View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk
brought to you by CORE
provided by Diposit Digital de Documents de la UAB

Between the Censor and the Critic: Reading the Vernacular Classic in Early Modern Spain

Julian Weiss
King's College London

The aesthetic domain, an historical problem

In the final book of his famous treatise, *Six livres de la république* (*Six books of the Commonwealth*), first published in 1576, the French political theorist Jean Bodin spoke of the need to revive the ancient Roman office of the censor. In his early modern guise, the censor's role was to safeguard those parts of the social fabric where, to paraphrase the title of Lucia Bianchin's recent book, «laws don't reach».[1] At the start of Book VI of his treatise, Bodin argues that the domain of the censor —our moral and social conscience— properly lies outside the direct jurisdiction of Church and State: «Lactantius said well, *Possunt enim leges delicta punire, conscientiam munire non possunt.* Lawes may well punish offences, but they cannot fortifie and amend the conscience».[2] As Bianchin's recent survey amply demonstrates, Bodin was not of course the only apologist for absolutism to have argued for the revival of the censor on grounds that may, from our modern vantage point, appear platitudinous: namely that nation-building depends upon winning and shaping the hearts and minds of the populace. Bodin's treatise, which was soon translated by the author from French into Latin, and by others into Italian, Spanish, and English, is entirely symptomatic of an age that recognised that order could not simply be imposed from above, whether by force or juridical means: it also needed to be sustained from below. Those familiar with the work of the Spanish cultural historian, José Antonio Maravall, will know that for him one of the defining features of the Baroque as an «historical structure» was that it constituted a «directed culture» («una cultura dirigida»), characterised by the

1. Bianchin (2005).
2. Bodin (1606: 645).

State's desire to control the morals, affect and spirit of its subjects by entering into their inner lives or private worlds.[3]

Although Jean Bodin betrays a predictable anxiety over the moral dangers posed by the theatre and music, he does not engage specifically with book censorship. Even so, his underlying premise bears a clear affinity with recent work on the institutionalised control of reading in early modernity. Over the past twenty-five years or so, scholarship on book censorship, especially that which deals with the English Elizabethan and Jacobean periods, has been marked by a shift in emphasis. No longer is literary censorship conceived simply as a mechanism whereby centralised authority (whether ecclesiastic, state, or court) exercised public control over perceived dissent, punishing heterodoxy and inhibiting freedom of expression. This conception, which set the categories «literature» and «censorship» in a fundamentally antagonistic relationship, has not been discarded, but it has been supplemented and nuanced by a variety of approaches and case studies, whose range can be sampled through a useful review article written by Alexandra Halasz.[4] In it, she examines four books all published in 2001 (listed under her name in my bibliography), in addition to earlier influential studies on Renaissance England by Annabel Patterson, Janet Clare and Richard Burt.[5] One of the threads running through much of this work is the desire to understand censorship in less purely repressive terms, and to explore its constitutive role in the construction of other discourses —the discourses of authorship or of literature, for example. Similar premises underwrite the more recent monograph by Amnon Raz-Krakotzkin, *The Censor, the Editor, and the Text: The Catholic Church and the Shaping of the Jewish Canon in the Sixteenth Century*.[6]

Some of these authors acknowledge a theoretical debt to Michel Foucault's ideas about the relationship between knowledge, power and subjectivity. Put very simply, the Foucauldian model rejects any notion of power merely «conceived as a property or a possession of a dominant class, state, or sovereign» and which assumes «an obligation or prohibition imposed upon the 'powerless'».[7] Thus, it is impossible to escape censorship since power circulates throughout the social body, linking subjection and freedom in a fundamentally dialectical relationship. As Richard Burt argued, we should aim to «displace the moralistic, monolithic, ahistorical definition of censorship [...] with a historically specific, epistemological definition; [...] literary censorship was less a matter of denying liberty of speech than a legitimation or delegitimation of specific discursive practices».[8] And for Burt, the discursive

3. See Maravall (1986, especially 57-78). As I argue elsewhere, Weiss (1997/1998), Maravall's approach is flawed by its rigid determinism.

4. Halasz (2003).

5. Patterson (1984, 2nd ed. 1990), Burt (1993), Clare (1999).

6. Raz-Krakotzkin (2007).

7. Smart (2002: 77).

8. Burt (1993: x; see also 12).

practices of censorship are related to those that cluster under the modern term «literature». In similar vein, Annabel Patterson had also argued that «it is to censorship that we, in part, owe our very concept of «literature» as a kind of discourse with rules of its own».[9]

This essay, therefore, explores a key stage in the historical trajectory of that elusive category «literature». Needless to say, any history of «literature» needs to take into account how thoroughly overdetermined and multifaceted a discourse it is, as both concept and practice, being historically conditioned by a myriad of interrelating factors —social, institutional, discursive, and material. For present purposes I approach the problem primarily from the perspective of the reading subject and his or her relation to another category, the «classic».[10] It is well known that with the spread of lay literacy, the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance witnessed the development of vernacular national «classics». In Spain, the fifteenth-century poets Juan de Mena (1411-1456) and Jorge Manrique (*c.* 1440-1479) were rapidly elevated to this status during the sixteenth century, though the conditions for this process were firmly established in the second half of the fifteenth.[11] I shall argue that a «classic» requires a humanist subject position, whereby the reader is encouraged to move across time, to set the past in dialogue with the present, and to acquire a panoptic understanding of the text and the world of which it forms a part. This hermeneutic is also represented spatially, with the reader moving inside and outside the text, being affectively immersed within it, yet able to survey its contours from a meditative and critical distance. Both moves entailed the interplay of personal desire and social exigency, mediating between an interior private world and the world of shared, public values. This ability to move in and across time and space is what constituted, in ideological terms, the reader's practical sense of freedom. For reading the literary classic comprised more than merely paying homage to authority; it required creativity, judgment and independence of thought. Yet this freedom had its limits: it was a controlled

9. Patterson (1990: 4). These ideas were taken up by Raz-Krakotzkin (2007: 5), who argued that censorship should be located «on several planes», which means, for example, setting it «in the context from which modern categories such as ethnicity, religion, and culture have emerged».

