

Imagining *Celestina*

Ivy A. Corfis
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Like the *Libro de Buen Amor* [LBA] and other masterpieces of medieval and early modern letters that require the reader to create meaning from the openness of the written word, *Celestina* [LC] engages its readers through its very indefiniteness.¹ In the LBA, the reader's participation is acknowledged within the text itself and has often been commented on by critics.² In a similar fashion, LC also requires the readers to participate in the creation of the text, either as silent or vocal readers, who "imagine" what the text leaves unstated.³ This is, of course, the obvious result of LC's dialogic style and lack of a narrative voice to fill in the gaps and provide information that the characters themselves do not openly state through speech. The dramatic nature of the text, whether classified as dialogue novel, drama, or any other form, requires the reader to imagine much of the physical world that the characters' words do not explicitly describe.

The concept of imagination is important in medieval and early modern philosophy and letters. As Murray Wright Bundy shows through early Christian theories of imagination, such as those found in the work of St. Augustine, the faculty of internal vision (the mind's eye) reproduces images stored in memory; but the hallmark of imagination for these theorists is that it transcends memory by enhancing or manipulating things remembered. By adding or deleting features to or from remembrances, imagination may transform the remembered image into something quite different. Memory through imagination thus creates fantasy, which may be false recollection or altered memory (Bundy 163). However, as Bundy points out, neither Augustine nor later writers such as Shakespeare conceived of imagination as a creative function (165); and Albert Magnus understood that fantasy often hindered rather than enhanced intellect since it "excessively occupies the mind with the composition and division of images and 'intentions'" (Bundy 191). Dante used some of the same concepts, linking them specifically to love in his poetry: that is, that imagination can enable love to dominate completely all human thoughts as well as bodily states. Indeed, imagination, combined with passion, can overrule the dictates of reason (Bundy 226). "Dante's conception of 'fantasy' in the *Vita Nuova* is, then, typical of the descriptive psychology of the Middle Ages" (Bundy 227). Dante shows

¹ The two texts are recognized by literary critics as masterpieces and canonized as such by María Rosa Lida de Malkiel in the title of her work, *Two Spanish Masterpieces* (1961). I want to thank Professor Pablo Ancos for reading a draft of this essay and for his suggestions for its improvement. All responsibility for content is mine alone.

² Most compelling with regard to reading strategies is the study by John Dagenais.

³ For reference to vocal readers, see, for example, the second strophe of "Concluye el autor" (Rojas 609-10) and the second and fourth strophes of Alonso de Proaza's verses (Rojas 612, 613).

imagination to be “capable of reproducing and combining the images derived from the senses, a power especially active and dangerous in dreams, when, influenced by physical states, it conjures up strange images, resembling but not necessarily corresponding to reality” (Bundy 227). Imagination is thus apt to conjure “wrong opinions and dangerous passions” as well as “wrong physical states” not corresponding to the real world (Bundy 227-28). In such a way, imagination employs memory to create ideas based on what previously was perceived, to create an altered vision of the world (Bundy 236-39). Unlike earlier classical and Christian views, where reason was the mistress and imagination the servant, in Dante and later theorists, imagination is freed from reality and the constraints of reason to go where “reason cannot follow” (Bundy 280).

It is important to note in the above summary that imagination is linked to memory; and, as Dorothy Severin has shown in her masterful 1970 study, memory is indeed crucial to LC and to the development of the characters in the past, present, and future. In this study I will not enter into a detailed discussion of faculty psychology or focus on how images and thoughts are stored and remembered, as does Frances A. Yates in the classic study *The Art of Memory*, or delve into the function of memory and the ethics of reading and authority, as does Mary J. Carruthers in *The Book of Memory*. Rather in a more descriptive fashion, it is clear that memories are present in LC, as Severin has shown.⁴ This is especially true for memory as the basis of imagination: that is, memory used to view the world –or create worlds– other than that which is perceived objectively. Whether the altered perception results from false or distorted memory or from creative thought that reconfigures reality based on remembered images and information, memory through imagination can astound, convince, or create fantasy, as seen in LC.

In her work, Severin brings to fore several important ideas in relation to memory and imagination. She notes that “mechanical” or descriptive memory evokes human experience and companionship (1970, 6). Moreover, Melibea’s memory “contains overtones of the Christian idea of memory as a prudent defense against causality, a way to enlighten the mind with the lessons of the past –‘Por más aclarar mi ingenio’ And this, in turn, becomes the ultimate irony of Rojas’ approach to memory” (Severin 1970, 6). She discusses how Rojas, like Diego de San Pedro before him, links memory to the characters and their environment (1970, 10), which is a connection that also can be seen between imagination and the characters and their surroundings, as this study will discuss in more detail below. Severin points out various instances of memory: for example, where Celestina uses false memory (e.g., the riches Alberto left in Celestina’s care for Pármemo), only then to move on to a discourse of pleasure, which exploits memory to imagine the camaraderie and good times that Pármemo could enjoy through Celestina’s advice (1970, 22). Severin also views the use of memory and imagination as foreshadowing, where Celestina’s words project a vision of Calisto’s

⁴ For some recent studies on the process of reading and the faculties in LC, see, for example, Burke (1993 and 2000) and Folger and the bibliography cited in the latter.

future encounters with Melibea (1970, 22). In Auto III, Severin sees the use of memory to “create an ideal which may be superimposed on reality” (1970, 27), when Sempronio, as a result of his youth, disregards the past and focuses on present acts which lead to the future. Celestina, in her old age, distorts and idealizes the past and is forgetful and often cannot recall recent events, while Pármeno, on the other hand, remembers the distant past that he wishes to discredit through memory (Severin 1970, 27).

Severin touches on the “fusion of memory, imagination, and literary tradition” with the function of memory to establish “an objective reality” that emerges through LC’s dialogue (1970, 15), where memory is “a way of revealing character” (1970, 17) and can be used to influence another person, as notably in the case of Pármeno and Celestina in Auto I, where Severin sees Pármeno “come off second-best in a battle with the champion manipulator of memory, Celestina” (1970, 21). According to Severin, for Rojas memory is “a natural and inescapable process of the human mind” (1970, 18) and particularly “grants Calisto [the] role as the most imaginative character of the work” (1970, 39): not only imaginative in creating a non-objective reality, but imaginative to escape guilt through false memory and forgetfulness. Memory, then, is a faculty of mind through which the characters’ lives are constructed and grow and through which their world takes shape.

Julian Weiss follows a similar line of inquiry to examine how the author himself uses memory to construct narrative: adopting a contemplative stance as he read the *auto primitivo* and then continued it first to sixteen and then to twenty-one acts in the *Tragicomedia*. Memory and imagination are fundamental and go hand in hand with LC’s composition as one author reflects on the work of another. Mental functions are crucial for processing information and interpreting the present, past, and even future and for a reader’s understanding of a text.

An additional concept with regard to the power of imagination in LC is the linkage between love and medical discourse.⁵ Gerard of Berry, in his *Glosses on the Viaticum*, states that in lovesickness the imaginative faculty becomes fixated on the beloved’s image (Wack 56). Peter of Spain, in his *Questions on the Viaticum*, discusses how the eyes allow the beloved’s image to enter the imagination and infect the subject (Wack 102). Peter understands lovesickness to be a disease of the imaginative faculty, which observes the images of objects or people “and transfers them to ‘higher’ mental faculties for further processing” (Wack 90). It is the *virtus fantastica* that is most damaged in lovesickness since that is the faculty that judges and distinguishes perceived, sensible forms once “they have been received by the common senses and imagination” (Wack 92). Since the lover believes, upon sight of a woman, that she is more beautiful than all others, the *fantasia* must necessarily be damaged and affected by the illness, for it can no longer judge objectively the perceived object/person (Wack 92).

⁵ There is abundant critical study on lovesickness in LC, which this study need not repeat in detail. Some of that bibliography is cited in Folger.

