

## *Ut pictura non poesis: Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda and the Construction of Memory*

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### **Abstract:**

Painting and literature in Early Modern Spain were powerful tools used to educate the population in a theocratic and absolutist ideology. Although the resolutions of the Council of Trent did not create a new style, they did provide a corpus of rules that shaped the artistic and literary production of the Catholic nations. Among the most important consequences of these resolutions may have been the necessity of controlling the different expressions of human creativity in order to maintain the country's dominant ideology. The next logical step for art and literature was to break with the intellectual elitism of the Renaissance and Mannerism in order to become more appealing to the senses of the population (Portús 21). Spain, the champion of the Catholic Reformation, developed a theory of the art of painting based on its "usefulness" in narrating stories to the faithful using strategies such as *compositio loci* or in illustrating complicated concepts with the rhetorical help of the *demonstratio ad oculos*. The seductive power of images was considered key to teaching the appropriate behaviors. (1) Francisco Pacheco established this importance in his *Arte de la pintura* (1649), in which he considers the aim of the Christian painter to "persuadir al pueblo, y llevarlo, por medio de la pintura, a abrazar alguna cosa conveniente a la religión" (I, 11; 252).

**Keywords:** Painting | Literature | Early Modern Spain | Literary Criticism

### **Article:**

**\*\*\*Note: Full text of article below**

## *Ut pictura non poesis. Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda* and the Construction of Memory

IGNACIO LOPEZ ALEMANY

PAINTING AND LITERATURE IN Early Modern Spain were powerful tools used to educate the population in a theocratic and absolutist ideology. Although the resolutions of the Council of Trent did not create a new style, they did provide a corpus of rules that shaped the artistic and literary production of the Catholic nations. Among the most important consequences of these resolutions may have been the necessity of controlling the different expressions of human creativity in order to maintain the country's dominant ideology. The next logical step for art and literature was to break with the intellectual elitism of the Renaissance and Mannerism in order to become more appealing to the senses of the population (Portús 21). Spain, the champion of the Catholic Reformation, developed a theory of the art of painting based on its "usefulness" in narrating stories to the faithful using strategies such as *compositio loci* or in illustrating complicated concepts with the rhetorical help of the *demonstratio ad oculos*. The seductive power of images was considered key to teaching the appropriate behaviors.<sup>1</sup> Francisco Pacheco established this importance in his *Arte de la pintura* (1649), in which he considers the aim of the Christian painter to "persuadir al pueblo, y llevarlo, por medio de la pintura, a abrazar alguna cosa conveniente a la

<sup>1</sup> Molanus writes in his *De Historia SS. Imaginum et Picturarum, pro vero earum usu contra abusum Libri quatuor*, that "mucho más persuade la pintura que la oración." I take the quote from Francisco Pacheco (III, II; 580).

religión" (I, II; 252).

Thus, *decorum*, became a major preoccupation of the authorities. During the Renaissance *decorum* referred to the sacrifice of accuracy regarding historical details to gain in effectiveness, but for theologians, men of letters, and the hierarchy of the Church, the meaning of *decorum* soon fell under the semantic influence of "decency." The artist and the writer were thus compelled to "amend" the so-called "errors" to which strict historical fidelity could fall prey, because it was accepted, art could—and should—perfect nature (Portús 27). If *imitatio* and *inventio* were not clearly distinguished in the early sixteenth-century theory of art, the influence of the moral concept of *decency* on the artistic *dispositio* could only complicate things even more.<sup>2</sup>

The artists, with their persuasive creations, would become an important instrument for the goals of the absolutist and theocratic society, with responsibilities centered around the purity of the religious and political dogma. But for the same reasons, the artists would become a potential danger to the society. The new political role of the artists, as Emily Bergmann has explained, reinforced their long-lasting claim for a position among the liberal arts that would let them "avoid paying taxes levied on the products of crafts, and to enable them to become members of the military orders" (24-25).