10. In writing «his or her» I acknowledge merely in passing the role played by gender in the construction of the reading subject; in the Spanish context, see Weissberger's analysis of the sentimental romance and its female «resisting readers» (1997); the phrase derives from Judith Fetterley's classic study (1978). See also my essay on the relation between the Spanish *querelle des femmes* and the emergent discourse of literature in late medieval and early modern periods, Weiss (2002).

11. The symptoms include a widespread classicizing style, the self-commentaries of Mena and others, the habit of prefacing works with prologues based on academic *accessus*, and the composition of vernacular glosses and commentaries: see Weiss (1990, especially chapters 3 and 4). This process was partly inspired by the commentaries on Dante and Petrarch, some of which were translated into Spanish. For the Italian authors, see in particular Kennedy (1994) and Parker (1993).

improvisation —a *habitus*, in the terms of Bourdieu— whose boundaries were forged by the two terms of my title: the censor and the critic.[12]

In order to develop my analyses of the modern vernacular classics Juan de Mena and Jorge Manrique, I shall graft my arguments onto some of the earlier work on literary censorship that I have just referred to. As I have mentioned, Richard Burt argues that censorship is much more than a matter of controlling access to knowledge as such; it relies upon the control of ways of knowing, or epistemologies, that are themselves invested with cultural and symbolic capital. He applies this theoretical premise in an examination of the ambivalent relationship between censorship and literary criticism. This ambivalence is predicated upon what he terms «the emergence of a licensed and relatively autonomous aesthetic domain», or «an emergent discourse of literary criticism which regulated the exercise of a relatively autonomous poetic liberty».[13] My research focusses not only on the relative freedoms of the aesthetic domain, but also on the problem of how to historicise it. Burt —like most early modernists— works backwards. He assumes eighteenth and nineteenth-century categories, and looks for their emergence in the sixteenth. This way of writing literary history tends to privilege the historical epoch over the historical process; it glosses over the residual or even archaic elements that can constitute the ideological or material grounds that makes such an emergence possible in the first place. The residual, according to Raymond Williams:

> has been effectively formed in the past, but [which] is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present. Thus certain experiences, meanings, and values which cannot be expressed or substantially verified in terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practised on the basis of the residue —cultural as well as social— of some previous social and cultural institution or formation.[14]

Consequently, although my approach owes a considerable debt to Richard Burt, I am more interested in exploring how residual elements from the late Middle Ages helped shape Renaissance notions of a «licensed and relatively autonomous aesthetic domain». This means taking into account a widely acknowledged, but little studied, aspect of the sixteenth-century Spanish literary landscape: the continued editorial popularity of fifteenth-century poetry and its contribution to the construction of the modern vernacular literary classic.

Before Richard Burt, Annabel Patterson had also drawn a connection between early modern poetics and a discourse of freedom. As in the case of Burt, I am in broad agreement with her conclusions, but I feel that her arguments

12. For further discussion of Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* in the context of late medieval and early modern Spanish literature, see Weiss (2002).

13. Burt (1993: 12).

14. Williams (1977: 122).

are equally in need of some historical fine-tuning. In the introduction to her analysis of the conditions of writing and reading in early modern England, she discusses the case of the French poet Clément Marot, who in 1519 had been exiled by Francis I for alleged Lutheranism. In a poem first printed in 1532, Marot complains that the King had tampered with the cabinet of the holy Muses («cabinet des sainctes Muses sacres»), and that although this «cabinet» contained forbidden books, «that is no offense in a poet, who should be allowed a long rein [«à qui on doibt lascher / la bride longue»] and have nothing hidden from him, whether it be magic, necromancy, or cabbalism; there is no doctrine, written or spoken, that a true poet should not understand in order to do his duty as a writer».[15] For Patterson, Marot's poetics conjoin two ideas: «the *right* of the individual to privacy and the *responsibility* of poets to wade in dangerous waters».[16] Marot's cabinet, she continues, is:

> simultaneously his private space (the self); his workshop, where the tools of his erudition, his nascent classical humanism, were kept; and the cultural arena where new imaginative work should have been allowed to proceed, connecting documents of the classical past to the emergence of France as a nation and the vernacular as its medium of expression.[17]

She concludes by suggesting that the passage illustrates the «humanist principle, that the writer has a right to be in advance of or athwart his times».[18]

Patterson, I think, overstates the case for what we might call Marot's transgressive poetics. Marot's claim that poets should be put on a long leash («la bride longue») derives from an authoritative tradition of poetry as first philosophy or architectonic science (the knowledge that encompasses all others).[19] It is true that poets —following the tradition of Virgil the necromancer— should have access to all knowledge, including illicit knowledge; but this was an intellectual reserve: in Marot's metaphor, it was the «sacred cabinet of the Muses». Whether it was also, as Patterson suggests, a «cultural arena» is a moot point. Her easy shift in spatial metaphor from private space or humanist workshop to the more open public «arena» occludes the fundamental problem posed by the reconfiguration of cultural boundaries brought about by the spread of lay literacy and later by the arrival of the printing press. In the passages quoted, I see no evidence to support Patterson's inference that «the freedom of the writer […] is expressed in terms of the freedom of the reader […] to read books which society prohibits as dangerous to the *status quo*».[20] This formulation glosses over an unresolved dilemma: the tension between the relative freedoms of the literate

15. Patterson (1990: 6-7).
16. Patterson (1990: 6).
17. Patterson (1990: 7).
18. Patterson (1990: 7).
19. The classic treatment of this topic in the Renaissance remains that of Weinberg (1961).
20. Patterson (1990: 7).

elite embodied by the authoritative writer (or *auctor*) and those of the general lay reader. As I shall explain in the final section of this essay, this tension lies at the heart of Juan de Mena's representation of censorship, articulated nearly one hundred years earlier in 1444.