The image caused by sight captures the imagination and enters the *fantasia*, causing excessive thought and fixed imaginings; and to cure this, many remedies were prescribed (Wack 132).⁶ Ovidian advice in the *Remedia amoris* recommends concentrating one's thoughts on the negative aspects of the lady (Ovid 199–201). Sempronio's speech to Calisto may be such an example of Ovidian lore, where the servant attempts to focus the lover's thoughts on the most distasteful aspects of women in order to break Calisto's fixation and cause him to fall out of love (Corfis 407–08). Additionally Avicenna in the *Liber Canonis* proposes as a cure that horrible old women belittle the beloved to the patient (Wack 103), which is similar, again, to what Sempronio does in the misogynistic discourse delivered to Calisto.⁷ However, in spite of the enumeration of women's defects, Sempronio is unable break Calisto's fixation on Melibea and thus delivers Celestina to Calisto when he fails to bring about a cure.⁸

Pármeno also plays with Calisto's imagination, as Michael Solomon shows in his essay "Pharmaceutical Fictions." Solomon documents that medieval and early modern physicians acknowledged the benefits of imagination for healing sickness. Jacme d'Agramont, Juan de Aviñón, and Pedro Mexía all referred to the power of imagination to cause or cure illness, with Estephano de Sevilla believing that imagination could be more beneficial for the healing process than even the physician himself (Solomon 2007, 100-01). In a similar curative manner, Pármeno's extensive description of Celestina's dubious reputation, sordid occupation, and extensive laboratory may have been intended to dissuade Calisto from associating himself with the bawd, since, according to Pármeno, "todo era burla y mentira" (I, 247).⁹ Unfortunately, the vision of such an extensive laboratory had the opposite effect on Calisto's mind, according to Solomon: it incited the lover's imagination with the possibility that Celestina could be an effective healer. Pármeno's detailed description of Celestina's philters leads Calisto to imagine that Celestina indeed could make his "deseado fin" come true. It must be remembered, however, that Calisto is not thinking rationally due to lovesickness, and his fantasy is incited by imagination with images not anchored in objective reality. As a result, Calisto cannot process rationally the message that Pármeno attempts to communicate. The young lover takes away a message opposite to that intended by the servant.

There is frequent use of memory and imagination to interpret or create reality

⁶ Solomon (1989, esp. 43-45) refers to the medieval medical treatises that discuss imagination in relation to lovesickness.

⁷ Avicenna's therapy passed into scholastic medical writing and can be seen, for example, in Bernardo of Gordon's chapter on love, *Practica dicta Lilium medicinae* (1305), Book II, chapter 20 (Wack 106; see also Solomon 1989, 53-54).

⁸ Solomon (1989) refers to Sempronio's role in speaking ill of the beloved and focusing on her less desirable qualities as part of the clinical treatment prescribed by medieval treatises for lovesickness.

⁹ All quotations from LC are taken from Peter E. Russell's edition published by Castalia. References are given first by the number of the *auto*, in Roman numerals, followed by the pages corresponding to Russell's edition.

beyond that of Celestina's laboratory. An evident example is when Calisto imagines Melibea in his dreams. The ability of imagination to create reality through memory on the one hand and to forge vivid sensorial images, particularly in dreams, on the other, are key concepts to its understanding in the Middle Ages, concepts that can be observed in LC. Calisto, lying in bed in his darkened room, in an environment and opportunity to dream, gives free reign to his mind to conjure "wrong opinions and dangerous passions," as Bundy states (227-28).¹⁰ Calisto confirms that he dreams of his love Melibea: "En sueños la veo tantas noches, que temo no me acontezca como a Alcibíades o a Sócrates, que el uno soñó que se veía embuelto en el manto de su amiga, y otro día matáronle y no hovo quien le alçasse de la calle ni cubriesse, sino ella con su manto" (VI, 348). He also says to Sempronio and Celestina, when enjoying the *cordón*: "Suelta la rienda a mi contemplación, déxame salir por las calles con esta joya, por que los que me vieren sepan que no ay más bienandante hombre que yo" (VI, 353). Calisto is using memory to recreate Melibea through dreams and fantasy and wishes to continue imagining her through contemplation of the girdle, a symbolic representation of her body. Dreams are a recognized venue for the workings of imagination since classical times, as Bundy outlined; and in LC not only do the characters remember and imagine the past, present, and future but Calisto creates a new reality through imagination and his impaired *virtus fantastica*. He can no longer judge objectively the perceived object/person of his desire due to lovesickness, and his imagination does not reflect reality as it brings to his mind's eye the perception of his beloved or the world around her.

Another example of imagination is with Melibea, who clearly highlights a similar process of fantasy and love. Imagination is in play as Melibea creates for herself a lover who does not exist. Melibea formulates in her mind a Calisto who is at first "torpe" (I, 213), then "loco, saltaparedes, fantasma de noche, luengo como ciguñal, figura de paramento mal pintado" (IV, 316). Celestina adds to the imaginary portrait of Calisto in Auto IV when she describes him to Melibea as having:

Gracias, dos mill; en franqueza, Alexandre; en esfuerço, Etor; gesto, de un rey; gracioso, alegre. Jamás reyna en él tristeza. De noble sangre, como sabes. Gran justador, pues verle armado, un Sant George. Fuerça y esfuerço no tuvo Ércules tanta. La presencia y faciones, disposición, desemboltura, otra lengua había menester para las contar. Todo junto semeja ángel del cielo. Por fe tengo que no era tan hermoso aquel gentil Narciso que se enamoró de su propia figura, quando se vido en las aguas de la fuente. (IV, 321-22)

While upon close examination some of the above attributes may be contradictory, as Russell points out in his edition in a note to this passage (1991, 321 n109), the

¹⁰ For more detailed study on dreams and dream theory as applied to LC, see Castells.

positive portrait of Calisto probably affects Melibea's imagination and reshapes her memory of the young man.¹¹ As the love affair progresses, Melibea refers to Calisto's "mucho merecer, ... estremadas gracias, ... alto nascimiento" (XII, 465). Then in Auto XIX, she refers to him as "el dechado de cortesía y buena criança" (XIX, 571); and in her final discourse, she describes him as:

el más acabado hombre que en gracia nació ... el dechado de gentileza, de invenciones galanas, de atavíos y bordaduras, de habla, de andar, de cortesía, de virtud. Yo fuy causa que la tierra goze sin tiempo el más noble cuerpo y más fresca juventud que al mundo era en nuestra edad criada. ... [de] claro linaje. Sus virtudes y bondad a todos eran manifiestas. (XX, 587)

As Russell notes in his edition, the description of Calisto as an example of virtue may reflect an ironic tone that satirizes the frivolous chivalric lifestyle (1991, 587n33). However, it is also the culmination of Melibea's imagination as she transforms Calisto into the ideal lover whom she hoped to enjoy, a role that the real Calisto could not fulfill. Melibea can only find her beloved through imagining him: remembering his faults as virtues; envisioning his tears and childish laments at her garden door in Auto XII as courtly service and suffering rather than seeing them as ineptitude to carry out even the simplest conversation without prompting. Melibea undergoes a process opposite to that which the *Remedia amoris* proposes: for Melibea, negative experience enhances love rather than ends it. Through imagination and a love-sick, defective *virtus fantastica*, Melibea creates for herself a Calisto much more noble in virtue and courtesy than that which the reader witnesses, as demonstrated by the lover's words, "Señora, el que quiere comer el ave, quita primero las plumas" (XIX, 571), which immediately follows Melibea's reference to his "cortesía" and "buena criança." Her words create an idyllic world of love that she very much wishes to be true; and Calisto's physical passion is a counterpoint, if not contradiction, to the world she