Sometimes the actual facts of history needed to be altered in the spirit of this new meaning of *decorum*. Knowing when and how to make the necessary arrangements required "good judgment" (*buen juicio*), and artists as well as writers were expected to exercise it to achieve their ideological mission. Vicente Carducho would even write in his *Diálogos de la pintura* (1633) that it is a quality of the good artist to exceed the *imitatio* by "amending" the reality. Gabriel de Corral narrates a classical example of this in his prologue to the history of Don Juan de Austria by Lorenzo Van der Hamen. In the introduction to the life of Don Juan de Austria, painters are encouraged to avoid physical defects of authorities, such as a prince, in the same way historians can only narrate positive

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<sup>2</sup> A good study of the concepts of imitation and invention in Cervantes' novels can still be found in the classic study of E. C. Riley (57-61).

stories of their heroes: "...assi porque se atiende a que en la Historia solo se escriba lo que parece loable, como aquel Pintor, que retratando a un Príncipe, a quien faltava un ojo, le pintó por la parte del rostro que carecía de aquel defecto."<sup>3</sup>

In this article I will illustrate how events are changed, omitted or added according to the different purposes and narratives used in the Cervantine romance *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*.

In the third book of this novel, an artist is commissioned to paint the adventures of the wanderers upon their arrival in Lisbon, in what Aurora Egido has named a "reverse ekphrasis." This painting is, in fact, an artistic account of the first two books, "por cuanto es la historia narrada la que se hace cuadro, y cuadro que es síntesis de ella" (298). Soon we learn that the story of this narrative painting doesn't tell us exactly the same story as Periandro's epic narration in the palace of King Policarpo. Additionally, neither accurately portrays the first narrative, the one the author claims to be "translating" and is presented to the reader as *historical*.

Therefore we find: 1) an indisputable historical narrative presented to us as *mimesis*; and 2) a number of different *diegesis*. These *diegesis* include an artistic narration painted on a big canvas and two literary expositions: Periandro's epic speech and the captain's tale. Lastly, we find a third verbal *diegesis* by Auristela to Old Antonio that coincides with the first narrative and can be considered a reiteration of it.<sup>4</sup>

The diverse array of stories told in the artistic representation and in dissimilar literary narratives constitutes not only a master class on perspectivism,<sup>5</sup> but also an example of how different limits have been

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3 See also Cervantes, *Don Quijote* (I, 25; 274-75): "... y así lo ha de hacer y hace el que quiere alcanzar nombre de prudente y sufrido, imitando a Ulises, en cuya persona y trabajos nos pinta Homero un retrato vivo de prudencia y de sufrimiento, como también nos mostró Virgilio en persona de Eneas el valor de un hijo piadoso y la sagacidad de un valiente y entendido capitán, no pintándolo ni descubriéndolo como ellos fueron, sino como habían de ser, para quedar ejemplo a los venideros hombres de sus virtudes." (emphasis added)

4 American critics in the Jamesian tradition would normally explain this opposition of *mimesis* / *diegesis* as *showing* / *telling*. In the traditional vocabulary of Todorov, it would be *representation* / *narration*.

5 Elizabeth Bearden thinks this "polyvalence of Cervantes's ekphrastic represen-

set up for painting and writing in their role of construction of memory in post-Trentian Spain. Roberto González Echevarría is right when he considers that in the modern state, the “growth of a patrimonial bureaucracy, created a discourse... that writers found compelling” and that the law, especially when involving love, provided Cervantes with “fresh narrative forms in which to recast traditional stories” (xiv). But this legal system of control developed after the Council of Trent made the Renaissance dream of *ut pictura poesis* not just an unattainable ambition but a legally impossible aspiration. What was historical had to be changed in literature and, as in this case, amended when painted. By imposing different standards for content in art and in writing, censorship was also extended to the form, since what is told is inseparable from its appropriate expression. Therefore, things that could have been narrated in a certain manner needed to be painted in another and—because of the importance of the content relative to the form—the only narration that can stay true to history in this book is the one told in private by a woman, Auristela, to an old man, Old Antonio. This is possible because both characters have been excluded as agents of communication from the places and contexts that would allow them to speak with authority.<sup>6</sup>

