

LINDSAY G. KERR. *Luis de Góngora and Lope de Vega: Masters of Parody*. Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2017. ix + 213 pp.

Lindsay G. Kerr's brief critical gem takes as its point of departure a curious choice of very different authors to juxtapose. The reasons for her selection are not immediately evident, which makes her success in laying out the relationships between the two all the more remarkable. The principal thread of her argument is that at the ends of their careers, despite their profoundly different styles, these authors share a subtle but perceptible parodic attitude towards poetry, life, and the world – all of which are hard to differentiate.

Kerr's focuses on one particularly important parody by each poet: Góngora's *Fábula de Píramo y Tisbe* and Lope's *La Gatomaquia*. She takes each author in turn, and to set the stage, begins her analysis of each with a chapter on their prior parodic work.

In the case of Góngora, Kerr refers back as far as the poet's earliest production, with his celebrated satirical *letrillas*, but then devotes ever more careful attention to later pieces. Those sharing important thematic characteristics with *Píramo and Tisbe*, such as the author's other satirical takes on mythological stories of amorous misadventure, like "Arrojose el mancebito" and his *Fábula de Polifemo y Galatea*, come under especially close scrutiny.

As Kerr notes, *Píramo y Tisbe* functions as a kind of natural capstone on, or a finale to, a series of parodic poetic works embodying a deepening satirical bent in Góngora's poetic vision. While not discounting entirely the effects that the time of life might have on a poet's work, Kerr is reluctant to attach too much importance to biographical context. Instead, ably employing abundant textual and secondary sources, she argues that by the time he got to his *Píramo y Tisbe*, "Góngora was very much aware of, if not his lateness in years, then definitely the lateness of the poetry by which he was surrounded" (82). The critic's treatment of the poet culminates in the section "Nonsense of an Ending" (76) in Góngora's late mythological parody (76).

In Lope's case, Kerr begins by pointing out that his publication of the comic *Las rimas humanas del licenciado Tomé de Burquillos* at the end of his life was a departure from much of his previous work. So, with Lope, rather than looking far back into his earlier works, she begins with the *Rimas humanas* generally and saves *La Gatomaquia* for last.

To some extent, perhaps in a reflection on the language of the poets themselves, Kerr is clearer and more accessible on Lope than on Góngora. Particularly striking is her careful delineation between the distinct aspects of the poet: first as Félix Lope de Vega, a mortal man of his time; then, Lope

as a monumental literary persona (even in his own day); the poet's less differentiated narrative voice; and finally, the diegetic figure of Tomé de Burguillos. She stresses Burguillos' on-again, off-again narrative presence and shows how Lope uses his fictional alter-ego to play with, bend, and even break the conventional norms of poetics. She thus cites Burguillos in her analysis, rather than Lope, as for example, when she sums up *La Gatomaquia* by saying "Burguillos reduces 'kings, princes and great captains' to the form of feral cats; the poem is stripped of *engaño*, as a result perhaps of its lateness" (157).

At the end of the monograph, Kerr brings it all together with a chapter called "Last Laughs," which is devoted to a concise but substantial comparison of the deep similarities between the two literary giants' late parodic works – similarities that belie the poets' undeniable superficial differences. She points out that it is no accident that both authors, at the end of their productive years, used parody to comment pointedly on the twilight of the poetic epoch they were living in, and which they had each done much to define.

Kerr's erudition is dazzling, and she shows she has read both poets widely and deeply and not only on the specific subject matter at hand. This leads me to what might be my only quibble. Kerr alludes to an extraordinary number of theoretical and critical sources, particularly in introductory passages. This pattern holds not only in the first chapter of the book, but also in the initial sections of subsequent chapters, as well. Fortunately, Kerr does not allow herself to get bogged down explicating all these references. However, in such a slim volume, the overall effect of making so many elliptical mentions can be one of distraction, especially for the less specialized reader.

That said, her arguments are well-founded, and she provides a helpful analytical perspective. This is true where she delves most closely into textual examples from her corpus but is also evident in her insightful philosophical reflections on Golden Age poetry in general, and on Góngora and Lope, specifically.

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JOSÉ MANUEL MARRERO HENRÍQUEZ, ED. *Hispanic Ecocriticism*. Berlin: Peter Lang, 2019. 249 pp.

José Manuel Marrero Henríquez – profesor de literatura comparada y teoría literaria en la Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria – lleva una década