¹¹ Robert Folger has studied the interaction between Celestina and Melibea in Auto IV through faculty psychology, as an example of Celestina's persuasive powers to "assuage Melibea's ire" and turn her rage into pity by evoking Calisto's toothache and suffering (17). As a result, Melibea assimilates new information about Calisto, which, according to Folger, is an example of eidetic persuasion: the major, if not sole, force behind Melibea's change in attitude toward Calisto, in Folger's view. However, as Folger himself admits, many forces and narrative threads are involved in this scene: persuasion, the spell conjured by Celestina, whether Melibea was already in love with Calisto from the beginning, to name a few (for bibliography on magic and witchcraft, see Severin 2007). For the purposes of this essay, which does not pretend to study the psychology of Melibea's love, what is important is not so much how or why she adopts a new opinion of Calisto's worth, but that she does so: she took to heart Celestina's words, which undoubtedly affected the young woman's imaginary portrait of her suitor. Burke also studies the change in Melibea and concludes that the power of names and words is in play and creates an acoustic weapon that wounds Melibea with love (2000, 83-86). In the end, whether stimulated by the bawd's persuasion or magic or by her own desire, it is Melibea's imagination that then takes flight to create a Calisto she finds fitting, in spite of past or future experience.

imagines, as Russell points out in his note to the above passage (1991, 571-72 n46). As her speech in Auto XX demonstrates, Melibea remembers the night and Calisto through imagination and fantasy, not objective reality.¹²

There is also another level of imagining in the text. Just as the characters are imagining one another, so, too, the readers must imagine the characters through the physical reality and personal characteristics mentioned in the speeches and actions. As Steven Gilman discusses (56-57), there is a lack of fixed description in LC, as the above portraits of Calisto as well as those of Melibea in Autos I (231-32) and IX (407-08) exemplify. The reader must remember and imagine what the characters have said and use that information to create the context of the action and physical environment that is often left unstated through dialogue. Indeed, in *The Art of La Celestina*, especially in Chapter 3, “The Art of Character,” Gilman studies how “[t]he character of Celestina, Calisto, and the rest can only be judged or discovered after the fact of speech and action” (57). The reader only understands the characters as they are “related to each other in dialogue, and not apart from it” (Gilman 57). “Rojas’ dialogic artistry, in other words, has resulted in a *cast of lives* rather than of *characters* in the usual sense of the term” (Gilman 64), and “each individual sees himself, on the one hand, as others see him or as he imagines they see him” (78-79). Alan Deyermond, revisiting Gilman’s work some fifty-three years after its publication, remarks on the insights contained in *The Art of La Celestina*, especially with regard to Gilman’s observation on the lack of fixed description (citing Gilman 56): “This is a brilliant insight [according to Deyermond] ... Once he has made the essential point, we can build on his discovery. We can see that the rival and incompatible descriptions of Melibea are not intended to tell us what she looks like: their purpose is to let us into the minds of the describers” (2009, 124). As Gilman points out, it is through the mind’s eye that the reader sees the characters. The reader learns from the character’s words not merely a description of the other characters but something about the speaker’s own personality, emotion, motivation, and imagination. Proof of this is found in the two citations given above, where Calisto refers to “imagining” and “contemplating” Melibea. The reader sees Calisto’s imagination and his lack of reason through his own words. The same process is in play throughout the text where the characters’ imagination is crucial to their personality and actions. A few examples will suffice to demonstrate the point. In Auto I, Sempronio says to Celestina:

O madre mía, todas cosas dexadas aparte, solamente sé atenta y ymagina en lo que te dixere y no derrames tu pensamiento en muchas partes; que quien junto en diversos lugares le pone, en ninguno le tiene, sino por caso determina lo cierto. (I, 237)

¹² As Burke has noted, Melibea, like Calisto, suffers from lovesickness and either fails to interpret reality correctly or her memory has been damaged so severely that “it no longer functions properly” (Burke, 1993, 41).

Sempronio warns Celestina of letting her wits wander and not focusing her imagination on the matter at hand. Ironically, immediately after these words Sempronio refers to the idea of friendship and sharing, which will be used by Celestina to bring Pármeno into the fold and eventually bring about the death of all three. Memory will play a key role in the death scene as well, as Celestina evokes Pármeno's past.

In Auto III, Celestina says of Claudina: "No loca, no fantástica ni presumptuosa, como las de agora" (III, 285), which highlights Claudina's practical and realistic nature: a woman not caught up in imagination and false hopes. Then Sempronio says, in Auto V: "La raleza de las cosas es madre de la admiración; la admiración concebida en los ojos deciendo al ánimo por ellos; el ánimo es forçado descubriendo por estas exteriores señales" (V, 329). The source for this idea is Petrarchan and a metaphysical commonplace, as Russell documents in his notes to the speech (1991, 329 n10, 11). The mind's eye interprets the image received by sight and stored in the brain as memory. The fact that Sempronio has never seen Celestina behave in such a manner causes the sight of her in such action to enter his imagination and interpret the image as something strange and surprising. Burke comments on this passage as an example of sight causing *admiratio* (2000, 58-60).

In Auto XIII, Calisto describes his own experience as dreamlike: "¿Soñélo o no? ¿Fue fantaseado o pasó en verdad?" (XIII, 488), which again underscores that much of Calisto's understanding stems from his imagination of what might be rather than from actual, direct experience. He dreams so often that he has difficulty distinguishing reality from what he has imagined through fantasy, either awake or asleep. Severin discusses this quotation as an example of Calisto as an "artist of memory, refashioning it as a world of imagination" (1970, 58). Melibea then refers to imaginary fears as she contemplates the possible perils that may befall Calisto. She worries in Auto XIV:

¿O si por caso los ladrones perros con sus crueles dientes, que ninguna diferencia saben hazer ni acatamiento de personas, le ayan mordido? ¿O si ha cayó en alguna calzada o hoyo, donde algún daño le viniessse? Mas, ¡o mezquina de mí! ¿qué son estos inconvenientes que el concebido amor me pone delante y los atribulados ymaginamientos me acarrear? (XIV, 499)

Calisto's tardiness gives flight to Melibea's imagination to create possible dangers that may have caused him not to keep his appointment at her garden. Severin also points to this example as "an offshoot of the type of very immediate worries that Celestina revealed in her monologue of Auto IV, while approaching Pleberio's house" (1970, 59). Other characters also imagine the dangers that may beset them, such as Sosia in Auto XIV on the way to Melibea's garden: "devemos yr muy callando, porque suelen levantarse a esta hora los ricos, ... los trabajadores de los campos y labranças, y los pastores que en este tiempo traen las ovejas a estos apriscos a ordeñar" (XIV, 504-05).

Characters also imagine successes, as Sempronio says of Celestina in Auto IX, when she calculates her conquests while she should be praying: “Quando menea los labios es fengir mentiras, ordenar cautelas para haver dinero: por aquí le entraré, esto me responderá, estotro replicaré. Assí vive esta que nosotros mucho honrramos” (IX, 402). In this example Severin understands Celestina as “functioning in the present and plotting in the future” (1970, 29).

More than any other character, Calisto combines memory and imagination. He creates a world of love, as in Auto XIII above cited, as well as forgets his responsibility to his servants. After a night of love in Auto XIV, in a discourse that begins with lamenting the death of the two servants and the dishonor to his house and his lack of action to counter the perceived injustice, Calisto then realizes rationally the great service that the judge truly did him through the swift execution of the two men. Quickly, however, Calisto returns to the imaginary. Calisto focuses on Melibea and wipes away the thoughts of what happened to Sempronio and Pármeno. Rather than face reality, he invokes imagination: “Pero tú, dulce ymaginación, tú que puedes, me acorre. Trae a mi fantasía la presencia angélica de aquella ymagen luziente, buelve a mis oýdos el suave son de sus palabras; aquellos desvíos sin gana, ... aquellos açucarados besos” (XIV, 514-15). Imagining Melibea allows him to forget his worries and duty.

In the above examples, as in Calisto’s understanding of Celestina’s laboratory and the descriptions of Calisto and Melibea, imagination allows the characters to formulate mental pictures and beliefs, either fictional or real, and express such to one another. The reader must distinguish which of the character’s words are “real” and which are “creative fiction,” since characters may see each other not as they really are but as their imagination fashions them: Calisto imagines a Melibea in his dreams and Melibea imagines a Calisto who is a noble lover. The characters often “see” themselves and others differently than the reader “sees” them through the actions, interactions, and words expressed on the pages of the text.

