

through literary fiction may fail in its intended goal, but it nevertheless propels him on a “journey to self-awareness in God” (121).

The concept of the spiritual journey is also fundamental to McGrath’s final chapter, in which he turns his attention from the knight to his squire. He cites Sancho’s frequent statements of trust in divine providence as well as multiple instances of his humility, compassion, and charity, perhaps most strikingly during his brief governorship and his renunciation of that office. In this effective reading of the character, the squire’s unexpected ingenuity and guile are mirrored by a corresponding “spiritual acumen,” an “Ignatian awareness of God’s presence in his daily life” that he demonstrates repeatedly during his travels with Don Quixote (137).

In an era in which many interpreters prefer to regard *Don Quixote* as a masterwork of subversive resistance to the hegemonic ideologies of early modern Spain, *Don Quixote and Catholicism* is a worthwhile contribution to the polyphony of scholarly voices that enriches our always-evolving collective understanding of the novel. McGrath makes a convincing, well-researched case for the applicability of the Catholic doctrines he cites to *Don Quixote*. How many readers he will persuade that those same ideas could have animated Cervantes himself in its composition may prove a trickier question, given the durability of Américo Castro’s model of *los dos Cervantes*. Nevertheless, as McGrath himself points out, each reader of *Don Quixote* “finds in the novel a reflection of the guiding principles of his or her own life” (56). McGrath’s study provides a Roman Catholic believer’s responses to this text and its author, as well as to the work of other commentators. *Don Quixote and Catholicism* treats Church teachings as more than a target of satire, challenges the modern skepticism about Cervantes’s own faith, and even suggests that the novel might well offer readers a mystical experience (33).

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HUGO MORENO. *Rethinking Philosophy with Borges, Zambrano, Paz, and Plato*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2022. 231 pp.

In the conclusion of this thoroughly researched and well-written volume, Hugo Moreno states that the aim of his study is to reconsider the place of philosophy in the realm of Hispanic literature. Philosophy is, of course, a capacious category, and Moreno argues in favour of a conception of the discipline that includes essayistic, narrative, and poetic forms, in the vein of Kierkegaard, Santayana, Nietzsche, and Unamuno. This, he points out, is the

conception favoured by the Hispanic literary tradition, often ignored by the dominant strains of philosophy in the Western world in the modern and contemporary periods.

Moreno chooses Jorge Luis Borges, María Zambrano, and Octavio Paz to show the productive links between philosophy and literature. Inspired by Badiou, he proposes an “analogical schema,” that is, a theoretical framework in which neither discipline has epistemological privilege over the other, since the quest for truth and knowledge does not have to abide solely by logic, argumentation, and demonstration, but can also employ metaphors, stories, and figuration, that is, rely on an aesthetic approach. His examination focuses on *Ficciones* (1944) by Borges, *Claros del bosque* (1977) by Zambrano, and *El mono gramático* (1974) by Paz.

It is not by chance that Moreno devotes two chapters to Borges, who is arguably the closest to philosophy, in so far as he is the author who most explicitly sets up a dialogue with the philosophical tradition. Chapter 1 skillfully maps the possible relationships between philosophy and literature, settling on an expanded meaning of philosophy, one that “may embrace the specificities of linguistic, biographical, cultural difference, history, not an aspiration of a general truth achieved through reason” (61). He reviews the philosophical traits in Borges’s work, linking him to existentialism, deconstructionism, and mystical doctrines, among other schools and trends. Moreno reads Borges’s fiction as a kind of philosophy, and points out that his “greatest contribution ... to contemporary philosophy is to have realized better than anybody else before him the philosophical possibilities of the short story” (13). In Chapter 2, Moreno maintains that Borges’s philosophy is not meant to convince us of a system, but “to induce metaphysical wonderment and perplexity” (75), echoing here the famous passage in “Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius” where metaphysics in Tlön is not considered a source of truth, but of amazement. Besides referring to his skepticism and irony, and to Borges’s debt to his mentor, the eccentric Macedonio Fernández, Moreno engages in an extended, allegorical reading of the short story “El jardín de senderos que se bifurcan.” He claims that the labyrinth is the key metaphor in Borges’s thought. Ts’ui Pên, mythical builder of labyrinths, becomes the creator of a labyrinth of labyrinths that encompasses all possible human and non-human facts and outcomes, making him, Moreno, speculate, the secret genius behind Borges’s own fictions (92). In the Chapter’s last section, Moreno links the story to both ancient philosophy and modern cosmology, as an example of the “truth” that literature can advance.