My final preliminary observation concerns one of the very rare attempts in Spanish literary historiography to recognise the need to historicise the category «literature» and to relate it to questions of freedom and power: the two volumes edited by Wlad Godzich and Nicholas Spadaccini in the 1980s, *Literature among Discourses* and *The Institutionalization of Literature in Spain.* In an essay included in the first of these, they argue that one of the defining changes of the period 1500-1700 is «the entry of the state upon the stage of culture as its major force».[21] It would take too long to summarise what is a complex and often slippery argument. For our purposes, the key point is their attempt to identify a homology between the ideological image of the State and the dialogic structure of the novel, whose originary paradigm is *Don Quijote*. They argue that:

> Its famous dialogic structure represents an attempt to inscribe as many discourses as possible within its frame. The question is who can read them. In a sense, the answer is: the state. Only the totalizing state can claim to be the adequate subject for reading a novel like the *Quijote*, for only the state has attempted to inventory and totalize all these discourses. In practice this means that such a novel serves to provide its readers with an experience of what it is to look at things from the perspective of the state, that is, to perceive the limitations of each […]. It must be noted how complex the position of the novel is: inconceivable without the kind of cultural fragmentation that occurs in this period, it is at once the most adequate expression of the ideological role of the state and its most obvious challenger.[22]

Although I applaud their larger goals, their arguments about the constitution of the novel's reading subject and its relation to the allegedly all-seeing state need to be reformulated. The power to catalogue and to perceive the limitations of the multiple discourses that constitute *Don Quijote*, the fluid perspectives brought into play by Cervantes's irony, the ability to possess a detached, panotopic vision of the book, as well as to become immersed in local detail, all this is an inherent part of the construction of the humanist «general reader», educated in the long-established tradition of literary commentary on authors deemed classical. To rephrase their conclusion, Cervantes's novel provides at once the most adequate expression of, and challenge to, the ideological role not of the state, but of the subject of the state, specifically the subject when confronted by a «classic», in particular the recently constituted vernacular classic.

21. Godzich & Spadaccini (1986: 60).
22. Godzich & Spadaccini (1986: 59-61).

Reading the vernacular classic, in time and space

The first Spanish poem to acquire the status of vernacular «classic» was the *Trescientas*, also known as *Laberinto de Fortuna*, by Juan de Mena, who was occasionally called «príncipe de la poesía castellana». His complex and often obscure poem is a national epic dedicated in 1444 to Juan II of Castile, exhorting him to complete the Reconquest and in the process to engage upon a programme of moral and political regeneration of the Castilian warrior caste. Politically, the poem is an apologia for the absolutist monarchy whose ideological foundations (*poderío real absoluto*) were being forged at this time by the *letrado* caste, of which Mena was a prominent member. Yet the poem's highly latinate, classicizing style reveals another agenda: the elevation of the vernacular and the creation of an aristocratic cultural elite, who conjoined the values of arms and letters. The poem attracted a variety of manuscript commentaries and glosses, but its status was cemented by the edition and monumental commentary of the humanist Hernán Núñez (1470/75-1553), which he first published in 1499, and then revised with a more general educated readership in mind in 1505. And this edition, which was republished over a dozen times in folio and octavo formats between 1506 and 1566, constituted a key Renaissance best-seller, until it was replaced by the handier duodecimo edition, with a much slimmer critical apparatus, brought out by El Brocense in 1582.[23] The changes Núñez made to the second edition indicate that he wished to broaden the scope of his reading public. He eliminates nearly all the Latin, removes the original academic prologue, and cuts most anecdotal detail, as well as the eulogy of his patron, the count of Tendilla, in whose household he was originally working as a tutor.

In spite of his textual revisions and the composition of a new prologue, Hernán Núñez's basic conception of the *Laberinto* remained the same. As the original 1499 prologue clearly shows, Núñez works within the long-standing tradition of poetry as a comprehensive form of knowledge. He eulogizes the poem for its encyclopedic scope and copiousness of form and content: it is an «obra varia, diffusa, copiosa, de grand doctrina y no menor eloquencia».[24] But before this comprehensive quality can be apprehended, the work has to undergo a philological restoration, with scribal and printers' errors purged, and obscurities explicated:

> En fin, que, repurgada toda de las mendas que tenía, explicadas las historias, declaradas las fábulas, desatados los nudos, expuestos los enigmas y en todo reduzida

23. The best introduction to the poem and its reception is by Lida de Malkiel (1984); for the anonymous glosses and commentaries by Hernán Núñez and Francisco de las Brozas (El Brocense), see Weiss (1990: 122-23, 127; 2005: 523-24, 529-32), Jiménez Calvente (2002). For a preliminary digital edition, see Núñez de Toledo, ed. Weiss & Cortijo; our definitive edition, with full introduction and critical apparatus, is in the final stages of preparation.

24. Mena (1499: 2v).

> a mejor estado, de labyrintho (al qual nadie hasta aquí por tiniebla y difficultad que en él avía osava descender) le avemos fecho amphitheatro abierto y claro donde todos assí doctos como indoctos puedan sin miedo ninguno entrar.[25]

His commentary and textual emendations open up a new critical space within this restored monument, which is now simultaneously pristine and transformed by its philological renovation. Note the subject position occupied by the general readership («doctos como indoctos»). Instead of finding themselves within a dark labyrinth, readers are placed in the open, as spectators of a drama unfolding within an amphitheatre. Here, unlike in the case of Clément Marot, Patterson's image of «cultural arena» is apt. For the readers become detached observers, viewing the action from a critical distance, but with their backs to the contemporary world that surrounds them outside the walls of the amphitheatre. For example, the Reconquest, which is such a major theme in the original poem, is treated only very schematically in a commentary that glosses most historical matters in considerable detail. In an earlier study, I suggested that the reorientation of the reader is the result of a combination of factors, both political and discursive.[26] Hernán Núñez wanted to distance the poem from the discredited regime and factions of Mena's patrons Juan II and his *privado* Álvaro de Luna. Even as he consolidates Mena's cultural authority, he undermines him politically by showing that his uncritical support for Luna revealed him to be a «mal profeta». But the political reconfiguration also obeys a discursive logic: for the work to become classical and to be truly transcendent, it cannot be read as the exclusive product of obvious political circumstances and allegiances. The literary classic requires a broader contemplative position, one that enables historical particulars to be set into transhistorical perspective.