Moreover, it is left up to the reader not only to imagine the characters but also the physical world. Imagination is required of the readers to visualize the urban and domestic settings. Spaces have been much commented on by Joseph Snow and others in recent studies. As Snow sums up, critics have long recognized the need for the reader to interpret the specific physical details of the text; he cites as examples the works of María Rosa Lida de Malkiel (1966), Peter Russell (1989), Patrizia Botta (1994, 2001), and Anita Fabiani. Snow’s essay continues their line of dialogic investigation to “attempt to guide readers of *Celestina* in visualizing, via the imagination, its urban environment by enlarging upon the spare mentions of physical settings, against –or in– which the dialogue-action of the work unfolds” (133).

The action of LC takes place in an urban setting consisting of houses (those of Calisto, Pleberio, Celestina, Areúsa, and Centurio) as well as the streets and passageways connecting them. Patrizia Botta notes that there are 27 scenes that take place entirely in the street, distributed between Autos I-V, VII-XIV, XVII-XIX; Autos

VI, XV, XVI, XX, and XXI take place in houses and domestic spaces. Botta also notes that the characters most often found in the streets are Sempronio, Pármene, Calisto, Sosia, Tristán, Elicia, Lucrecia, and Alisa, in that order of frequency (1994, 115). Among the urban constructions mentioned are: *casa, morada, posada, edificio, palacio, puerta, portón, torre, azotea, paredes, ventana, techo*, among others; and public buildings: *iglesia, templos, monasterios, hospital, sepulcro, cementerio, tenerías, burdel, putería*; and urban settings: *feria, tiendas, plaza del mercado, mesón, tabernas, bodegones*; as well as *arrabales, barrios, plaza, calles, camino, puente, rincón, encrucijada*, to name a few examples (Botta 1994, 116-18).

As Anita Fabiani notes, much of the diegetic world, which includes the buildings, streets, and materials mentioned above, is not described directly but rather insinuated to the reader through the characters' words and deeds. It is only by means of the dialogue that the reader can mentally visualize the physical space and world of LC; and mainly it is through the lens of Celestina, Sempronio, Pármene, Elicia, and Areúsa, those most often found in the streets, that the reader gathers the information, as the characters inhabit the houses and travel through the urban environment and comment on the objects around them (Fabiani 130). Fabiani underscores that there is a dual purpose to the information that the readers gather from the text: it informs them, to some extent, not only of the city and its context but also symbolically represents the characters: e.g., Calisto's darkened chamber as metaphor for his state of mind and lovesickness (136-37).¹³

To broaden the study of the text's physical world, Snow considers "the invisible houses, houses that, at least in part, reflect the influence of Alan Deyermond's perceptive account (1997) of the 'invisible characters' present –but often not seen or even remembered– in the dialogue-action of *Celestina*. ... *Celestina's* composite city [is populated] with ... some former homes, others present ones, but a considerable number of them belonging to 'invisible characters'" (134). Thus, as Snow points out, even the existence of spaces is imagined and not always specified in the text, as in the case of Traso's house and the houses of the town's officials and other city inhabitants mentioned in the text "but never seen," at least outside of the mind's eye.

In addition, it is important to consider the items within the spaces, such as possessions and dress. Snow describes some of the material objects mentioned in LC (Snow esp. 136-37). To examine and expand on Snow's list, the following items appear in the text.

Celestina has *cient monedas de oro* given to her by Calisto (I, 265 and II, 267 refers to them); *haldas* (IV, 300; V, 328); *saya* (IV, 320); *manto raydo y viejo* (VI, 336, 343); *saya rota* (VI, 337); new *manto* and *saya* promised (VI, 347), but *cadena* given instead (XI, 446–47); *hilado* (IV, 301 and VI, 341 refers to it); *manilla de oro* (VII, 382); *mesa* (IX, 403); and benches (assumed but not mentioned) in dinner scene in

¹³ For further discussion of the symbolism of the space and image of the home, see Ellis; also, Gerli on the house in LC.

Auto IX, plus *jarro y taça* (IX, 404).

Calisto has *falcón* (I, 209); *cama* (I, 214); *girifalte* (I, 214); *laúd* (I, 217–18); *cient monedas de oro* given to Celestina (I, 265 and II, 266 refers to them); *neblí* (II, 274); *cavallo* (II, 276); *vihuela* (IV, 322); *espada* (VI, 337) and *cadena* given to Celestina (XI, 446–47); *coraças* (VII, 457); *espada, coraças, capa, capacete* (XIX, 574).

Melibea: *dinero* that she gives to Celestina for the *hilado* (IV, 311); *cordón* and *oración* (IV, 317–18); *ropas* and *camisa* (XIX, 571).

Sempronio: *jubón de brocado* from Calisto (I, 233); *broquel, espada, caxquete, capilla, correas, coraças* (XII, 469).

Pármemo: *sayo* promised from Calisto (I, 247; VI, 348); *haldas, adarga* (XII, 469).

Elicia: *manto de tristeza* (XV, 521); *ropas de luto* (XVII, 543); *tocas blancas, gorgueras labradas, ropas de plazer, gallinas, cama* (XVII, 543).

Areúsa: *cama* (VII, 371); *guante* (XIX, 562).

Sosia: *sayo, calças, capa* (XVII, 546); takes care of *cavallos* (e.g., XVII, 548); *capa vieja ratonada, çapatos* (XIX, 562).

Centurio: *cama, jarro, assador, capa harpada, aros de broqueles, rimero de malla rota, talega de dados* (XVIII, 553); *espada* (XVIII, 557).

Pleberio: *torres, árboles, navíos* (XXI, 596).

As the above examples demonstrate, the number of items mentioned as contained within the spaces, possessed or worn by the characters, is minimal. The material and architectural world is left to the reader's imagination. Reference to beds, chairs, and such, exist, but it is uncertain how that interior world and space was decorated, or by what art or flowers or adornments the speakers were surrounded or what their physical world was like.

In sum, mainly the readers are aware of the configuration of space: rooms, windows, towers, garrets, broom closet, garden, stable, etc., as Snow describes and as is evident in the reading of LC. While readers are informed of buildings, streets, markets, and squares, the contents of those spaces are left almost completely to the imagination. And, true to theories of imagination, memory also plays a part. Readers must draw on their own memories of such spaces to imagine how the world would be in the context of LC.

Memory not only aids in the readers' interpretation of spaces but also functions

within the work for, as Snow notes: “many houses are created in the text not only in the actual city but in the city’s past as well, giving it a temporal dimension –aided by memory– often overlooked” (137n17). Memory evokes in the characters’ imagination, as well as in that of the readers, former acts, circumstances, and also spaces: e.g., Celestina’s former houses, as well as her past glory; Pármeno’s past and family; and Pleberio’s youth and life before being content in his marriage at forty years of age. As Severin (1970) has shown, the characters’ memory of the past plays a key role in their present and future, and, importantly, the readers learn of that past through the characters’ act of remembering.

Snow’s conclusion is important:

we can see emerging from [the houses of the ‘invisible’ characters] –and from the principal houses in or near which the main actions take place– a teeming urban environment with its full panoply of functionaries –secular and divine, well-to-do and marginal, male and female, young and old– made up of members of all social classes and engaged in a remarkable number of professions ... [the author of *Celestina*] succeeding in suggesting, in the dialogue-action, the larger place that contains [the dialogue]: the town, its river, its outskirts, its living quarters, its barrios and its cemeteries, its social divisions and its ethnic mix, its several neighbourhoods, its network of criss-crossing, unpaved, muddy streets, its markets, squares, police, magistrates, churches, taverns and shops, its daily sounds and its nightly silences. And all of it is there, alive and dynamic, palpably swirling about the houses of Pleberio, Calisto, Celestina, Areúsa and Centurio. (141)

The word *see* in the first line of the above quotation is through the mind’s eye. The reader imagines the environment from the information gleaned from the characters’ dialogic interaction. Gilman pointed the way in 1956: different views of the world, environment, and people are offered by the various voices in the text. The reader constructs a world imagined through the perceived information.

