Don Juan*; Doré and other illustrators of canonical works paid it scant attention, especially outside of Spain, likely due to the different way in which the reader was meant to relate to Celestina and her immoral nature. This is perhaps why Fernández's book comprises one of the first studies of Celestinesque visual culture.

After a brief overview of the illustration history of printed books in Chapter 1, Fernández digs into the first illustrated edition published in c. 1499 before continuing on to assess subsequent editions of the sixteenth century. As a new story with no illustrated precedent at that time, the first publisher deliberately reached for inspiration from contemporaneously published works of fiction and non-fiction. Fernández's treatment of how such works inspired the illustrations of the c. 1499 edition is a satisfying approach to illustration history, one that knits together the observation that printed book illustration, even by the turn of the fifteenth century, began as a practice with a sweeping geographical scope: works from one region would inspire those of another, and more so when publishers from countries such as the Netherlands and Germany moved to Spain to practice their trade.

As with many other illustrated Spanish works printed in that period, such as the corpus relating to el Cid, there is a considerable gap between their initial popularity and a renaissance three centuries later in the nineteenth century. The images in the case of *La Celestina* grew more provocative and detailed, and the intended viewership became clearly older audiences, who sought these works out as a form of titillation; by the nineteenth century, then, younger readers may have been restricted from reading *La Celestina* for concerns about encouraging immoral behaviour. A century later, the Fran-

co-era enforcement of moral expectations meant that editions of *La Celestina* reduced, softened, or caricaturized this provocative material. After the dictatorship concluded, though, adult versions gained greater popularity.

In terms of painting in the book's second chapter, it is precisely the lewdness of the story that prevented it from garnering much interest from Renaissance and Baroque painters, which is why Fernández then examines procuresses and brothels around the time *La Celestina* was published, as these are the ones that eventually crystallize into the iconic portrait of Celestina as an exaggeratedly old, unattractive woman. By the time Luis Paret y Alcázar created his 1784 watercolour of the book's characters, which went on to influence the likes of Goya decades later, the visualization of Celestina had become iconic, if somewhat romanticised: situated in her humble house, surrounded by the likes of prostitutes or the lovers themselves, as well as her potions and instruments for making them. By the following century, however, the tone of these visualizations grew to encompass counterexamples demonstrating bad behaviour, with Goya's *Celestinas* being particularly dark.

The aspect that I found most refreshing about this book is the third chapter's focus on advertising *La Celestina*, whether as book covers, film posters, or playbills. Fernández rightly points out that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century temporary book covers, which served to catch the reader's attention but were not designed to remain a permanent feature of an edition, have received little attention until his foray into their importance. This chapter offers perhaps the first overview of the work's book covers as, over the centuries, visualizing the content of the book on its cover becomes emphasized and less space is accorded for text, with a trend toward eroticization and titillation in the twentieth century—obviously, sex sells. Many adverts in recent decades have also recycled early modern engravings and paintings, whether directly related to *La Celestina* or to the types of interactions and characters that it contains, as a means of gesturing to the plot's temporal setting or characters' temperaments. At the same time, some recent editions have been satisfied with using any visual material remotely related to «Spanishness», rather than the plot of *La Celestina*, for instance a fragment of Velázquez's c. 1655 painting, *Las hilanderas*. This changes for filmic portrayals for which the actors themselves attract viewers, so it is not a surprise that cinema posters and related material tended to feature the actress playing Celestina.

It is a challenge to find ways of improving upon Fernández's book from a scholarly perspective, and my only quibble is that the illustrations accompanying each chapter are not inserted into the text when they are being discussed, leaving the reader to flip or scroll to the end of the book to view them.

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