To throw into relief Núnez's humanist construction of the general reader, contrast the way one earlier fifteenth-century commentator glossed the labyrinth metaphor:

> Semejante es este tratado a este laberinto [...] porque ay dentro en él mucho trabajo [...]. Es comento o escriptura de materias grandes e difíciles, en el qual tratado o scriptura el que entrare o leyere le conviene que lieve para lo entender ovillo de cuerda asaz luenga, que es ayuntamiento de saber muchas e diversas facultades, así istorial como de poesía e otras ciencias que continuamente toca.[27]

This anonymous commentator offers an interesting variant on the conventional metaphor of reading as a journey through the text. Developing the se-

25. Mena (1499: 3r).
26. Weiss (1993).
27. *Cancionero de Barrantes* (private library of Bartolomé March, MS 20-5-6, f. 39r), quoted from Weiss (1990: 131).

mantic potential of the poem's title, he imagines reading not merely as entering the text («entrar o leer») but of being trapped by it. In spite of Ariadne's thread that will eventually lead the reader out of the work, in the act of comprehension he is still firmly enclosed within its labyrinthine walls. For Hernán Núñez, on the other hand, the reader's position is always double, since he is both inside it and at a critical distance. Besides the political ambivalence I have described above, the duality is confirmed by his commentary on other aspects of the work's content or «doctrina copiosa». In brief, Núñez's approach illustrates one of the fundamental features of late medieval and early modern commentary, which Alistair Minnis has described in the conclusion to his well-known book on medieval theories of authorship: the rise of the «familiar author».[28] This approach entailed a more judicious attitude to authority, where respect for inherited status was tempered by awareness of a writer's shortcomings. The classic was not infallible. Thus, although Núñez makes plain his admiration for the earlier poet, he also identifies his weaknesses, which were, by and large, determined by the cultural limitations of his age (e.g., he relied on corrupt manuscripts or inadequate factual authorities, such as the cosmography of St Anselm). Indeed, Núñez calls attention to this very fact in his 1499 preface, when he declares how he stood in awe of the poet's eloquence and wisdom, «maravillado de aver cabido en hombre de nuestra nación, *segund entonces los tiempos eran*».[29] In short, the reader is required to appreciate the historical conditions in which Mena was writing, even as he is expected to admire the poem's ability to transcend them.[30]

Núñez's implied reader illustrates the paradoxical relation between past and present that according to Frank Kermode lies at the heart of what we call the classic. «[The] modern is a renewal of the ancient», writes Kermode, «still, renewing the past changes our sense of it […]. Efforts to see [classical] models clearly make them seem further off in time».[31] «Books we call classics», he continues, «possess intrinsic qualities that endure, but possess also an openness to accommodation which keeps them alive under endlessly varying dispositions». So, he concludes, reading a classic entails «a just estimation of the permanent relations between the enduring and the transient, the essence and the disposition».[32] What Kermode does not describe in his study is the kind of subjectivity that is required and performed by the act of reading the classic. Indeed, his formulation emphasizes the «intrinsic qualities» of the text at the expense of what is done to the text in the process of reading it. A better formulation is offered

28. Minnis (1984: 211-217).
29. Mena (1499: 2v; my emphasis).
30. For numerous instances of this approach, see Malkiel (1984: especially 350-355); Weiss (2005: 531-532).
31. Kermode (1983: 16).
32. Kermode (1983: 44).

by Terry Eagleton in his study of Enlightenment ideologies of the aesthetic: the «aesthetic is simply the name given to that hybrid form of cognition which can clarify the raw stuff of perception and historical practice, disclosing the inner structure of the concrete».[33] This hybrid cognitive process reinforces the sense of a mobile self, that is both here and now, there and then, inside the text and outside it; as such it consolidates the legacy of earlier humanist notions of man, whose nobility, as Pico della Mirandola would have it, resides in the fact that he is at once at the centre of God's created world, but also at its edges, in that he has no uniquely allocated rung on the ladder of divine creation. Like Pico's Man, the implied reader of the classic does not occupy a single subject position, precisely because the classic mobilizes a way of seeing that passes to and fro between the historically concrete (the conditions of the text and the reader) and the universal (the transcendental values laid bare by the act of reading).

On one level, this hybrid cognitive process gives to the implied reader a sense of liberty and empowerment, since it presupposes the ability to sift the transcendental from the contingent. The process is never simply a matter of perception; it is also evaluative, since it entails choice and judgment, historical understanding and knowledge of literary particulars. As such, the classic makes its implied readers partake of that creative ambiguity which Pierre Macherey locates at the heart of literary criticism:

> [criticism] implies, on the one hand, a gesture of refusal, a denunciation, a hostile judgment; and on the other hand it denotes (in its more fundamental sense) the positive knowledge of limits, the study of the conditions and possibilities of an activity. We pass easily from one sense to the other as though they were merely aspects of a single operation, related even in their incompatibility. The discipline of criticism is rooted in this ambiguity, this double attitude.[34]

As I have indicated, Núñez's commentary is symptomatic of the emerging discourse of literary criticism applied in a non-professional vernacular context, precisely because it demands that its readers adopt this «double attitude». The commentary is marked by multiple «gestures of refusal» (political, stylistic, intellectual) that co-exist with the desire to be immersed in the possibilities of Mena's poem. The most striking instance of the reader's assimilation into the text is when Núñez eulogizes Mena's extraordinary rhetorical powers, which enable him to recreate a particular scene so effectively «que no parece el hombre leerlos sino verlos como si presente estoviesse».[35] Thus, in spatial terms the reader glides back and forth between the text as labyrinth and the text as amphitheatre.

33. Eagleton (1990: 16).
34. Macherey (2006: 3).
35. Mena (1505: 99v). This corresponds to the rhetorical quality of *enargeia* or *evidentia*; the passage is question is the famous maternal lament over the death of Lorenzo d'Ávalos (stanzas 203-06).

This spatial ambiguity is also what lends such vibrancy to the reception of another medieval Castilian work that achieved the status of modern classic in the sixteenth century: Jorge Manrique's *Coplas por la muerte de su padre*. This poem, composed in 1479, is an elegant elegy for a deeply inelegant warrior, Rodrigo Manrique, who succumbed to a distinctly inelegant death (his face eaten away by cancer), after a life dedicated, like that of many other noblemen of the time, to the violent pursuit of wealth and power. The poem's transformation of brutal reality into a moving meditation on the transience of life is written from a decidedly aristocratic vantage point. As various scholars have pointed out, the elegy's political edge lies in the way the poet uses his father's enemies as *exempla* of the futility of material aspirations, and the highly deferential way a personified Death assures don Rodrigo not only of his place in heaven but also of the immortality of earthly fame.[36] Jorge Manrique's poem illustrates the well-known dictum of Sir Philip Sidney, who around one hundred year later declared that the ideal poet «coupleth the general notion with the particular example».[37] The ideological effect of this coupling is to represent the values and socio-economic conditions of the landed aristocracy (the particular example) as a universal paradigm of the human condition. This universalising strategy does not deny salvation to those readers who, by dint of social, gender, or racial difference, cannot measure up to the masculine, warrior ideals embodied by Rodrigo Manrique. Yet as they consider how the poem applies to their own circumstances, readers are called on to filter their own experiences through the exemplary achievements and values of the dead nobleman. Thus, Jorge Manrique strives to preserve class and caste privilege even as he insists upon the ultimate equality of human life. The relation between contingent individual circumstance and transcendental human condition is one of the poem's central themes. Yet it is more than a theme: the Renaissance reception of the poem demonstrates how the relation between what Kermode termed essence and disposition was considered to be integral to the experiential dynamics of reading the poem itself. The implied readers acquired a subjectivity that was in constant movement, as they passed back and forth between the transcendental meanings of the poetic fiction and the particular historical conditions in which they read it. Although theirs was a mobile, adaptable selfhood, it was always structured by a variety of formal, material, and ideological constraints.