It must be remembered, moreover, as Deyermond noted: “*Celestina* is ... an entirely urban work. It is set in a city which is not identified, and which does not correspond exactly to any Spanish city of its time” (2010, 84). The lack of fixed description, of which Gilman writes, clearly applies not only to the characters but to their environment, as the above examples confirm; but the indefiniteness of space and environment is not unique to LC and, in part, may be the influence of the Roman comedies, especially those of Terence and Plautus, as well as the model of the elegiac and humanistic comedies. Clearly Rojas would have read Terence and his commentators, such as Donatus, through university study and surely would have

known the fifteenth-century humanistic comedies.¹⁴ Indeed, critics have long acknowledged the debt of LC to such works, not only with regard to the urban environment but through the theme of love, the characters' social rank, personal names, dramatic techniques such as asides and monologues, irony, *sententiae*, to name a few examples. Especially the humanistic comedy's character development and presence of the father and urban setting are striking antecedents for LC (see, e.g., Lida de Malkiel 1962, 37-50; Russell 1991, 40-54).¹⁵ Following the Roman and humanistic comedy, then, LC creates a very urban environment; however, unlike theatre that visually provides additional clues to setting and meaning through gesture, intonation, clothing, or props (as few as they may have been in the Roman or early theatre), the readers of LC must imagine and construct mentally the spaces from very sparse information.

Interestingly, the only space that is commented on extensively is Celestina's laboratory. Pármemo describes it for the readers from his childhood memory, when he lived in Celestina's house; and, importantly, as mentioned above, Pármemo remembers Celestina's arts as sham:

Venían a ella muchos hombres y mugeres, y a unos demandava el pan do mordían, a otros de su ropa, a otros de sus cabellos; a otros pintava en la palma letras con açufrán, a otros con bermellón; a otros dava unos coraçones de cera llenos de agujas quebradas, y otras cosas en barro y en plomo hechas, muy espantables al ver. Pintava figuras, dezía palabras en tierra. ¿Quién te podrá dezir lo que esta vieja fazía? Y todo era burla y mentira. (I, 246-47)

As Solomon discusses, there are over one hundred items recorded by Pármemo as belonging to this space (2007, 99). LC provides great detail of the laboratory and its equipment, such as *alambiques*, etc., whether capable or producing real spells and philters or not. In spite of it all possibly being “burla y mentira,” the fact that this space, in contrast to all others, is described in detail is significant: not only for inciting Calisto's imagination and causing the opposite result than what Pármemo had expected, but also to define Celestina and paint a description of the bawd and her profession that we would not otherwise have.¹⁶ The detailed description incites Calisto's as well as the reader's imagination, as Celestina's world is exposed as one

¹⁴ LC mentions Terence and Plautus in the acrostics (“Jamás no vi sino [en] terenciana” 192) and in the verses by Proaza (“No debuxó la cómica mano / de Nevio ni Plauto, varones prudentes” 612). On the relation between LC and Roman and humanistic comedy, see Fraker, esp. 22-48.

¹⁵ For a view of the urban environment as a social network, see Rank.

¹⁶ Solomon describes the effect of Pármemo's speech as follows: “Suddenly Celestina is no longer merely the old woman whom Sempronio, acting as a makeshift physician, has prescribed to heal Calisto's dubious wounds. Rather, she is the therapist who will analyze, diagnose and treat Calisto's ailment. When Pármemo captures Calisto's imagination by listing the substances in Celestina's laboratory, he simultaneously identifies Celestina as a fitting healer” (2007, 106).

deeply connected to combining and exploiting natural elements to change human behavior and create desire, for many of the items in the laboratory are recognized as common ingredients in love potions.¹⁷ Through such description Celestina becomes the dominant and most fascinating character in the world of the *Comedia/Tragicomedia*: a character whose name will eventually occupy the title of the work. So not only do characters use imagination, like Calisto when listening to Pármeno's speech on Celestina's laboratory, but so, too, do the readers imagine the physical reality, constructed space, dress, and costume located around the people and spaces, with Celestina at the center of it all.

Coincidentally, the one detailed description in LC –that of Celestina's laboratory– provides a large number of references to natural elements. In viewing the appearance of nature in the entire text, the vast quantity of instances are found in Pármeno's description of Celestina and her profession (I, 239-47), where he refers to Celestina's universal fame in the city, her *oficios*, and workshop.¹⁸ The items to which Pármeno refers are not part of the narrative action but rather represent a recollection of the contents that such a laboratory of medicines and potions would contain. Memory is very much in play in the speech since Pármeno is recounting his childhood experience in Celestina's house and what he remembers from those days. The readers' memory and imagination are also involved since they would need to recognize the items in the inventory and imagine their uses from their knowledge of the items' curative qualities. As mentioned above, these items have the power to incite the imagination: Calisto desires Celestina's assistance even more after Pármeno's discourse (Solomon 2007), and similarly the readers, too, would imagine the laboratory and recognize its power.

In addition to Pármeno's description in Auto I, there are also references to the items in Celestina's laboratory in Auto III, before and during the conjure scene (III, 290-91, 292-95), elements which do play a part in the action, as well as later references to the conjure itself (IV, 328). Items of the trade are also mentioned in Lucrecia's description of Celestina's profession (IV, 303); and in Autos VI, VII, and XIX, there are included medicinal potions and cosmetics.¹⁹ Laza Palacios registers the

¹⁷ On the relation to love potions, see, for example, Laza Palacios, Vian Herrero, Russell (1978), and Solomon (2007).

¹⁸ A quick scan of the speech indicates some one hundred items of flora and fauna mentioned by Pármeno, which coincides with the number given by Solomon ("Pármeno inventories more than one hundred substances and alludes to the fact that there are thousands more on Celestina's shelves ... [which] could lead to thousands of marvelous and unexpected remedies" [2007, 99, 105]). The count is not meant to be definitive, and I do not mean to indicate that I have registered in my reading every word referencing the natural world; however, it gives an approximate value to the quantity of references and the predominance of those items in this one speech alone in comparison to the other twenty-one acts.

¹⁹ Examples outside Pármeno's speech are: *azeyte serpentino*, *ala de drago*, *sangre de morciélago*, *agua de mayo*, *sangre del cabrón*, *ojos de la loba*, *pelleja del gato negro* (used in the conjure, III, 290-91); *serpentino azeyte*, *yervas*, *piedras* (IV, 328); *yiervas* (IV, 303); *doradas yervas*, *rayzes*, *ramas*, *flores* (for cosmetics, VI, 355); *poleo*, *ruda*, *axiensos*, *humo de plumas de perdiz*, *de romero*, *de moxquete*, *de encienso* (medicines, VII, 373-74); and *olor de almizque*, *azahar* (odors/perfumes, XIX, 562).

majority of these herbs and potions in his 1958 study.