In *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, when the entire group arrives in Lisbon, they decide to have a canvas painted to help them tell their story. Periandro is the only person responsible for the story shown here because it is specified that “ordenó Periandro que, en un lienzo grande, le pintase todos los más principales casos de su historia” (III, 1; 437)<sup>7</sup> [*Periandro directed him to paint on a large canvas all the major events in*

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tations... emphasizes the inadequacy of patriarchal and Eurocentric perspectives on what was a rapidly changing colonial world” (742). The truth is that there are discrepancies between the canvas and the first narrative, but also between this last one and Periandro’s speech, or between the painted canvas and Periandro’s narration. Bearden’s general diagnosis does not examine the different nature of each of those inadequacies, how “a rapidly changing colonial world” produces them or why they are “a tool of subversion against European artistic and cultural paradigms” (740).

6 For more on the connection of censorship with the form of narration, see Pierre Bordieu (137-59).

7 All the quotes from the *Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda* are taken from the edition prepared by Carlos Romero Muñoz.

*their story*]. This is done with the intent of helping Young Antonio tell the group's adventures, and thus "Antonio el mozo declaraba las pinturas y los sucesos cuando le apretaban a que los dijese" [*The younger Antonio would simply describe the picture when people insisted he tell about the events*]. The narrator adds that "no quedó paso principal en que no hiciese labor en su historia que allí no se pintase" (III, 1; 439) [*He... painted into the story every important step along their way*]. Therefore, when Young Antonio tells the stories (III, 4) he does so not only using the mnemonic device, but also with the limits set up for him by Periandro in the painting. Thus, he does not refer to his own experience or what he knows, but to the "amended" story provided for him.<sup>8</sup>

The ekphrasis of the big canvas begins by describing the painting of the fire on the Barbarian Island (III, 1; 437-38). This event takes place almost at the end of the fourth chapter in the first book. What happened in the previous three was obviously important enough to be included in the history Cervantes translates, but apparently not in the painting.

According to the "historical" narration, Periandro dresses as a woman to be able to save Auristela, who at the same time is dressed as a man. The cross-dressed Periandro arrives at the Barbarian Island and saves Auristela by revealing to the Barbarians that their captive is really a woman. The scene finishes with the *anagnorisis* of whom we have been told to be brother and sister:

[A Periandro] Quitósele la vista de los ojos, cubriósele el corazón con pasos torcidos y flojos, fue a abrazarse con Auristela, a quien dijo, teniéndola estrechamente en sus brazos:

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8 For Elizabeth Bearden, this resembles the Native American testimonials in New World courts, in which indigenous peoples presented traditional *lienzos* as evidence in their cases (741). This connection of the Cervantine text with the Native American *lienzos* is very difficult to believe because there is already a long tradition in Europe of using series of images for the same purpose. As Mary Carruthers explains, "the importance of visual images as memorial hooks and cues is a basic theme in all memory-training advice and practice from the very earliest Western texts we possess, the *Dialexeis*" (221). In this Cervantes' novel, the false captives use the same technique to try to convince the population from "un lugar no muy pequeño ni muy grande, de cuyo nombre no me acuerdo" of their sufferings while in the hands of a Turkish Captain (III, 10).

—¡Oh, querida mitad de mi alma! ¡Oh, firme coluna de mis esperanzas! ¡Oh, prenda, que no sé si diga por mi bien o por mi mal hallada, aunque no será sino por bien, pues de tu vista no puede proceder mal ninguno! Ves aquí a tu hermano Periandro. (I, 4; 153-54)

*[His eyes dimmed and his heart stopped, and with weak and faltering steps he went to embrace Auristela, to whom he said as he held her tightly in his arms, "Oh, beloved half of my soul, oh, strong pillar of my hopes, oh, treasure now found though I don't know whether for good or ill, though surely it can only be for my good, since no evil can possibly come from the sight of you! Behold your brother Periandro! (29)]*

Auristela replies with the same enthusiasm, but adds "Suerte dichosa ha sido el hallarte, pero desdichada ser en tal lugar y en semejante traje" (I, 4; 154) [*What happy fortune to have found you, but how unhappy the place and in such clothing! (29)*]