Structured freedom and controlled improvisation govern the most significant way in which Manrique's *Coplas* were reproduced in the sixteenth century. This was the form of the poetic *glosa*, of which there were eleven published between 1501 and 1582, in addition to one prose commentary. The poetic *glo-*

36. See Monleón (1983), Darst (1985).
37. Quoted from Bennett (2005: 125). Sidney's defence of poetry's power to embrace both the singular and the universal is part of Renaissance attempts to clarify poetry's relation to history and philosophy, a debate that stretches back to Antiquity.

sas enabled writers to elaborate thematically upon the original by interweaving their own verses within the inherited metrical structure. Although it was subject to significant variations in form and content, the basic technique was practised to such an extent during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries that Lope de Vega would consider it Spain's national genre.[38] Though regarded now very much as a minor, derivative literary form, the *glosa* was in fact instrumental in consolidating the conditions in which the vernacular literary classic could emerge as a recognizable category. The glossed *Coplas* demonstrate how the poem became a classic not because of some quantifiable aesthetic quality (we shall see that its «formal integration», to borrow Nicholas Round's phrase, was often twisted out of all recognition),[39] but because the very form and mechanics of the *glosa* enabled the writer, and through him the reader, to enter into a critical dialogue with the past. Rather like Petrarch in his «familiar epistle» to Cicero, the glossator could blend reverence and refusal in his approach to authority, endowing certain values and local meanings with a timeless quality, even in the process of discarding or silencing others.

In general, two obvious things happen to the poem in its glossed versions, and they are interrelated. Firstly, many of the glossators bring out the negative image of death in such a way as to make the poem closer in mood to the iconographic traditions of the Dance of Death (the medieval Spanish *Danza de la muerte* of *c*. 1400 was also republished and extended in the early sixteenth century). The severe, didactic tone of these *glosas* is heightened by macabre woodcuts that often accompany the printed editions.[40] What captured the interest of most glossators were the opening contemplation on the transience of life and, to a lesser extent, the central section with its historical examples and rhetoric of *ubi sunt*? This emphasis upon the abstract and universal theme of life and death is connected to the second common feature of these *glosas*, which is that the eulogistic final section devoted to the poet's father is frequently eliminated. The combined effect of these moves is that readers experience the poem's message without the obvious mediation of this particular dead nobleman and his clan. Although the aristocratic elitism that informs the original is not in all cases diminished, it is certainly reconfigured, and with it the readers' relationship with

38. For a general introduction to the form of the poetic *glosa*, see Janner (1943). For a survey of the manuscript and printed *glosas* on Manrique's poem, see Sánchez Arce (1956). The printed ones have all been published in facsimile editions, some of which I cite below. For a bibliographical overview, see Pérez Gómez (1962). For Lope's eulogy of the *glosa* —«propia y antiquíssima composición de España, no usada jamás de otra nación ninguna»— see Janner (1943: 232).

39. Round (1985).

40. This phenomenon is described, with numerous illustrations, by Sánchez Arce (1956). Although she frequently situates this within the medieval tradition of the *danse macabre*, in her conclusions she rightly emphasizes its compatibility with Renaissance iconography, such as Peeter Breughel the Elder's *Triumph of Death*, or the *Emblemas morales* of Sebastián de Covarrubias y Orozco (1956: 103-104).

the text itself. Whether implicitly or explicitly, the readers themselves are now authorised to enter the text and occupy the central position once held by Rodrigo Manrique, engaging in their own dialogue with death. Take, for example, the very first *glosa*, composed by Alonso de Cervantes, first published in 1501, and subsequently reprinted in 1525, 1552, and 1562.[41] Seeking consolation for his own unhappy circumstances and professional disillusion, Cervantes inserts himself into the poem as a personal witness to Rodrigo's death, alongside other members of the Manrique clan. But in order to make space for himself, he also elbows Rodrigo Manrique himself out of the way by eliminating most of the previous eulogy to the dead nobleman. Other glossators also incorporate their own experiences and perspectives into the poem, and by implication provide a model for their readers —glossators *in potentia*— to do the same.[42]

However, for all their «democratising» tendencies (and I use the term loosely) it would be wrong to say that the aristocratic presence is entirely eradicated; rather, it is transformed. Although Cervantes cuts out most of the eulogy of don Rodrigo, he replaces it with a prefatory eulogy of his own patron, don Álvaro de Stúñiga. The immortality of his noble lineage is celebrated in a brief poem set beneath the aristocrat's coat of arms, prominently displayed on the first folio.[43] By the final edition (Cuenca, 1562), a macabre woodcut of triumphant death has replaced the coat of arms, casting its ironic shadow over the claims of the verse eulogy that remains beneath it.[44] These displacements symbolize the reconfiguration of the social power of sixteenth-century aristocracy: politically less central than under earlier forms of feudalism, the upper nobility continued to provide, in the eyes of many, the dominant paradigm for the human condition. Readers are encouraged to engage in their own personal meditation upon the meaning of life and death, using the glossed poem as a literary space for self-reflection and self-fashioning; yet the process continues to take place under the auspices of aristocratic patronage.