Outside of the laboratory, there are few references to the natural world and even fewer references that actually form part of the characters' actions in the specific urban environment. Beyond the references cited above to medicinal and magical ingredients, for the most part nature appears in proverbs and sayings or as a point of comparison to refer to people, moods, states, or a world in conflict, as the following list demonstrates.²⁰

Animals

animal/animalia (Prólogo, 197; IV, 314; V, 332; X, 429; XII, 473); *animal congoxoso* (I, 249); *brutos animales* (I, 219; IV, 313); *flacos animales* (IV, 319); *bestias* (I, 240, 248, 253); *bestia sin oficio* (VII, 382); *fieras* (Prólogo, 197)

asna coxa (I, 251); *asnillo* (I, 263); *asno* (I, 231, 250; VII, 378; XII, 478); *asno cargado de oro* (III, 286); *asnos en el prado* (I, 262); *buey* (IV, 298; XII, 484); *cabra* (Prólogo, 197); *cabritos* (XIX, 567); *corderica* (XI, 451); *cordero, carnero* (IV, 309); *elefante* (Prólogo, 198); *gamo* (XII, 469); *ganado* (XII, 475; XIV, 501; XIX, 567); *gato* (VII, 376); *león* (Prólogo, 197); *liebre* (Prólogo, 198; XII, 482); *lobitos* (I, 253); *lobo* (Prólogo, 197; XII, 475; XVII, 544; XIX, 567); *mur* (VII, 376); *ovejas* (XIV, 501, 505); *oveja mansa* (XII, 483); *puerca* (IX, 416); *monteses puercos* (VI, 338); *raposa* (XII, 475; XIX, 564); *ratón* (Prólogo, 198); *toros* (I, 221; VI, 338)

galgo (XII, 482); *guzques* (XII, 484); *perro* (Prólogo, 198; I, 240; II, 278; IV, 314; XVIII, 554); *perro del ortolano* (VII, 373); *perra vieja* (III, 284); *perro viejo* (XII, 482); *sabuesos* (VI, 338)

unicornio (IV, 314)

Birds

águilas, halcones, gavilanes, milanos, pollos (Prólogo, 199); *ave(s)* (El autor escusándose de su yerro, 189; Prólogo, 197, 199; I, 253; XIX, 571); *aves, gallo, gallinas, pelicano, cigüeñas, pollitos* (IV, 314); *cigüñal/cigüeña* (IV, 316); *cisne* (XIX, 569); *cuervo* (XIV, 509); *gallos* (III, 287); *galillo* (VII, 379); *gallina* (IV, 307; IX, 415, 416); *gallina atada* (XII, 483); *golondrina* (VII, 377); *pájaros, pájaras* (V, 331); *papagayos, ruyseñores* (XIX, 568); *perdiz* (VII, 376; VIII, 395); *picaças y papagayos* (IX, 404)

²⁰ The items are cited by like grouping, in alphabetic order. The list does not include the following types of nature: parts of the body, manifestations of illness, time of day (*amanecer, noche, atardecer*, for example), or plants or animals referred to not as living organisms but as food. This list is not meant to be all-inclusive, since items may have escaped my scrutiny; however, it does provide representative documentation of how and where the natural world is mentioned in LC.

Fish

Pece, pesces, pescados, echeneis (Prólogo, 197–99); *pesces* (I, 253); *sardina* (VIII, 389); *truchas* (VII, 360)

Flowers

Flor(es) (I, 257; VI, 355; X, 436; XV, 526; XXI, 598); *flores, lirios, açuçena* (XIX, 566–67); *rosas* (Acróstico, 190)

Insects

abeja (VI, 339, 347; XV, 525); *hormiga* (El autor escusándose de su yerro, 188); *moxcas* (XII, 484); *telaraña* (IV, 319)

Plants/ fruits

calabaças (IV, 408); *col, lechuga* (VI, 336); *fruta nueva* (IX, 422); *fruto* (Prólogo, 195; IV, 298; VII, 363; XXI, 603); *hojas* (Prólogo, 195); *havas* (I, 260); *melón* (XVIII, 555); *panes* (I, 252); *planta(s)* (I, 253, 257; X, 429; XIII, 513); *florida planta* (XXI, 597); *rama, cayado de mimbre* (IV, 306); *ramo(s)* (Prólogo, 195; III, 286); *ruda* (IV, 303); *verdura* (XIV, 513); *verduricas* (XIX, 565); *lo vegetativo* (I, 253); *yerva(s)* (11 instances, among them: I, 252; IV, 303; VII, 371)

Reptiles and invertebrates

alacrán (I, 253); *bívora* (Prólogo, 198); *venenosa bívora* (V, 332); *culebras* (XV, 526); *ranas* (I, 240); *reptilia(s)* (Prólogo, 198; I, 253); *sanguijuela* (I, 258); *serpiente(s)* (Prólogo, 197, 198; VI, 342; X, 428); *serpiente enconada* (Prólogo, 198); *vajarisco* (Prólogo, 198)

Trees

árbol(es) (IV, 323; VIII, 392; XIX, 568); *roble* (VIII, 397)

Minerals/metals

aljófar (XIII, 515); *coral* (IX, 405); *elementos* (Prólogo, 196; II, 268); *lata* (Acróstico, 190); *metal* (El autor a un su amigo, 185); *oro* (Acróstico, 190; I, 230, 256, 265; IX, 403, 405; XII, 479); *perla* (I, 231; IV, 311; IX, 403; X, 436; XIV, 500); *piedras* (IV, 323; VI, 350, what cities made of, building material of city; VIII, 391); *plata* (I, 256, 285); *rubíes* (I, 231)

Parts of world, geography

fuelle clara (XIX, 567); *huertas* (I, 240); *mar* (13 references, among them: Prólogo, 197; IX, 406; X, 426); *monte* (XIV, 509; XXI, 599); *mundo* (some 56 occurrences, such as: I, 223; VII, 375; XVI, 535); *prado(s)* (VIII, 398; XXI, 599, 600); *río* (II, 278; III, 281; XVI, 532); *tierra(s)* (35 instances, among them: Prólogo, 196; IV, 308; X, 426; XIV, 510); *yermos y aspereza* (I, 259)

desierto, morada de fieras, laguna llena de cieno, región llena de espinas, huerto florido y sin fruto, fuente de cuydados, río de lágrimas, mar de miserias (XXI, 599)

Physical heavens

cielo(s) (Prólogo, 196; I, 223; VII, 368; X, 426; XIV, 514; XV, 527); *eclipse* (III, 282); *estrella(s)* (Prólogo, 196; I, 234; XIX, 568); *firmamento celestial, norte, luna* (XIV, 514); *planeta(s)* (XIV, 514; XIX, 577); *sol* (I, 217; VIII, 398; XVIII, 557; XIX, 569)

Fire

fuego(s) (33 occurrences, among them: Autor a un su amigo 184; Prólogo 198; I, 218, 219, 220, 236; II, 268–69, 270, 276; VI, 338, 340; IX, 410, 411; X, 435, 439; XXI, 605); *llama(s)/flamas* (Prólogo, 197; I, 218; II, 276; VIII, 398; X, 439; XXI, 605)

Weather and climate

aguaduchos (Prólogo, 197); *ayre* (Prólogo, 197); *luz* (I, 214); *nieve* (I, 231); *copo de la nieve* (IV, 305); *nuves* (Prólogo, 197; I, 199); *nublados oscuros* (VIII, 390); *pluvias* (VIII, 390); *rayo(s)* (Prólogo, 197; III, 281; XXI, 605); *soles* (VIII, 390); *tempestad* (IV, 317); *terremotos* (Prólogo, 197); *torvellinos* (Prólogo, 197); *truenos* (Prólogo, 197); *viento(s)* (10 instances, such as: Prólogo, 197; III, 283)

Divine realm

cielo(s) (I, 212, 222; XIV 510)

Hell

fuegos, étnicos montes, lagunas y sombras infernales (III, 293); *infernales centros* (X, 426)

Reference to myths/tales

asno (VIII, 399); *aves, árboles y piedras* (IV, 322–23); *brutos animales, toro, can, ximio* (I, 223–24); *dragón, bívora* (X, 428–29); *hárpias, ydras* (III, 293); *mançana* (VI, 354–55); *toro* (XVI, 538); *piedras, aguas, ave, bruto* (Proaza, 611–12); *yervas* (VI, 352)

Nature

natura (19 occurrences. among them: IV, 314, 326)

Reference to Passion of Christ

espinas (El autor escusándose de su yerro, 193; Concluye el autor 609)

To denote time

cavillos de Febo ... verdes prados (VIII, 398); *gallinas* (VII, 371); *las Cabrillas y el*

Norte (III, 287); *missas del gallo* (I, 242)

Again, it is important to note that in the above list the physical world appears metaphorically or as point of comparison for the human world or as geography and setting not present in the action; nature is mentioned also in the lyrics of the songs sung by Lucrecia and Melibea in Auto XIX, again as reference to love and *locus amoenus*. In general, references to nature rarely portray things present in the action or actually felt or seen by the characters at the moment of speaking. The use of nature through proverbs/*sententiae* or to exemplify the qualities of people and things cues the reader to imagine the characters, their passions, and their context through memory of the natural world. The above elements, then, appeal to the readers' understanding of nature, to allow them to envision mentally the world that the text creates.

