

## Kaspar von Barth, Latin Translator of *La Celestina* (1624), and Concepts of Canonicity in the Seventeenth Century

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(The British Library)

1624 saw the publication of *Pornoboscodidascalus latinus, de lenonum, lenarum, conciliatricum, servitiorum dolis, veneficiis, machinis plusquam diabolicis, de miseriis juvenum incautorum qui florem aetatis amoribus inconcessis addiciunt, de miserabili singulorum periculo et omnium interitu. Liber plane divinus, lingua hispanica ab incerto auctore instar ludi conscriptus Celestinae titulo, tot vitae instruendae sententiis, tot exemplis, figuris, monitis plenus ut par aliquid nulla ferè lingua habeat* (Francofurti: typis Wechelianis, apud Danielelem et Davidem Aubrios et Clementem Schleichium). It was edited in an admirable edition by Enrique Fernández in 2006.

“Teacher of the brothel master,”<sup>1</sup> concerning the guiles, potions, and more than diabolical machinations of panders, bawds, procuresses, and servants, concerning the woes of incautious youths who devote the flower of their youth to forbidden loves, concerning the wretched danger of each and the death of all. A clearly divine book, written under the title of *Celestina* by an uncertain author in the form of a play so full of sayings for the instruction of life as of exempla, figures and admonitions that it barely has an equal in any language. (Printed at Frankfurt by Wechel for Daniel and David Aubry and Clemens Schleich).

Barth includes a long prologue, some 300 notes and a version of Musaeus’s “*Hero and Leander*”, cited as a parallel to the death of Melibea. The notes are more common towards the beginning of the text, and point to sources for the purpose of emending the text. As established by Fernández, Barth used the Plantin edition of 1599. Strangely he seems not to have recognized the age of *Celestina*, probably placing it in the middle of the sixteenth century (Fernández, 27).

Barth as a translator has been well studied by Fernández and others. He keeps close to the original and conveys the style well.

Celestina: ¡Putos días vivas, bellaquillo! ¿Y cómo te atreves ...

Pármeno: ¡Como te conozco!

Cel: ¿Quién eres tú?

Pár: ¿Quién? Pármeno, hijo de Alberto, tu compadre, que estuve contigo un poco tiempo que te me dio mi madre, cuando morabas a la cuesta del río, cerca de las tenerías.

Cel: ¡Jesú, Jesú, Jesú! ¿Y tú eres Pármeno, hijo de la Claudina?

Pár: ¡Alahé, yo!

Cel: Pues fuego malo te queme, que tan puta vieja era tu madre como yo! ¿Por qué me persigues, Pármeno? ¡Él es, él es, por los santos de Dios! (Acto I, Severin, 67).

Cel: Prostituaris tute, asine. Et ex unde haec tibi audacia est?

Par: Unde te notam habeo.

Cel: Quis es tu?

<sup>1</sup> Briesemeister (2008, 359) gives the Greek etymologies: porneia=Hurerei; bosko=betrieben; pornoboskos=Kuppler; didaskalos=Lehrer.

Par: Parmeno, filius patris Alberti, ut vocant, compatris tui, qui parumper olim tecum fui datus tibi servitum a matre mea cum ad fluminis latus isthic prope cryptam habitares.  
 Cel: Iesu, Iesu, Iesu, et tu es Parmeno, filius Claudinae?

Per: Certe ego.

Cel: Ergo male igne deflagres, tam prostituta vetus meretrix mater tua erat quam ego nunc sum. Cur me persequeris, Parmeno? Ille est per omnes sanctos, ille est (Actus I; Fernández, 101).

He makes a small number of omissions, chiefly to make the text more palatable to a Protestant readership (Fernández, 31).

Barth's is not the first critical edition of *Celestina* (this was Salamanca 1570, as we shall see); nor is it the first commentary (the manuscript *Celestina comentada* is thought to be c. 1580). It is not the first edition from Germany (which was Christof Wirsung's of 1520), but it is the first Latin translation and was the form in which one of the most famous readers of *Celestina*, Robert Burton, encountered it.

By Barth's time there was already a corpus of Neo-Latin translations of modern literature (see Grant, Burke). Germany was a major source of such translations, especially from the Spanish, as has been studied comprehensively by Briesemeister in a range of publications.