The dynamics of the poetic *glosas* also underpin the lengthy prose commentary on the first twenty-six stanzas, published in 1552 by Luis de Aranda (like many of his contemporaries he found no moral value in the eulogy of don Rodrigo, and simply cut it out). In his prologue, Aranda argues that at the time of writing all literary forms had been exhausted —everything worth saying had already been said by the great Castilian poets of the past. He locates the source of Castilian literary prestige firmly in the fifteenth century. And yet, in the sec-

41. Sánchez Arce (1956: 31-35).

42. The pattern established by Cervantes was adopted, with variants, by Rodrigo de Valdepeñas, Jorge de Montemayor (in his second glossed version), and Gregorio Silvestre. Each of them finds a way to enter the climactic scene and to speak as spiritual advisors, and, in Silvestre's case, also to become a warrior «a lo divino», confronting Death with the arms of the Good Christian. See Sánchez Arce (1956: 46, 63, 92, 95).

43. Cervantes (1501: 1r).

44. The page is reproduced by Sánchez Arce (1956: 32). I have not seen the editions of 1525 or 1552.

ond part of his preface (as well as in the commentary itself) Aranda suggests a more nuanced stance toward that cultural authority. A variety of comments, which I have not the space to detail here, indicate that for him Manrique's greatness resides in his ability to be reinterpreted for the present, to be regenerated by modernity. For him, to be an author certainly still means to be an *auctor*: someone who conveys doctrine of lasting value, but in a form that requires constant qualification by the present reader. The author requires «criticism», what Macherey called that «gesture of refusal». For example, Aranda argues that given the clarity of Manrique's *Coplas*, a prose commentary may seem redundant to some; but he writes to «augment» clarity with doctrine: «los [passos] claros aumentamos con doctrina». Moreover:

> Muchas coplas vemos buenas pero no tales que no tengan (como dizen) un «si no»: porque si tienen gracia, carecen en alguna manera de sentencia, y si tienen complida sentencia, fáltales entera gracia, y si gracia y sentencia tienen, son escuras, y si claras no tienen ayre.[45]

If Aranda's remarks show how the classic's openness to accommodation entailed critical evaluation, this critical stance also extended to the individual reader's own place in time. The *Coplas* make readers situate themselves *sub specie aeternitatis* and in relation to a particular political map. The glossed versions preserve the universal perspective, but alter the historical and political coordinates of the original, by shifting political allegiances, updating historical references, or expanding the range of exemplary figures from Spanish history. Francisco de Guzmán (Lyon, n.d., second edition, Antwerp, 1558) offers the most striking example. In his verse prologue he explains that he has tried to attenuate the «viejo contar» of the original by focussing on the present circumstances of «nuestra Iberia». Thus, if he eliminates Rodrigo Manrique it is not because of any «intención […] maliciosa», but because he wishes to embrace a wider range of heroic and virtuous figures.[46] He invites his readers to contrast the narrower historical perspective of the original and the broader sweep of his glossed version. And those readers who had access to other *glosas*, with different political and historical visions of both past and present, would move across an even more fluid set of perspectives.

The fluid subject positions enabled by reading were clearly recognized by the last of the glossators, Gregorio Silvestre, whose spiritual *glosa* was published in 1582. In brief, Silvestre dismantles Manrique's aristocratic elitism and rebuilds the poem into a neoplatonic expression of the soul's yearning for God. But he does so in a way that reflects upon the transformative power of poetic fiction.

45. Aranda (1552: 2v-3r).
46. Sánchez Arce (1956: 69-70, 71-73).

In his conclusion he draws attention to the fictive nature of his dialogue with a personified Death (he has, as I suggested, entered Manrique's poetic world and assumed the original role of don Rodrigo). And yet there is a note of caution, almost self-censorship, as he comments that the spiritual perfection he has described is a poetic construction, not to be confused with his real, historical self: «Esta perfección que pruebo/ No es que hago yo la prueba,/ sino la pluma me lleva». Poetic fiction, he suggests, is necessary because no one can strive towards perfection «si el hombre no se renueva/ con hacerse otro de nuevo».[47] Reading the *Coplas,* and rewriting them as a *glosa*, is his way of regenerating himself, of making the past live on, and of acquiring through what we now call «literature» a vicarious experience of the eternal.

Conclusion: internalizing censorship

In an essay on the materiality of reading —how textual meaning is shaped by the physical contours of the printed book— Roger Chartier suggests that the entire history of reading is structured by one overarching tension:

> De un lado, la lectura es práctica creadora, actividad productora de significaciones en modo alguno reductibles a las intenciones de los autores de textos o de los hacedores de libros: es «braconnage» [caza furtiva], según la palabra de Michel de Certeau. De otro lado, el autor, el comentarista y el editor siempre piensan que el lector debe ser sometido a un sentido único, a una comprensión correcta, a una lectura autorizada. Acercar la lectura, por tanto, es considerar juntos la irreductible libertad de los lectores y las coacciones que intentan frenarla.[48]

Broadly speaking, the issues I have been exploring are simply one aspect of that elemental tension between freedom and coercion. Of course, the modes and conditions of reading cannot be reduced to a single historical practice or ideological construct, whether it is de Certeau's «poaching» or the fluid subject positions offered to sixteenth-century readers by the vernacular classic. Nonetheless, we should not draw too sharp a line between the two elements of a binarism that places the reader on the side of «irreducible» freedom, and the editor, commentator, critic, or book merchant on the side of coercion and the quest for univocal meaning. The intervention of editors, commentators, or printers could open up new spaces for independent, creative readings —whether through explanatory or contextual information, clearer layout and type faces, glossaries, indices, or illustrations. A minor but very eloquent testimony to this is offered by Cristóbal

47. I quote from the BAE edition, Silvestre (1872: 266). Earlier, Silvestre acknowledges the «ignorancia» of personifying death, since it is «efecto sin sustancia»; even so, it is a necessary fiction (1872: 265).

48. Chartier (1993: 42).

de Villalón, who in 1539 commented wrily that editors had punctuated their texts so precisely and so extensively that the new lay readers could approach them «sin maestro».[49] Certainly, as Chartier suggested, in the physical absence of the teacher there were other forms of guidance embedded in the texts and the books that served as their physical vehicles. But this is not to be understood simply as coercion, a form of control external to the reading process itself. The material and textual evidence suggests that readers themselves, not only the newly constructed vernacular classics, were thought to possess «an openness to accommodation which keeps them alive under endlessly varying dispositions».[50] At the same time, the evidence also suggests that this openness should be self-regulating; as Richard Burt argued, the aesthetic domain should be only «relatively autonomous».