There are, of course, elements of nature that actually do form part of the textual action as it appears in the *Comedia* or *Tragicomedia*; however, they are not numerous. In Auto I there is the *falcón* (I, 209), *cavallos* and *girifalte* (I, 214); in Auto II, the *neblí* (II, 274) and *cavallo* (II, 276, 277); and there are the ingredients of the conjure, mentioned earlier: *azeyte serpentino*, *ala de drago*, *sangre de morciélago*, *agua de mayo*, *sangre del cabrón*, *ojos de la loba*, *pelleja del gato negro* (III, 290-91).

The presence of nature directly represented or portrayed as part of the setting also exists, but again examples are not great in number: *pedras* (of the street, IV, 300); *ave negra*, *cuervo*, *perro* (IV, 300, as signs of good fortune); *perro* (VII, 381, dog barks); *toros*, *cavallos* (IX, 412, what Sempronio says of Calisto's activities); *alegre vergel*, *suaves plantas y fresca verdura*, *deleytosas estrellas* (XIV, 513, Melibea's garden that Calisto remembers); *yervas deleytosas*, *sombrosos árboles del huerto*, *flores olorosas* (XV, 525-26, Elicia curses Melibea's garden); *cavallo* (XV, 520, 521, which Areúsa gave to Centurio); *gallinas* (XVII, 543, that Elicia has); *cavallos* (XVII, 545, 546, 548, animals in Sosia's care); *luna* (XVII, 548, Sosia describes his work); *luna*, *nuves*, *fontezica*, *yervas*, *cipresses*, *viento*, *sombras* (XIX, 569-70, in the *huerto*); *frescos ayres de la ribera* (XIX, 581, to which Pleberio would like to take Melibea); *aullido de canes* (XX, 586); *mundo* (XXI, 598) and *tierra* (XXI, 596, Pleberio speaks to world and hard earth).

There are also spaces and locations referenced through nature: for example, Celestina's house *cuesta del río*, *cabe el río* (I, 241, 255; IV, 302, 309); and the *huerta/huerto*, which, as Botta argues, may be two distinct locations (2001): *huerta* (I, 209; II, 274; XIV, 497); *huerto* (XII, 466, 472, 477; XIV, 499; XV, 526; XVI, 538; XVII, 549; XIX, 561, 562, 565, 567, 569, 572, 578; XX, 588). Although the *huerta/huerto* is a space, it is included here as part of the register of nature since it is not space alone but also reference to an exterior scenery and natural landscape.

A few other natural items form part of the textual framework but are not actually present; they are referenced through memory or imagination: *tierra* (VII, 367, Celestina remembers what she did with Claudina); *páxaros*, *álamo*, *pedras*, *ortaliza* (XII, 471, Sempronio remembers what he did in the past); *correr toros* (XIII, 489,

Tristán imagines what might be the noise in the streets); *perros* (XIV, 499, what Melibea imagines might occur in city, cited earlier above); *campo, ovejas* (XV, 504-05, Sosia worries about the imagined activity of the city, cited above).

Clearly, the list of natural elements present in the text is small, and it is striking that memory and imagination are involved in some examples: e.g., Celestina remembers Claudina in Auto VII; Melibea imagines the dangers that might befall Calisto; and then Calisto remembers Melibea's garden in Auto XIV. Additionally, as Burke (1993) discusses, the first scene of the first act in LC alludes to nature; "En esto veo, Melibea, la grandeza de Dios" (I, 211) shows Calisto viewing, reading, and interpreting the book of nature in Rojas' text. However, the elements of that natural scene are not mentioned. It is up to the readers to interpret what Calisto sees and how he reads, or misreads, the natural world before his eyes. In such a way, not only is nature important in the readers' memory and imagination to interpret the examples and references based on the natural world, but the characters, whether awake or perhaps in dreams, also remember, imagine, and interpret nature.

What does the sparse representation of nature mean for the text? Following the discussion of David Pattison, does the reliance on imagination of nature and other matters make LC a medieval or renaissance work? Jacob Burckhardt, in *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*, in Part Four, discusses the discovery and beauty of landscape. The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, especially in examples of Italian writers, view nature with "genuine modern enjoyment, not a reflection of antiquity," according to Burckhardt (210). However, in spite of that enjoyment, detailed description of nature was not always present in the texts themselves.

The novelist Bandello, for example, observes rigorously the rules of his department of literature; he gives us in his novels themselves not a word more than is necessary on the natural scenery amid which the action of his tales takes place, but in the dedications which always precede them we meet with charming descriptions of nature as the setting for his dialogues and social pictures. (Burckhardt 211)

Nature, then, according to Burckhardt, is present and valued but not always depicted extensively or realistically within medieval and early-modern creative literature.

If one considers landscape as a type of space that contributes "to the mapping of ideological realms that give form and value to human attitudes about class status and society not yet articulated in a consciously systematic fashion," as E. Michael Gerli describes it (68), nature becomes symbolic of the social world it surrounds. In looking at landscape as space, Gilman makes the comparison of LC to Pieter Brueghel's *Fall of Icarus* (1554), a work roughly contemporary to Rojas' life (128-32).²¹ Gilman sees

²¹ It should be noted that the figure of Daedalus is mentioned in the verses of "El autor escusándose de su yerro" (191). Lida de Malkiel also discusses the background of seascape as frequent in Flemish-

the painting as “another illustration of the unconcern of the spatial universe to man’s fall” (130). Melibea, in her climb to the top of the tower, mentions the view of ships, which must also indicate a view of the sea, or at least of some body of water (XX, 581). “For Brueghel and other painters of the time, the sea and ships, the seascape from the land, is a customary background. It portrays in accepted fashion the uncertainties and attractions of sheer distance, the alien fascination of space,” thus linking Melibea with the themes of fortune and fall, according to Gilman (130). Gilman views most of the dialogic situations as “both defined and brought to full significance by spatial determination” (130); and while he discusses space in broader and more universal terms than the urban spaces studied by Botta (1994, 2001), Snow, and others, the importance of the generality and even mention of ships, implying the natural geography of sea and land, is striking and once again fits the overall indefiniteness that Gilman sees as essential in the dialogic context of “tú” and “yo,” where the characters’ lives and their environment are created through their own speech: lives and environments that the reader must imagine and recreate from the dialogue.

Indeed, Rojas’ lack of detailed description of nature and setting is not extraordinary in the art of humanistic comedies or of early-sixteenth-century writers and thus places LC on the cusp between the “medieval” and “renaissance” world. As Pattison notes, in the transition of the 1499 *Comedia* to the 1502 *Tragicomedia*, “the entire evolution of this subtle and fascinating work bears witness to its author’s capacity to take a literary world based firmly in the past and to carry it forward in ways which, as he himself remarked in his 1502 ‘Prólogo’, have given rise to all manner of diverse interpretations and judgements” (119).

As Charles Fraker stated in his 1990 study, as a masterpiece of Hispanic letters LC reveals a “complexity and subtlety with which the motives behind the characters’ actions are defined and specified,” as well as an idiom unique to each individual character for each particular circumstance (14). Perhaps another reason for LC’s stature as a masterpiece can be seen in its indefiniteness, which leaves to the readers’ imagination the visualization of the physical world. This is not to say that the readers imagine meaning, motivations, or themes not woven into the work, but that the physical appearance of the characters and setting is left open to the reader’s understanding. As Gilman recognized over five decades ago, LC requires the reader to participate in the text and construct the characters and their world from the speeches. Readers complete the text through their own spatial and cultural vision, which interprets the work and anchors it to each individual reading over time. Since the words on the page are symbols of lives in process, where the characters’ past, present, and future are exposed through memory and imagination, the readers embrace the dialogue and provide a context for the action through their own mind’s eye. The creative function of memory and imagination makes the work timeless and relevant

Spanish painting (1962, 164-65 n7). See also Gómez Moreno on the topic, esp. 214-16, whose study also discusses the importance of the tower and the fall.

throughout the centuries as each reader imagines the world of LC.