### Barth's Life and Works

The standard account is by Hoffmeister. Barth was born in 1587 in Küstrin (now in Poland) and died in Leipzig in 1658. He was a man of means and a prolific writer (two things that often go together). Some thought he was indiscriminating. "He professed to have read 16,000 authors of every kind" but Gevaerts pronounced him "multae lectionis sed exigui iudicii" "of much reading but tiny discrimination" (cited by Sochatoff 1984: 335-6). Aged twenty-three he submitted his *Racemationes* ('notes') on Petronius to Melchior Goldast for inclusion in his edition of 1610 (they were reprinted in Barth's *Adversaria*, bk XXI, ch. vi). He is thought to have begun them ten years earlier at the age of thirteen.

Hoffmeister (23-42) draws the chronology by which Barth began his career with editions of Greek and Latin works, followed by editions with translations and translations with commentaries. He was also a poet in German but the vast bulk of his works are in Latin.

He was well connected in literary and academic circles: his prodigious output (some of it unpublished: Briesemeister 2008, 357) and extremely wide range of interests should not mislead us into thinking of him as an eccentric.

He published with a range of publishers, but had a particular association with Daniel and David Aubry and Clemens Schleich, with whom he published twelve books between 1623 and 1629.<sup>2</sup>

What to me is striking is that Barth covered every type of Latin literature apart from the major works of Golden classical authors. Thus he edited a Virgilian work but this was not the *Aeneid* but the *Ciris*. He edited Silver (Seneca, Statius [see Berlincourt 2013], and Ausonius) and medieval Christian authors (Phoebadius, Martianus Capella, Optatus). From the French he translated Commynes in 1629 and from the Spanish three works: Pietro Aretino's *Colloquies*, bk III (1623):

<sup>2</sup> *Epidorpidum* 1623; Aesop et al. 1623; his own *De fide salvifica* 1623; his own *Soliloquia* 1623; Namatianus 1623; Gallus 1623; *Pornoboscodidascalus* 1624; *Adversaria* 1624; *Erotodidascalus* 1625; Horatius Lucius 1626; his own *Deutsche Phoenix* 1626; Commynes 1629.

*Pornodidascalus, seu Colloquium muliebre Petri Aretini ingeniossissimi & ferè incomparabilis virtutum & vitiorum demonstratoris: de astu nefario horrendisque dolis, quibus impudicae mulieres juventuti incautae insidiantur, Dialogus [...] traducebat, ut juvenus Germana pestes illas diabolicas apud exteros, utinam non & intra limites, obvias cavere possit cautius Caspar Barthius*

*The Teacher of prostitutes, or Colloquy of women, of Pietro Aretino, the most ingenious and almost incomparable demonstrator of virtues and vices; concerning the nefarious cunning and horrendous wiles with which shameless women ambush unwary youth. A dialogue translated by Kaspar von Barth so that the youth of Germany might more cautiously avoid those diabolical plagues abroad, and hopefully at home*

*Celestina (Pornoboscodidascalus 1624) and Gil Polo's Diana enamorada (Erotodidascalus sive nemoralium libri v, 1625).*

The titles suggest that Barth saw a connection between the works: “The Teacher of prostitutes,” “Teacher of the brothel master,” “Teacher of love or pastorals.” Perhaps the common theme is love, pure (as in the *Diana*) or venal. In the case of the first two, “teacher” might mean “warner against.”

Barth seems to have had a gift for discerning morality in filth. He translates Aretino's *Ragionamenti* from the Spanish version of Juárez, because, he says, the Spanish version is cleaner than the Italian original: addressing “Juventuti germanicae” [The youth of Germany] he says “quod illud [the Spanish] cautè obscoenitatem hujus [the Italian] supposuit” [because the Spanish advisedly replaced the obscenity of the Italian] (Gagliardi, xxxv). His poem on Pantagruel (Kühlmann, 259) focuses on morality rather than bawdy.

### Canonicity and the Ages of Latin

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Cicero held sway as the model of Latinity, although opinion varied between the pure Ciceronians such as Bembo and the eclectics, most notably Erasmus.<sup>3</sup> As time went on, Silver authors such as Seneca and Tacitus and even Apuleius were thought worthy of imitation (see D'Amico).

In this connection it is interesting to see the ideas of Barth and his contemporary Du Cange on the history of the Latin language.