We again find the same events in Periandro's analeptic speech to the people gathered at the palace of King Policarpo. The language and the style Periandro uses to narrate his adventures are very ornate and elaborate—eliciting some criticism from certain listeners. But despite all the details, within this internal *analepsis* we find what Genette has named a *paralipsis* (52), a sort of lateral ellipsis where the narrator sidesteps a given element. In this case, when Periandro reaches the point where he saved Auristela, he only mentions it by saying:

Caí en las misericordias del príncipe Arnaldo, que está presente, por cuya orden entré en la isla para ser espía que investigase si estaba en ella mi hermana, no sabiendo que yo fuese hermano de Auristela. La cual otro día vino en traje de varón a ser sacrificada; conocíla, dolióme su dolor, previne su muerte con decir que era hembra. (II, 20; 419)

*[I then fell into the kind hands of Prince Arnaldo here, under whose command I went onto the island to be a spy and investigate whether*

*my sister was there, although he didn't know I was Auristela's brother. The next day she was brought forth in men's clothing to be sacrificed. I recognized her, sympathized with her suffering, and prevented her death by saying she was a female. (188)]*

Here, despite the fact that Arnaldo knows that Auristela was Periandro's sister because he had been told before (I, 2; 142), it is interesting that Periandro finds it necessary to "amend" and elude the elements of the narration that affected him: his cross-dressing, but not his sister's. After all, as Forcione has explained, "Periandro is not only an epic hero but also an epic poet as he relates the story of his wanderings and sufferings... in accordance with the Renaissance conception of the ideal hero" (187). This is in accordance with Gabriel del Corral's aforementioned advice to the painters to avoid "physical defects."

This episode, however, does not make it at all onto the painted canvas. And because Periandro is the person responsible for this narrative, we can assume that he omitted it in his narration to the painter. Alternatively, the episode may have been included, and the artist did not want to make it part of this narrative. Either way, we can see that although both reconstructions are forced to deviate from a mimetic narration of history, there are different necessities of decorum/decency in literary and artistic narratives. While in the epic speech Auristela's cross-dressing is still acceptable, Periandro's is not, and in the work of the famous painter, the whole episode is conveniently forgotten. Both the painter and the writer use the praised "buen juicio" or good judgment to correct the first narrative.

Fourth and last is Auristela's private narration to Old Antonio, in which she explains how she was kidnapped by the pirates and then, in one of the characteristic shifts from indirect to direct speech in Cervantine prose, she continues explaining that the captain dressed her as a man, afraid of her being seduced by the wind (III, 9; 524).<sup>9</sup> She traveled with the pirates until they were attacked by the Barbarians, the captain was

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<sup>9</sup> See Juan Bautista Avalle-Arce's edition of *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda* (III, 9; 341, n. 376).



killed, and she was made a prisoner to be executed as all male captives should be according to their belief. This private narration by Auristela is told only to Old Antonio after his son presents him with the canvas and tells him about the absence of this story in the painting. The importance of the private nature of this narration and its exclusion to the public is explained right afterward, as the subsequent chapter begins:

Las peregrinaciones largas siempre traen consigo diversos acontecimientos... poniéndonos en duda dónde será bien anudarle; porque no todas las cosas que suceden son buenas para contadas y podrían pasar sin serlo y sin quedar menoscabada la historia (III, 10; 526).

*[Long pilgrimages always bring with them a variety of events... leaving us unsure as to where it will be best to tie them back together again. Not everything that happens makes good telling, and there are things one could let pass untold without diminishing the story. (246)]*

A second discrepancy between the artistic account and the written narratives is the painting of the squadrons of "Virtues" and "Vices" as part of Periandro's adventures. This adventure is, in fact, a dream, as Periandro acknowledges in his epic speech (II, 15; 385). Because it never happened, it is obviously not included in the first narrator's account of this romance, but it is still part of the story told by Periandro in Policarpo's palace. Diana de Armas has explained in detail the meaning of this dream and its inclusion in Periandro's narration, as well as its critical interpretation, literary context and tradition (66-77). In his speech, Periandro explains how he and his mariners arrived at an island paradise, a lotusland, full of gold, pearls, emeralds, etc. (II, 15; 380-82). Frederick de Armas has studied the description of this island as a "banquet of senses," presented in the order established by Ficino: this is, first to the eyes and ears, then to the nose, and finally to the tongue and hands as an attempt to enslave the travelers in sensory gratification (404-05). *Sensualidad* herself appears to Periandro accompanied by other beautiful women and says to him, "costarte ha, generoso mancebo el ser mi enemigo, si no la vida, a lo menos