Works Cited

- Botta, Patrizia. "Itinerarios urbanos en la *Celestina* de Fernando de Rojas." *Celestinesca* 18.2 (1994): 113-31.
- . 'Las (¿dos?) casas de Melibea.' Ed. Patrizia Botta et al. *Tras los pasos de La Celestina*. Estudios de Literatura 67. Kassell: Reichenberger, 2001. 157-82.
- Bundy, Murray Wright. *The Theory of Imagination in Classical and Mediaeval Thought*. University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature 12.2-3 (May-August 1927). Urbana: University of Illinois, 1927.
- Burckhardt, Jacob. Trans S. G. C. Middlemore. *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*. New York: The Modern Library, 2002.
- Burke, James F. "The Insouciant Reader and the Failure of Memory in *Celestina*." Ed. Frederick A. de Armas. *The Occult Arts in the Golden Age. Crítica Hispánica* (Special Issue) 15.1 (1993): 35-46.
- . *Vision, the Gaze, and the Function of the Senses in Celestina*. Penn State Studies in Romance Literatures. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.
- Carruthers, Mary J. *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Castells, Ricardo. *Fernando de Rojas and the Renaissance Vision. Phantasm, Melancholy, and Didacticism in Celestina*. Penn State Studies in Romance Literatures. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.
- Corfis, Ivy A. "*Celestina* and the Conflict of Ovidian and Courtly Love." *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (Glasgow) 73.4 (1996): 395-417.
- Dagenais, John. *The Ethics of Reading in Manuscript Culture. Glossing the Libro de buen amor*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.
- Deyermond, Alan. "How Many Sisters Had *Celestina*? The Function of the Invisible Characters." *Celestinesca* 21.1-2 (1997): 15-29.
- . "Rereading Stephen Gilman's *The Art of 'La Celestina'*." Eds. Joseph T. Snow & Roger Wright. *Late Medieval Spanish Studies in Honour of Dorothy Sherman Severin. Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (Special Issue) 86.1. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009. 121-32.
- . "*Celestina*'s Ring of Power." Ed. Devid Paolini. "*De ninguna cosa es alegre posesión sin compañía*." *Estudios celestinescos y medievales en honor del profesor Joseph Thomas Snow*. Vol 1: *Estudios celestinescos*. New York: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 2010. 84-90.
- Ellis, Deborah. "¡Adiós paredes! The Image of the Home in *Celestina*." *Celestinesca* 5.2 (1981): 1-17.
- Fabiani, Anita. "Las funciones diegéticas del espacio en *La Celestina*." Ed. Fermín Sierra Martínez. *Literatura y transgresión (En homenaje al profesor Manuel Ferrer Chivite)*. Diálogos Hispánicos 24. Amsterdam-New York: Rodopi,

2004. 129-49.
- Folger, Robert. "Passion and Persuasion: Philocaption in *La Celestina*." *La corónica* 34.1 (2005): 5-29.
- Fraker, Charles F. *Celestina: Genre and Rhetoric*. Colección Támesis, Serie A, Monografías 138. London: Tamesis, 1990.
- Gerli, E. Michael. "Precincts of Contention: Urban Places and the Ideology of Space in *Celestina*." *Celestinesca* 21.1-2 (1997): 65-77.
- Gilman, Stephen. *The Art of La Celestina*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1956.
- Gómez Moreno, Ángel. "La torre de Pleberio y la ciudad de *La Celestina* (un mosaico de intertextualidades artístico-literarias... y algo más)." Eds. Ignacio Arellano & Jesús M. Usunáriz. *El mundo social y cultural de La Celestina*. Actas del Congreso Internacional, Universidad de Navarra, junio, 2001. Madrid: Iberoamericana, Vervuert, 2003. 211-36.
- Laza Palacios, Modesto. *El laboratorio de Celestina*. Málaga: Instituto de Cultura de Málaga (Antonio Gutiérrez, Printer), 1958.
- Lida de Malkiel, María Rosa. *Two Spanish Masterpieces. The Book of Good Love and The Celestina*. Illinois Studies in Language and Literature 49. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1961.
- . *La originalidad artística de La Celestina*. Teoría e investigación. Buenos Aires: Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires, 1962.
- . "El ambiente concreto en *La Celestina*: Fragmentos de un capítulo no aprovechado para *La originalidad de La Celestina*." *Estudios dedicados a James Homer Herriott*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966. 145-65.
- Ovid. Trans. J. H. Mozley. Revised by G. P. Goold. *Remedia Amoris*. In *The Art of Love and Other Poems*. Loeb Classical Library 232. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985. 177-233.
- Pattison, David G. "Is *Celestina* a Medieval Work?" Eds. Joseph T. Snow & Roger Wright. *Late Medieval Spanish Studies in Honour of Dorothy Sherman Severin*. *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (Special Issue) 86.1. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009. 114-20.
- Rank, Jerry R. "'O cruel juez, y que mal pago me has dado ...': or Calisto's Urban Network." Eds. Ivy A. Corfis & Joseph T. Snow. *Fernando de Rojas and Celestina: Approaching the Fifth Centenary*. Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1993. 155-64.
- Rojas, Fernando de. Ed. Peter E. Russell. *Comedia o tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*. Clásicos Castalia 191. Madrid: Castalia, 1991.
- Russell, Peter E. "La magia, tema integral de *La Celestina*." Ed. Peter E. Russell. *Temas de La Celestina*. Letras e ideas. Mayor 14. Barcelona: Ariel, 1978 [1963]. 241-76.
- . "Why Did *Celestina* Move House?" Eds. Alan Deyermond & Ian Macpherson. *The Age of the Catholic Monarchs, 1474-1516. Literary Studies in Memory of*

- Keith Whinnom. *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (Special Issue). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989. 155-61.
- , ed. Fernando de Rojas. *Comedia o tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*. Clásicos Castalia 191. Madrid: Castalia, 1991.
- Severin, Dorothy Sherman. *Memory in La Celestina*. Colección Támesis, Serie A, Monografías 19. London: Tamesis, 1970.
- . "Witchcraft in *Celestina*: A Bibliographical Update since 1995." *La corónica* 36.1 (2007): 237-43.
- Snow, Joseph T. "Celestina's Houses." Eds. Joseph T. Snow & Roger Wright. *Late Medieval Spanish Studies in Honour of Dorothy Sherman Severin. Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (Special Issue) 86.1. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009. 133-42.
- Solomon, Michael. "Calisto's Ailment: Bitextual Diagnostics and Parody in *Celestina*." *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos* 23.1 (1989): 41-64.
- . "Pharmaceutical Fictions: *Celestina*'s Laboratory and the Sixteenth-Century Medical Imaginary." Eds. Ivy A. Corfis & Ray Harris-Northall. *Medieval Iberia. Changing Societies and Cultures in Contact and Transition*. Colección Tamesis, Serie A, Monografías 247. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Tamesis, 2007. 99-109.
- Vian Herrero, Ana. "El pensamiento mágico en *Celestina*, 'instrumento de lid o contienda.'" *Celestinesca* 14.2 (1990): 41-91.
- Yates, Frances A. *The Art of Memory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966.
- Wack, Mary Frances. *Lovesickness in the Middle Ages. The Viaticum and Its Commentaries*. Middle Ages Series. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990.
- Weiss, Julian. "Memory in Creation: The Context of Rojas's Literary Recollection." Eds. Joseph T. Snow & Roger Wright. *Late Medieval Spanish Studies in Honour of Dorothy Sherman Severin. Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (Special Issue) 86.1. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009. 150-58.