The Sieur Du Cange (incidentally, another gentleman scholar) published his *Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infimae latinitatis* in 1678 (Géraud 1840). In the Praefatio (I-II) he surveyed various schemes which compared the development of Latin to the ages of man, ranging from babbling infancy (“balbutiare”), adolescence, maturity and babbling old age. Or to the ages of the earth or of civilization: golden, silver, bronze and iron. In any analysis, Latin rose, increased and fell (Praefatio II) (Ax, 226).

Barth, in ch. ix of the *Adversaria* (a collection of academic footnotes), sets out five periods of Latin: (1) before Cicero (2) Cicero to Domitian, (3) Domitian to the Antonines, (4) the “barbari” before Charlemagne and (5) the Middle Ages and contemporaries. (Wolff 52). Barth makes clear that the fourth period is one with “indicia quaedam Latinae ingenuitatis, licet barbarie prodigiose confusa et obcaecata” [“some traces of the purity of Latin, albeit extremely

<sup>3</sup> Of course, as early as the sixteenth century the universities were not purely focused on the Golden classics: the Pre-Ciceronian Plautus and Terence were on the syllabus. Sánchez de las Brozas lectured on Garcilaso as well as Virgil (Coroleu 2019, 127) and Vives on Prudentius, Baptista Mantuanus and Poliziano as well as Virgil and Horace (Coroleu 2014, 167, n. 241). But these modern authors could be seen as modern continuators of the classical tradition. There was no room in the university canon for some of the works that Barth studied.

confused and blinded by barbarism”]. The Middle Ages too are an “aevum degenerans a puritate sermonis Latini” [“an age which degenerated from the purity of Latin speech”].

Both scholars are clear that the Latin language has decayed, but appreciate that all ages have produced good authors (Wolff, 51).

Barth also stands apart from the *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes*, in which scholars argued for the primacy of the ancients or the need to break away from them. Although the debate originated as early as 1594, Fumaroli shows it was still active in Barth’s time (his latest example is from 1761).

Various scholars have commented that Barth’s Latin style is eclectic, reflecting his breadth of reading (Wolff, 53; Fernández, 23 D30).

So I think we can see Barth as a good example of a post-Renaissance culture in which older narrower concepts of the canon were cast aside.

### Milesian Tales

A particular interest of Barth’s was the Milesian tale, often regarded by modern scholarship as the forerunner of the novel. Indeed, Barth’s contemporary Huet gave Apuleius’s *Golden Ass* and its Greek predecessors pride of place in his *Traité de l’origine des romans* of 1670 (1966: 11, 57, 64). (It is interesting that Rojas himself refers to Apuleius (Act 8; Fernández 184, Barth’s note 362).<sup>4</sup>

In the Prologue of *Celestina*, Barth mentions that he has in hand a collection in thirty volumes of Milesian tales:

Georgii de monte-maiore, Pastoralia, translata sunt proximis his diebus. Eadem inductus insignia Milesiarum, plus quam triginta volumina ex omnium idiomatum selectis fabulis et historiis summa qua fieri potuit sermonis aequabilitate et hilaritate composui.

[Jorge de Montemayor’s *Pastoralia* has been translated very recently.<sup>5</sup> Persuaded by this book, I collected a digest of Milesian tales, more than thirty volumes of the most amusing tales and stories taken from all languages.]

(Fernández, 67 D34; 399 D33).

He refers to this collection a year later in the prologue to *Gil Polo* (Briesemeister 2008, 358-59): “The little book was found by us in our silva of Milesian tales” (“Libellus est à nobis inter Milesianum nostram silvam repertus” (*Gil Polo*, ¶2v). He also seems to refer to his collection as a repository of treasures (“de Conditioriis nostrorum thesaurorum,” ¶2r). At the end of *Gil Polo* he says he will soon give to the press both the Milesian tales and the *Diana* of Jorge de Montemayor (“Daturi mox & Milesias, & Dianam Georgij de Monte-Majore,” ¶5v). He intended to include Antonio Eslava’s novella collection *Noches de invierno* (1609) in his collection of Milesian tales, and indeed in his *Celestina* says he has already “adapted” some of them (Fernández 21, 314, 415, 424). He expressed an interest in translating Feliciano de Silva’s *Segunda Celestina* (Fernández 21, 26). In accordance with his views of Rabelais and Aretino, Barth conceives Milesian tales as teaching morality.