el gusto" (II, 15; 384) [*It's going to cost you dearly to be my enemy, noble young man; if not your life, then at least your pleasure* (166)]. Immediately afterward comes another parade of virgins led by a woman who seems to be Auristela. One of the virgins says, "La Continencia y la Pudicia, amigas y compañeras, acompañamos perpetuamente a la Castidad, que en figura de tu querida hermana Auristela hoy ha querido disfrazarse" (II, 15; 385) [*We're Self-Control and Modesty, friends and companions always in attendance on Chastity, who today has decided to disguise herself in the form of Auristela* (167)], and then Periandro wakes up from his dream.

In her study of this episode, Diana de Armas concludes that Periandro's dream "reveals a world of concentrated psychic stress. And... depicts the self-embattled psyche of an impersonating male adult" (73). This "self-embattlement" is probably the best reason to explain why this "adventure," although it could not be included in the first narrative, is essential in Periandro's *diegesis*. Because of that, the narrator is forced to shift from what Genette categorized as extradiegetic-heterodiegetic to intradiegetic-homodiegetic paradigm—from Cervantes as a narrator in the first degree who tells a story he is absent from, to Periandro narrating his own story at either Policarpo's palace or the artist's studio.<sup>10</sup> After all, among the hardest "trabajos"—trials—of *Persiles* are precisely these "trabajos de amor." And this battle, and the dream that captures it, are as real to him as any of the other trials in the first narrative.

Nevertheless, this episode as narrated is a dream, and therefore its inclusion in the speech and the canvas fails to mirror the first narrative by *addition*. However, this new element is a correction to the *history* that can enhance the ideological mission of the painting with a *demonstratio ad oculos* of the internal battle between Vice and Virtue that takes place in human heart. The appearance of the episode in the painting could help teach the "appropriate behaviors," but it was necessary to elude the image of *Sensualidad* because it could have the opposite effect on the public. This was one of the reasons why the authorities tried to restrict not only paintings that would challenge dogma, but also those considered lascivious (Portús 28).

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<sup>10</sup> See Gérard Genette (212-62).

For that reason, on the Cervantine ekphrasis of the big canvas we only find a quick reference that can be later explained by Young Antonio (III, I; 438): “acullá estaba la agradable isla donde vio en sueños Periandro los dos escuadrones de virtudes y vicios.” [*The pleasant island where in his dreams Periandro saw the two bands of virtues and vices was in another spot* (198)]

The third disagreement between the painted canvas and the literary narratives of the first two books regards to the ceremony after Periandro wins all the athletic competitions organized by King Policarpo. According to the story the captain told in the presence of Auriſtela while she was separated from Periandro:

Quitóse en esto la bella Sinforosa una guirnalda de flores con que adornaba su hermosísima cabeza y la puso sobre la del Gallardo mancebo [Periandro]; y con honesta gracia le dijo al ponérsela:

—Cuando mi padre sea tan venturoso de que volváis a verle, veréis cómo no vendréis a servirle, sino a ser servido. (I, 22; 271-72)

[*With this the beautiful Sinforosa removed a garland of flowers adorning her uncommonly beautiful head and placed it on that of the handsome youth, saying to him with modest grace as she put it there: “When my father is lucky enough to have you return to visit him, you’ll see that you’ve come not only to serve him, but to be served”* (96)]

Then, we are told that Auriſtela “en oyendo pronunciar el nombre de Periandro... y habiendo oído antes las alabanzas de Sinforosa y el favor que en ponerle la guirnalda le había hecho, rindió el sufrimiento a las sospechas y entregó la paciencia a los gemidos...” (I, 23; 272). [*When Auriſtela heard her brother’s name mentioned—having already heard the praises of Sinforosa and about the favor she showed by putting the garland on him—her suffering yielded to suspicion and patience surrendered to moans* (96-97)].