Among its many forms and registers, self-regulation can manifest itself through the awareness of the threat of imposed correction or censorship. Although Gregorio Silvestre's comments on poetic fiction offer one example of this, a more compelling instance is provided by the other modern Spanish classic, Juan de Mena's *Laberinto de Fortuna*. At the heart of this poem's representation of the relation between the writer and the State is an act of official censorship.[51] It occurs in the circle of Phoebus, where Mena describes his vision of intellectual heroes and villains, past and present. When he comes to the present (stanzas 125-28), the poet focusses on a single figure, the extraordinary polymath Enrique de Villena (1384-1434). This aristocrat, who belonged to the royal line of Aragon, was at the forefront of early Iberian vernacular humanism, opening up new intellectual frontiers for noble lay readers. His aspirations and activities aroused suspicion, and he entered legend as a necromancer (Lope de Vega would write a play about him). Although Mena eulogizes his achievements, calling him «onra d'España», «ínclito sabio, autor muy sciente» (st. 127; ed. Kerkhof 1997), the scene climaxes with an elegy over the loss of his library, part of which was dispersed and part thrown to the flames. Villena's books were burned because, we are given to understand, they crossed the boundaries of licit knowledge. Ultimately, Mena's account is profoundly ambivalent: he affirms the legitimate authority of the absolute monarch directly to police the cultural endeavours of his subjects (st. 134), even as he laments the irretrievable loss of an intellectual treasure: «Castilla perdió tal thesoro/ *non conoscido* delante la gente./ Perdió los tus libros sin *ser conoscidos*» (sts. 127-28; my emphasis). What matters here, above all, is the location of knowledge. Mena implies —and it is only an implication— that Villena's library could have been preserved for the intelligentsia and kept hidden from the general public. Readers of the poem are

49. McPheeters (1961: 184 and 192).
50. Kermode (1983: 44).
51. I leave aside the various instances of self-censorship carried out by Hernán Núñez in his commentary: these include correcting or suppressing elements that might impugn the morals of the Church or appear to trespass on its authority. This aspect is discussed in the forthcoming critical edition.

thus confronted with, and presumably expected to endorse, their own censorship: they should not know who burned the books, what they were, or why.

Fifty years later, in his commentary on this passage, Hernán Núñez reconfigures the reader's relationship to the scene.[52] He makes the explicit point that even illicit books of magic should not be burned, but held in secret and safety for consultation by those qualified to use them. However, Núñez's commentary also testifies to the changed political and cultural landscape of Catholic Monarchs and the incipient interest in the control of the printed book. Anticipating a state of affairs that was to last at least as long as his own commentary was printed, he set before sixteenth-century readers an emblematic scene of censorship as a tussle between ecclesiastical and monarchical authority, a tussle that ended in a fiasco, with Lope de Barrientos, the King's chaplain responsible for vetting and destroying the books, blaming the King for what is now represented as a blunder. But Núñez also lifts the veil covering the titles of some of the forbidden books —Arabic translations of esoteric lore— and in doing so he draws readers closer to the historical events represented so allusively by Juan de Mena, encouraging them to reflect more critically upon the relation between literature and censorship: rather than being confronted with a fact, they participate in a process.

This scene, coupled with the other evidence I have been discussing, shows how the sixteenth-century reception of late medieval texts laid the ground for another author to write about what could happen when an otherwise nondescript country gentleman by the name of Alonso Quijano entered a labyrinth of medieval chivalric romances and, failing to distinguish between past and present, the local and the universal, the contingent and the transcendental, never quite managed to find his way out. This wayward, though profoundly creative and life enhancing reading experience (figured significantly as a journey through life and books) is what provokes the combination of censorship and literary criticism portrayed in Part I, chapter 6 of *Don Quijote*. Here, rational literary criticism, arbitrary judgements, and sheer chance all merge in an act of book burning that ironically stages the sense and the senselessness of endeavouring to control the reading subject of fictional literature.[53] What has changed from the portrayal of book burning by Juan de Mena and Hernán Núñez? For one thing, lay readers themselves have now become critics and censors. Cervantes clearly understood how the act of reading drew on the internalized discourses of the critic and the censor. Yet the comedy of this scene, as well as the nature and subsequent course of his entire book, shows how ultimately he placed the reading subject in an irrepressible and unpredictable space between them both.

52. Mena (1505: 69r-70v).
53. The bibliography on this iconic scene is substantial. For a useful overview, with basic bibliography, see the *Volumen complementario* to the 1998 edition (28-31, 282-86). The analogy between this scene and Mena's portrayal of the burning of Villena's books has already been suggested by Marasso (1947).

Bibliography

ARANDA, Luis de, *Glosa de moral sentido en prosa a las famosas, y muy excelentes coplas de don Jorge Manrrique* [facsimile ed. of Valladolid, ¿1552?], *Glosas a las «Coplas» de Jorge Manrique*, vol. 4, El ayre de la almena, 8, Cieza, n.p., 1962.

BENNETT, Andrew, *The Author*, London, Routledge, 2005.

BIANCHIN, Lucia, *«Dove non arriva la legge»: dottrine della censura nella prima età moderna*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 2005.

BODIN, Jean, *The Six Bookes Of A Commonweale. Out of the French and Latine Copies, done into English*, by Richard Knolles, London, Impensis G. Bishop, 1606.

BURT, Richard, *Licensed by Authority: Ben Jonson and the Discourses of Censorship*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1993.

CERVANTES, Alonso de, *Glosa famosíssima sobre las coplas de don Jorge Manrrique* [facsimile ed. of Lisbon, Valentín Fernández, 1501], *Glosas a las «Coplas» de Jorge Manrique*, vol. 1, El ayre de la almena, 5, Cieza, n.p., 1961.

CERVANTES, Miguel de, *Don Quijote de la Mancha*, ed. Instituto Cervantes, dir. Francisco Rico, 2 vols., Barcelona, Instituto Cervantes, Crítica, 1998.

CHARTIER, Roger, «Textos, impresos, lecturas», *Libros, lecturas y lectores en la Edad Moderna*, trans. Mauro Armiño, Madrid, Alianza, 1993, pp. 41-57.

CLARE, Janet, *Art Made Tongue-Tied by Authority: Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramatic Censorship*, 2nd ed., Manchester, Manchester University Press, (1990) 1999.