Chapter 3 examines Zambrano’s thought and her quest to reconcile philosophy and poetry. One may sense that the author takes at face value perhaps too much the peculiar philosophical content of her writings, which

may seem too poetical for philosophers, and too speculative for readers of literature. He acknowledges that critics may see her thought today, and consider the use of key notions in her writing, such as "poetic reason," "the Word," and "the heart," as uncritical and even obsolete (p.126).

Chapter 4 is an analysis of *El mono gramático*, framed in Paz's romantic quest for the reconciliation of opposites through analogy. Paz is seen as a "labyrinth wanderer," a searcher without a map, subjected to the contingencies of language and the aporias of thought. Moreno resorts to a Heideggerian prism that brings to the fore what he finds most central in the proposals of the Mexican writer, namely, the recognition of poetry as the prime source of epiphanies. Poetry becomes a vehicle through which reality, or the truth of being, is disclosed. The chapter ends with an insightful analysis of the painting "The Fairy Feller's Master Stroke" (1864) by Richard Dadd, which Paz comments on in *El mono gramático*.

Finally, Moreno includes an appendix that provides historical context by revisiting the clash between philosophy and poetry in Plato's *Republic*, thus enriching his discussion of contemporary writers and their relationship with philosophy.

While aware that terminology about philosophical subjects might be slippery, Moreno sometimes takes for granted what he should be proving, for example, when he refers to Paz's "philosophy" (137). There are, of course, many philosophical ideas in Paz's work, but claiming that he had a philosophy of his own might be a step too far. In other places, to bolster his case concerning the affinity of literature and philosophy, he writes that "contrary to common opinion, Plato's writings are both literature and philosophy" (14), and that "Borges's fiction continues to be regarded as 'just' literature" (p18). However, I doubt that any serious reader or critic would deny that Plato's work is indeed both literature and philosophy or that they would claim that Borges wrote "just" literature.

A salient virtue of Moreno's work is the broad and thorough literature review of the works he examines. He explores in depth the interrelations between literature and philosophy. While aspiring to any semblance of exhaustivity, particularly in the case of Borges's work, would be futile, the book could have included an examination, or at least a mention, of the seminal work of Paul Valéry on the list of writer-philosophers he champions. The French writer had a lasting influence on Borges, given Valéry's exploration of the ways inner processes such as consciousness, memory, imagination, and generally the creative powers of the mind can be allegorized and rendered into characters and plots.

Overall, the book is a contribution to the interdisciplinary field of philosophy and literature in the Hispanic context, and beyond. It contains both useful and provocative ideas about the ways in which we situate in

specific genres the writings of complex authors who are sometimes hard to pin down.

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C. GEORGE PEALE AND JAVIER GONZÁLEZ MARTÍNEZ, EDS. *La conquista de Orán de Luis Vélez de Guevara*. Newark: Juan de la Cuesta, 2021. 210 pp.

Co-editors C. George Peale and Javier J. González Martínez offer another authoritative critical edition in their publication of Luis Vélez de Guevara's *La conquista de Orán* (1671), which marks their sixth collaboration in Juan de la Cuesta's Hispanic Monographs *Ediciones críticas* series. Readers familiar with the series will be accustomed to the meticulous philological research that informs their editions of Vélez de Guevara, and this installment is no exception. The introduction ("Estudio introductorio") strikes a balance between being concise while also covering ample terrain to orient the reader to the historical context relevant to the content and composition of the play as well as a critical analysis of its salient poetic and ideological features. Other editorial components found in the play text itself include footnotes that indicate textual variants between early print editions, while other supplemental information is presented in the form of explanatory endnotes. Thanks to the breadth and depth of the notes provided by Peale and González Martínez, the editors accurately define their edition as both pedagogical and critical; their interventions successfully render the text accessible for modern readers uninitiated to the conventions of the *comedia*, but also provide Hispanists with a reference edition of Vélez de Guevara's work that indeed achieves their objective to "establish a solid philological basis for future critical works" (69; my translation).

La conquista de Orán dramatizes key moments in the public life of its protagonist, Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, beginning with his selection by Isabel I to be her confessor (Act I), then his subsequent appointment as the Archbishop of Toledo (Act II), and finally his major role in the 1509 siege of Orán, a wealthy city on the Mediterranean coast of northern Africa (present day Algeria). The editors argue that, of the possible historical sources available, the playwright's main reference was Eugenio de Robles's *Compendio de la vida y hazañas del Cardenal don Fray Francisco Ximénez de Cisneros* (1604). As evidence, they put forth a host of examples of the similarities between the two texts, and also provide endnotes throughout the play text to indicate other passages where *La conquista de Orán* coincides with the *Compendio*; however, beyond Vélez de Guevara's