Not long after this happens the ship arrives, or better said, crashes, against Policarpo’s island with Auriſtela’s health at risk due to her “illness

of jealousy.”

In Periandro’s speech he explains that “Allí [en la isla de Policarpo, Scinta] gané los premios, allí fui coronado por vencedor de todas las contiendas y de allí tomó ocasión Sinforosa de desear saber quién yo era, como se vio por las diligencias que para ello hizo” (II, 20; 418). [*It was there [Scinta] I won the prizes, there I was crowned winner of all the competitions, and because of all that Sinforosa decided she wanted to learn my identity, as can be seen in the steps she took with that purpose in mind* (187)]

The ekphrasis of the painting reflects this adventure<sup>11</sup> “como en resguño y en estrecho espacio, las fiestas de Policarpo, coronándose a sí mismo por vencedor de ellas” (III, 1; 438-39). [*In a small space he had Policarpo’s festivities sketched, and himself pictured with the winner’s crown* (198)]<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, and as Romero Muñoz has pointed out (III, 1; 439, n. 31), according to the captain’s narrative Periandro was crowned by Sinforosa though in the painting he is crowning himself. The editor wonders if Periandro makes the change in the painting as a gallantry or if it is another slip-up of Cervantes. We know that when Auristela hears of Sinforosa’s gesture in the captain’s tale, a tremendous jealousy almost ends her life (I, 23), and the specific description of the painting of this episode and its marginality in the canvas seems to be sufficient to think that the “mistake” was probably intentional. But we should not make haste to blame the painter for *manipulating* this particular account because we don’t have the historical chronicle, and therefore the question presented by Romero Muñoz might be, after all, a *false dilemma*. *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda* follows the literary tradition of the Greek novel by beginning *in media res*. Chronologically, this episode would have been located prior to where the first narrator begins the story and never reaches back to this point, hence, it is out of our historical knowledge. We are forced to choose if we are to trust the captain or Periandro, that is, to reconstruct our memory ourselves based on whose story we choose to

<sup>11</sup> About the consideration of this episode as “aventura” instead of “trabajo” see the article by Julio Baena.

<sup>12</sup> Here the translation fails to say that “he is crowning himself.”

believe.

After reviewing the pictorial and literary narratives of the episodes of cross-dressing and the rescue of Auristela, the parade led by *Sensualidad*, and the crowning of Periandro after the athletic games, we find notable differences between history and its artistic and literary reconstructions. These differences are not due however, only to their artistic nature and means of expression. On the contrary, they can also be explained by the different limits established for them in order to ensure their service to the absolutist and theocratic Spain.

As seen in the exclusion of *Sensualidad's* image from the Lisbon canvas, the authorities tried to restrict the public from accessing materials they thought could lead to lust. Nevertheless, right after the big canvas is handed over to Periandro, many portraits of Auristela—some of them copied from the Lisbon canvas—start appearing in the novel in a way that seems to escape from the control of the authorities, which causes numerous complications.<sup>13</sup> We find them painted by a servant of the Duke of Nemours (III, 13), copied from the original canvas painted in Lisbon and found in France and Italy (IV, 6), and as the enigmatic full portrait found in “Calle de los Bancos” (IV, 6). Of course, on this list we must also include the portrait sent to Persiles' brother, Maximino. Painting that originates all their trials (IV, 12).

The consequences of these images become disastrous. In accordance to the Petrarchan and Neoplatonic convention of “love's fatal glance,” to which Castiglione devoted two chapters of his *Cortegiano* (56-57), the painting's viewers feel compelled to possess the image and transfer their love to it/her.<sup>14</sup> While in Neoplatonic thinking the lover is able to transcend the image and see the pure concept of beauty beyond it (Parker 61-63), in the Petrarchan model, the lover is trapped. Instead of being a step toward divinity, the woman becomes the principal obstacle on a path to God, leading the Petrarchan lover to irrational behavior and blindness. As the narrator explains, “la hermosura en parte ciega y en parte

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<sup>13</sup> For a detailed study of the different portraits of Auristela, see Ignacio López Alemany.

