

Enlightened *hombre de bien*, who displays “[a]mor ardiente y defensa del honor, pero respeto a la familia y a las leyes” (259) and rightly highlights the continuity between Neoclassicism and Romanticism, explaining the latter as “una continuidad y una superación por exacerbación y multiplicación de rasgos que están ya en el Neoclasicismo” (276).

The fourth study sets out a clear and useful history of the texts, neither of which have manuscript versions with which to compare printed editions, and the fifth gives the rationale for the choices made in the present edition. The timing of this publication meant that it was unfortunately impossible for Pérez Magallón to take account of Philip Deacon’s discussion of the revisions made by the author to his last original play (“Las revisiones de Moratín al texto de *El sí de las niñas*” [2015]). Notwithstanding, this edition offers a detailed scholarly engagement with the critical panorama of work thus far on these two key plays of the long Spanish eighteenth century.

The BCRAE editions are beautiful books, in a small format that fits perfectly in the hand and of a quality that befits the rationale for the collection in bringing together the great classical works of Spain and Spanish-America. The sheer amount of data contained within this edition of Moratín’s most well-known plays could be overwhelming and raises the question of whether the readership to whom this work is directed is exclusively scholarly. However, what makes this edition stand out as a work valuable not just for scholars but for also students is the inclusion of a well-considered Index. It enables the reader to focus on a character, theme or other particular aspect and thereby makes this detailed and comprehensive edition really accessible and useful for all. Pérez Magallón has produced a fine new edition that constitutes a further major contribution to the growing panorama of Moratín studies.

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SIMONE PINET. *The Task of the Cleric: Cartography, Translation, and Economics in Thirteenth-Century Iberia*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016. 191 pp.

The rise of clerical culture in thirteenth-century Iberia has yet to receive the attention that it fully deserves, especially in its literary context. Spanish cultural history has often subordinated the literary manifestations of clerical culture to a sort of narrow, text-bound philology, generally disregarding its social context, its intellectual matter, and its clear ties to a

broader European academic milieu, preferring to privilege other forms of cultural expressions, especially popular ones. With few exceptions (studies by Raymond Willis, Ian Michael, Francisco Rico, Amaia Arizaleta, Isabel Uría Maqua, Adeline Rucquoi, and Julian Weiss) the crucial cultural importance of the *mester de clerecía* in thirteenth century Iberia has been met largely with indifference.

Yet the period in which the *mester de clerecía* flourished is one of intense scholarly curiosity and exploration in all fields of culture, especially religion, politics, science, and philosophy, and it marks an awakening of enormous interest in all things, leading to the production of vast bodies of new knowledge and strategies for organizing, managing, and interpreting them. The knowledge that emerges from clerical culture during the so-called long thirteenth century (c.1150-c.1350) presents two problems: one, its efficacy and moral legitimacy; and two, the cultivation of methods for categorizing, organizing, and using it. On the one hand the discovery of new knowledge produced an age of taxonomies, archives, tools, and methodologies for dealing with and using it; and on the other, it triggered anxieties and set off philosophical and theological polemics and disputes that both emphasized and questioned knowledge's very ability to know what it claimed to know. In this way, the thirteenth century comprises the emergence of an increasingly knowledge-based society that involves the creation, social construction, use, and domestication of knowledge. These tasks fell to a distinct class of learned people, clerks, whose existence depended on an organizational culture and community whose main undertaking was the fabrication, management, and dissemination of knowledge.

Simone Pinet's concise book on the cleric's task focuses on the *mester de clerecía* (in addition to task, *mester* may be understood as "duty or obligation") and takes a significant first step toward unveiling the central importance of knowledge to the cleric's undertaking: how it is shaped, mediated, and communicated, plus its relevance to rhetoric, organizational devices, and performance in its transferal, dissemination, interpretation, and use in thirteenth-century Castilian poetry.

Divided into three substantial chapters, Pinet's study focuses on the relationship of the major secular texts of the *mester de clerecía* (i.e., the *Libro de Apolonio*, and the *Poema de Fernán González*, but principally the *Libro de Alexandre*) to three fundamental discourses that reflect the emergence of the new knowledge, its relationship to power, and the efforts to convey it: cartography, translation, and economics. Chapter 1 traces the use of cartography as a device for systematizing and transmitting knowledge mainly in the *Alexandre*, and examines cartography as a visual and rhetorical trope for the recounting and portrayal of history, politics,