DARST, David H., «Poetry and Politics in Jorge Manrique's *Coplas por la muerte de su padre*», *Medievalia et Humanistica*, 13 (1985) 197-203.

EAGLETON, Terry, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1990.

FETTERLEY, Judith, *The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1978.

GODZICH, Wlad and SPADACCINI, Nicholas, eds., *Literature Among Discourses: The Spanish Golden Age*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1986.

GODZICH, Wlad and SPADACCINI, Nicholas, eds., *The Institutionalization of Literature in Spain*, *Hispanic Issues*, 1 (1987).

HALASZ, Alexandra, review of *Dictionary of Literary and Dramatic Censorship in Tudor and Stuart England* by Dorothy Auchter, *Literature and Censorship in Renaissance England* by Andrew Hadfield, *Press Censorship in Jacobean England* by Cyndia Susan Clegg, and *Elizabethan News Pamphlets: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marlowe and the Birth of Journalism* by Paul J. Voss, *Renaissance Quarterly*, 56 (2003) 888-894.

JANNER, Hans, «La glosa española: estudio de su métrica y de sus temas», *Revista de Filología Española*, 27 (1943) 181-232.

JIMÉNEZ CALVENTE, Teresa, «Los comentarios a las *Trescientas* de Juan de Mena», *Revista de Filología Española*, 82 (2002) 21-44.

Kennedy, William J., *Authorizing Petrarch*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1994.

Kermode, Frank, *The Classic: Literary Images of Permanence and Change*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1983.

Lida de Malkiel, María Rosa, *Juan de Mena: poeta del prerrenacimiento español*, 2nd ed., México D.F., El Colegio de México, 1984.

Macherey, Pierre, *A Theory of Literary Production*, Geoffrey Wall, trans., London, Routledge, 2006. [French original, *Pour une théorie de la production littéraire*, 1966].

Marasso, Arturo C., *La invención del «Quijote»*, Buenos Aires, Hachette, 1947.

Maravall, José Antonio, *La cultura del barroco: análisis de una estructura histórica*, 2nd ed., Barcelona, Ariel, 1980; English translation, *Culture of the Baroque: Analysis of a Historical Structure*, trans. Terry Cochran, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1986.

McPheeters, D. W., *El humanista español Alonso de Proaza*, Madrid, Castalia, 1961.

Mena, Juan de, *Las ccc* [*Las trescientas*] *del famosíssimo poeta Juan de Mena con glosa* [*de Hernán Núñez de Toledo*], Seville, Compañeros alemanes [Johann Pegnitzer, Magnus Herbst and Thomas Glockner], 1499. Revised ed., Granada, Juan Varela, 1505.

Mena, Juan de, *Laberinto de Fortuna*, ed. Maxim. P. A. M. Kerkhof, Madrid, Castalia, 1997.

Minnis, A. J., *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, London, Scolar Press, 1984.

Monleón, José B., «Las *Coplas* de Manrique, un discurso político», *Ideologies and Literature*, 17 (1983) 116-132.

Núñez de Toledo, Hernán, *Comentario a las 'Trescientas' de Hernán Núñez de Toledo, el Comendador Griego (1499, 1505)*, Julian Weiss, Antonio Cortijo Ocaña, eds., *http://www.ehumanista.ucsb.edu/projects/Weiss%20Cortijo/index.shtml* accessed September 2009.

Parker, Deborah, *Commentary and Ideology: Dante in the Renaissance*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1993.

Patterson, Annabel, *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England*, 2nd ed., Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, (1984) 1990.

Pérez Gómez, Antonio, «Noticias bibliográficas», *Glosas a las «Coplas» de Jorge Manrique*, vol. 6, El ayre de la almena, 10, Cieza, n.p., 1963.

Raz-Krakotzkin, Amnon, *The Censor, the Editor, and the Text: The Catholic Church and the Shaping of the Jewish Canon in the Sixteenth Century*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.

Round, Nicholas G., «Formal Integration in Jorge Manrique's *Coplas por la muerte de su padre*», *Readings in Spanish and Portuguese Poetry for Geoffrey Connell*, Nicholas G. Round, D. Gareth Walters eds., Glasgow, Dept. of Hispanic Studies, University of Glasgow, 1985, pp. 205-221.

Sánchez Arce, Nellie E., *Las glosas a las «Coplas» de Jorge Manrique*, Madrid, Sancha, 1956.

Silvestre, Gregorio, «Glosa sobre las *Coplas* de Don George Manrrique», *Romancero y cancioneros sagrados*, Biblioteca de Autores Españoles 35, Madrid, Rivadaneyra, 1872.

Smart, Barry, *Michel Foucault*, revised ed., London, Routledge, 2002.

Weinberg, Bernard, *A History Of Literary Criticism In The Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols., Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1961.

Weiss, Julian, *The Poet's Art: Literary Theory in Castile, c. 1400-60*, Oxford, The Society for the Study of Medieval Languages and Literature, 1990.

Weiss, Julian, «Political Commentary: Hernán Núñez's *Glosa a «Las trescientas», Letters and Society in Fifteenth-Century Spain: Studies Presented to P. E. Russell on his Eightieth Birthday*, Alan Deyermond, Jeremy Lawrance, eds., Llangrannog, Dolphin, 1993, pp. 205-216.

Weiss, Julian, «Maravall's Materialism», *Yearbook of Comparative and General Literature*, 45/46 (1997/98), 181-187.

Weiss, Julian, «'¿Qué demandamos de las mugeres?' Forming the Debate About Women in Late Medieval Spain (with a Baroque Response)», *Gender in Debate from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance*, Thelma Fenster, Clare Lees, eds., New York, Palgrave Press, 2002, pp. 237-281.

Weiss, Julian, «Literary Theory and Polemic in Castile, *c*. 1200-1500», *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, vol. 2, *The Middle Ages*, ed. Alistair Minnis and Ian Johnson, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, pp. 496-532.

Weissberger, Barbara F., «Resisting Readers and Writers in the Sentimental Romances and the Problem of Female Literacy», *Studies on the Spanish Sentimental Romance (1440-1550): Redefining a Genre*, Joseph J. Gwara, E. Michael Gerli, eds., Woodbridge, Tamesis, 1997, pp. 173-190.

Williams, Raymond, *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977.