<sup>14</sup> And, prior to Castiglione, Marsilio Ficino in his dialogue *Sopra lo amore*, patterned after Plato's *Symposium*.

alumbra: tras la que ciega corre el gusto, tras la que alumbra el pensar en la enmienda" (IV, 7; 667). [*Beauty partly blinds and partly illuminates; pleasure runs after the one that blinds us, thoughts of reform follow the one that illuminates the mind*].<sup>15</sup> While the blindness coming from beauty and followed by "gusto," *cupiditas*, clearly corresponds to Petrarchan love, the one that "alumbra," and leads to thoughts of reform corresponds to the love defended in the Council of Trent, *caritas*. Therefore, the real life of the Petrarchan lover is more likely to embody the Agostino Nifo's doctrines of *De amore*, rather than Ficino's.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of blindness displayed by Petrarchan lovers in this novel is the fight between Arnaldo and the Duke of Nemours when the former discovers the latter resting in the country and talking to a portrait of Auristela painted by his servant. The fight over the painting—represented in a very chivalric way<sup>16</sup>—almost ends both lives before the pilgrims find them and

El rastro que siguieron de la sangre les llevó... hasta ponerlos entre unos espesos árboles que allí cerca estaban, donde vieron al pie de uno un gallardo peregrino sentado en el suelo, puestas las manos casi sobre el corazón y todo lleno de sangre y limpiándosele con un lienzo, conoció, sin duda alguna, ser el herido el duque de Nemours. (IV, 2; 637-38)<sup>17</sup>

[*Followed the trail of blood into a dense stand of trees nearby, where at the foot of one of them they saw a handsome pilgrim seated on the ground. His hands were folded close to his heart and he was completely covered with blood. Croriano went up to him and raised his face and*

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15 I use my own translation here since the original doesn't correspond to the meaning of the Spanish. The original translation says: "Beauty partly blinds and partly illuminates; pleasure runs after it blindly, but only afterwards is the mind illuminated by thoughts of reform" (325).

16 Similar duels can be found in *Palmerín de Oliva*, ch. 36, *Lisuarte de Grecia*, ch. 3, or *Amadís de Grecia*, pt. 1, ch. 59.

17 Of more tragic consequences would be the assassination of Diego Parraces by a member of his own family (III, 4).

*cleaned it with linen cloth, for he recognized that without any doubt the wounded man was the Duke of Nemours.] (306-07)*

Another portrait of Auristela is still to be found by our pilgrims when they arrive in Rome. There, a merchant of the Calle de los Bancos has this mysterious canvas in which Auristela is shown standing up with the world at her feet and a broken crown on her head (IV, 6; 659), again causing a confrontation between the Duke of Nemours and Arnaldo.<sup>18</sup>

In the end, and despite the love that these noble men seem to have for Auristela, when she falls ill and loses all her beauty, “one by one the suitors fade away, leaving only Periandro who carries her portrait in his soul” (Gaylord 163).

It is proven, therefore, that the Petrarchan love produced by the unauthorized circulation of portraits of Auristela only corrupts the otherwise virtuous noblemen, while Periandro, who resisted *Sensualidad* and who never seems to pursue the “image” of Auristela, remains faithful to his love for her. It is necessary to recognize the corollary of this in the need for control over artistic production. That way, families such as the one of Diego Parraces, are not torn apart (III, 4) and the spirit of the most valuable people, such as Arnaldo and the Duke of Nemours, is not ruined because even from the most pure and excellent eyes such as Auristela’s, “salen espíritu vivos y encendidos” (Garcilaso, sonnet VIII) that can capture the men.

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<sup>18</sup> Brito Díaz has explained the meaning of the broken crown as a “spiritual liberation” (151); Michael Nerlich considers this painting as a symbol of the Church, whose broken crown represents the division between Protestants and Roman Catholics (375). Other critics such as Casaldueiro, Karl-Ludwig Selig, etc. have considered the same figure as Eve, the Virgin Mary, Venus, etc. For the editor Carlos Romero Muñoz, this image is based on a similar one in *Rev.* 12.17.

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