and sovereignty in the text. Chapter 2 focuses on translation and its representation, especially in the inscription of the story of Babel in the *Alexandre*, where, more than a tool, translation develops into a deliberation on the bond of language to sovereignty and as a skill that places the cleric tasked with its use at the center of mediating rule and authority. Finally, Chapter 3 centers on how the *mester*, or ministry of the clerk, as a creative labor of language is distinguished by intrusions of the discourse of a new kind of economic register - one based forthrightly on quantifiable yield and profit. All of which corroborates the centrality of clerisy and the ministry of the clerks to a rapidly changing world, most especially as an agent for the arbitration and definition of power and sovereignty for the court. Accordingly, Pinet's study takes us well beyond formalism and source hunting as it raises vital questions about the *mester de clerecía's* links to late medieval social institutions, the politics of knowledge, and the cultural logic of thirteenth-century Castile. Still more, her book marks a worthy beginning for the study in Iberia of what R.W. Southern in the context of a twelfth- and thirteenth-century Europe has called "Scholastic humanism."

While Pinet's study succeeds in opening the *mester de clerecía* to the world beyond the scriptorium and the philological enclosure to which it has largely been confined by cultural historians, exploring the rhetorical and artistic animating role of the clerk and his verbal art, it does fall short, however, on confronting the deeper philosophical and ethical issues that lie at the heart of the *mester's* existence and rationale - the "impeccable" (*sen pecado*) beliefs and principles that comprise its didacticism and subtend the legitimization of knowledge and the apology for the clerk as an arbiter of power and as an agent of change. What remains to be scrutinized in the *mester de clerecía* is the relationship between ethics, knowledge, and the exercise of newly emerging forms of sovereignty and authority during the long thirteenth century. When placed in a greater European context, it is evident that the *mester* is shot through with an anxiety about knowledge, inquiry, and their power, and reflects the larger polemic that was being waged in the Schools before, during, and after the period in which it prospered. The *mester de clerecía* brings to its Castilian vernacular audience scholarly ethical and political problematics that point to its links to the cosmopolitan world of the universities, European statecraft, and the affairs of the royal court. Although anchored in the historical moment that coincides with the rise of Castilian imperial ambitions, the very politics of empire and the role played by knowledge and power in relation to it shape the tension that structured the on-going debate in European learned circles regarding the newly emergent strength and place of human reason,

the nature of divine revelation, and the exercise of worldly imperial sovereignty.

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POL POPOVIC KARIC Y FIDEL CHÁVEZ PÉREZ, EDS. *Jorge Luis Borges. Perspectivas críticas. Ensayos inéditos*. Monterrey: Instituto Tecnológico de Monterrey/Porrúa, 2016. 277 pp.

Hace unos años me tocó redactar una nota acerca de libros sobre Jorge Luis Borges publicados en el siglo XXI. Y pensé en el narrador de “El Aleph,” quien, hacia la mitad del relato, se preguntaba cómo transmitir el conocimiento de ese objeto “que mi temerosa memoria apenas abarca.” No sé si ese narrador tal vez intuyera que esa misma frase podría aplicarse a las interpretaciones de la obra de Borges. La atención crítica sobre él continúa siendo notable y es dudoso que la memoria de un crítico, temerosa o no, pueda abarcarla.

Este volumen es el resultado de los coloquios anuales organizados por el profesor Pol Popovic Karic en Monterrey y dedicados a figuras centrales de la literatura hispanoamericana (hay volúmenes sobre Alejo Carpentier, Julio Cortázar, Rosario Castellanos y otros). A treinta años de la desaparición física del escritor argentino, dentro de la maraña de repeticiones borgeanas, es menester preguntarse si es necesario otro volumen misceláneo como el que nos ocupa.

El curioso prólogo hace énfasis en los conceptos de simplicidad y extrañeza en la obra de Borges a la vez que se permite frases como “el camaleón, reacio a los colores uniformes de la arena, proyecta incendiarios tintes del bosque tropical” (10). El volumen se ofrece como una miscelánea que, en la mayor parte de los casos, está más cerca del espíritu del ensayo literario que quiere ofrecer una lectura (por más trillada que esta sea) y lejos de la investigación académica que propone hallazgos aun en los territorios más frecuentados. Así, los trabajos de Roberto Sánchez Benítez - sobre la presencia del tiempo en la obra de Borges -, Graciela Tissera - sobre las “inagotables imágenes del universo en la poesía,” como anuncia su título -, Luis Quintana Tejera - relejendo el relato “El otro”- y Dolores Rangel - sobre nociones de estética y metafísica en los ensayos del escritor argentino - se incorporan a terrenos ya conocidos. Leemos en ellos frases como “todo lo que relatamos ocurre en el tiempo” (Sánchez Benítez 46); o “¿Cuál es Borges? ¿El lector asiduo, el visionario, el que quiere ser todos o nadie?” (Tissera 182); o “El tema de ‘El otro’ es un *leitmotiv* inexcusable en