<sup>4</sup> Apuleius was more influential than Petronius, in part simply because he was rediscovered first. Barth’s writings on the *Satyricon* were purely textual criticism rather than literary criticism. They were not separately published but were included in the Goldast edition of 1610 and others. He cites Petronius heavily in his *Celestina* (Fernández, 35). On Barth and Petronius see Berlincourt 2014, 141 n. 66. He could not have known the *Cena Trimalchionis*, discovered in 1664 after his death (Grafton).

<sup>5</sup> Explained by Fernández (399) as Kuffstein’s translation of 1619, *Erste und anderer Theil der newen verteuschten Shöfferey, von der schönen verlibten Dianas*.

This then is the generic context in which Barth places *Celestina*.

### **Celestina as a Classic**

Barth also contributed to the status of *Celestina* as a classic. This status can be measured in various ways. For some, classic status is equivalent to popularity, measured in numbers of editions or presence in inventories (documented by Snow). Yet a work can be popular but not valued or respected. Another indication of status might be the use of a text as a linguistic teaching aid: *Celestina* appeared in bilingual editions from 1633 on (Snow). But this might reflect its linguistic rather than literary qualities. For Baranda (308) the listing of parallels in manuscript marginalia in a copy of *Celestina* shows its classic status. The same too is true of the *Celestina comentada*. A firm indication of classic status is when a work is quoted in an academic context: *Celestina* is cited in Salinas's *Retórica en lengua castellana* of 1541 (Taylor). To my mind a firmer indication of classic status is when a work is critically edited. Tomás Tamayo de Vargas, in his edition of Garcilaso of 1622, cast an envious patriotic eye on the critical editions that other nations had done of their poets:

Pues es justo que lo que en el Señor de Bartás, el Tasso, Ausías March, en la poesía francesa, toscana, y lemosina han hecho M. Antonio Mureto, Ludovico Dolce, Juan de Resa, no falta al Príncipe de la nuestra [...] El mío, parte se fundará en conjeturas apoyadas con razones, [...] parte en las lecciones varias en otras impresiones, enmiendas y advertencias de hombres doctos [...] y papeles de curiosos que se tienen casi por originales (Gallego Morell, 597-98).<sup>6</sup>

Few Spanish works had received philological commentaries before Barth's *Celestina* of 1624, principally Mena and Garcilaso; Góngora (1627 etc.) and Camões (1639) post-date Barth.<sup>7</sup> Tamayo mentions only printed editions, but of course manuscript culture had transmitted commentaries on Classical texts since antiquity. The commentary tradition on vernacular texts seems to go back to Dante; among the Spanish there were manuscript commentaries, printed in the early modern period, on Mena's *Laberinto de Fortuna* and Santillana's *Proverbios*. These were all on poets, and among Spanish prose works *Celestina* was the first to receive a commentary.

As mentioned above, the earliest critical edition of *Celestina* seems to be that printed by Matías Gast for Simón Borgoñón in Salamanca in 1570 (studied by Scoles). Borgoñón addresses his patron Don Sancho de Avila:

Que este libro en gracia de V.M. saliesse mas correcto que hasta agora, y en forma y letra nueva [...] Atreui me, con consejo de algunos doctos, a mudar algunas palabras que algunos indoctos correctores peruertieron. En el acto primero emende Erasistrato, y Seleucal. Porque alli toca la historia del rey Seleuco, que por industria del medico Erasistrato concedio con paternal piedad a su propia muger al vnico hijo que por amores della casi al punto de la muerte auia llegado. Cuentalo largamente Luciano en su Dea Syria, y tocalo Valerio Maximo li. 5. ca. 7. En el acto. 6. Corregi Adelecta [...] (A3v).

<sup>6</sup> Ludovico Dolce edited Bernardo Tasso's *Amadigi* (1561) and Juan de Ressa edited March's *Obras* in Spanish (1555) but Muret did not edit Du Bartas. Muret edited Ronsard's *Amours* (1553). The *Semaine* and *Oeuvres poétiques* of Du Bartas were edited in 1597 and 1601 by Simon Goulart under the initialism SGS.

<sup>7</sup> I disregard the moralizing glosses on Manrique's *Coplas* and Santillana's *Proverbios*.

The notes are few, but their function is to establish the text by reference to literary sources (see Scoles).

Barth too criticizes the text of *Celestina*. While some of his notes are mere accumulations of parallels (which is typical of the practice of the time) in other places Barth uses the notes to improve the Spanish which he then translates. According to Fernández (35), “Barth’s purpose in his notes is not to identify the sources of *Celestina* but to authorize his translation”.

In other places he criticises the received text but translates it as it is: “si adessetis [nunc mihi Crato et Galenus]. “O si viniessedes.” Maybe one should better read ‘viviesedes’” (Fernández, 424).<sup>8</sup>

Thus I see an intimate relationship between translation and criticism. Barth’s purpose in the *Adversaria* (a Ciceronian word for “account book”) was to published unpublished texts and (of particular interest for his *Celestina*) to explain passages in texts (“illustrare, explicare”) and using these explanations to correct the text (“emendare, emaculare, corrigere”) (Wolff, 49).

I conclude with Barth’s most eminent reader.

### Robert Burton

In Burton Barth found a kindred spirit. An Oxford don who never travelled (1577-1640), his principal work is *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, which went through five authorial revisions in 1621, 1624, 1628, 1632, 1638, followed by a posthumous edition of 1651-52. It is a structured discussion of melancholy, arranged by divisions and subdivisions, but its method is to gather a vast range of material under appropriate headings. Like Erasmus in the *Adagia* and Montaigne in the *Essays*, Burton added new material in successive editions but tended not to delete any. Barth produced a similarly compilatory work in his *Adversaria*, collected notes to Latin literature.

From 1624 onwards Burton quotes Barth’s Aretino and from 1628 onwards Barth’s *Celestina*, chiefly in the section devoted to love-melancholy (these are registered in the biobibliography of the edition by Faulkner, Kiessling and Blair (Burton 1989-2000: VI: 313) and discussed by Castells).

[On the suffering of lovers] if they be surprised, leap out at windowes, cast themselves headlong down, brusing or breaking their legges or armes, and sometimes loosing life it self, as *Calisto* did for his lovely *Melibaea* ...

A fourth will take *Hercules* club from him, and with that Centurion in the Spanish *Caelestina*, will kill ten men for his mistress *Areusa*, for a word of her mouth, he will cut bucklers in two like pippins, and flap downe men like flies, *elige quo martis genere illum occidi cupis?* (Part. 3, Sect. 2, Memb. 3, Subs. 1; III, p. 172).

A further parallel with Barth is that Burton intended his *Anatomy* to be in Latin, but was persuaded by his publisher to use English. The *Anatomy*, as does his library, took in the whole range of Latin literature, and continental literature (for example Castiglione and *Guzmán de Alfarache*) in Neo-Latin translation (Castells 59). According to Kiessling (1998: xxxi), Burton’s languages were English and Latin: he had three books in Italian, and one each in French, German, Hebrew and Spanish.

His library had five titles by Barth (Kiessling 1998, nos 104-08): *Amphiteatrum gratiarum ... Anacreonte*; *Amphiteatrum sapientiae*; *Amphiteatrum seriorum jocorum*; *Cave*

<sup>8</sup> He comments “lege” at 425.7 and 464.5. The reading at 432.10 “cannot be found.” Readings at 435.6, 473.6 are “corrupt.” At 437.16 “would have said.”

*canem: de vita Gasparis Scioppii; Scioppius excellens*. It will be noticed that other works which he quotes such as *Celestina* and Aretino are not recorded as being in his library. (For the discrepancy between books which he quotes and books which he owned see Webster 1991.)

Burton's method in the *Anatomy* is more literary than scientific. Although he cites physicians on love-sickness, he also uses creative works such as *Celestina*. The contrast with the early psychologist Juan Huarte de San Juan is strong: in the *Examen de ingenios* of 1575 Huarte uses only scientific works. Burton, like Barth and other editors of texts, feels free to make use of any material that was available to him.

In conclusion, Barth's career reminds us that Latin was flourishing in the seventeenth century: indeed, in his hands Latin encompassed all literature to date. His was a vision of the world which overcame the divisions of ancient and modern, Gold and Iron, and Latin and vernacular.

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