CHAPTER 8

Calisto and Leriano in Love

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Critics have acknowledged that Celestina and the sentimental romances, especially Diego de San Pedro’s Cárcel de amor, share common traits.1 Similarities are evident: e.g., young lovers, courtly love, and failed or tragic endings to the affair. Many differences are also apparent: rhetorical style and allegory, to name a few. It is not the purpose of this essay to discuss whether the sentimental texts form a unified genre, or whether the terms “romance,” “novel,” or even “sentimental” describe such works. Nor will this study assume that Cárcel de amor is representative of the sentimental texts or that any parallel between Celestina and Cárcel de amor applies to other romances. Those are considerations beyond the scope of this essay. It is sufficient to acknowledge that comparison of the two books is appropriate given that San Pedro’s work

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1 Points of contact between the romances and Celestina may be formal or thematic. See, for example, Peter G. Earle, “Love Concepts in La cárcel de amor and La Celestina,” Hispania 39, no. 1 (1956): 92–96; Edwin J. Webber, “The Celestina as an arte de amores,” Modern Philology 55, no. 3 (1958): 145–53; Keith Whinnom’s introduction to his edition and translation, Prison of Love (1492) together with the Continuation by Nicolás Núñez (1496) (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1979), esp. p. xxvii; Dorothy Sherman Severin, Tragicomedy and Novelistic Discourse in Celestina (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), and Religious Parody and the Spanish Sentimental Romance (Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 2005); and Yolanda Iglesias, Una nueva mirada a la parodia de la novela sentimental en La Celestina (Frankfurt am Main: Iberoamericana-Vervuert, 2009), to mention only a few. On parody, see note 6 below. In this study I will refer to the “author” or “Rojas” without entering into who was/were or how many or at what stage of composition any given author(s) participated in the writing of the text, and accept that Rojas contributed in some way to the work. English translations of Cárcel de amor refer to Whinnom’s Prison of Love. Spanish quotations and references refer to Diego de San Pedro, Cárcel de amor, ed. Keith Whinnom, in Obras completas, vol. 2 (Madrid: Castalia, 1971). Quotations and references to Celestina in Spanish refer to Fernando de Rojas, Comedia o tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea, ed. Peter E. Russell (Madrid: Castalia, 1991); and in English, to Mack Hendricks Singleton’s translation of Celestina (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968). General references to the works refer to the original texts, with page numbers from the Spanish editions. When English translations are quoted, not accompanied by the Spanish original, the page number of the Spanish original is given first, followed by a semicolon and the page number of the English translation. I want to thank Professor Pablo Ancos for reading a draft of this article; responsibility for content is mine alone.
was well known to the late-fifteenth- and early-sixteenth-century reading public and that, while there are similarities between *Celestina* and the romances in general, there is indication that the *Celestina* author knew *Cárcel de amor*. Examples of reminiscences or borrowings are found in Pármeno's words in Act 2 (274–75); in Melibea and Celestina's conversation in Act 4 (315, 319, 320); in Celestina's speech in Act 10 (438); in Melibea's remark to Calisto in Act 14 after their first night of love (502–03); in Melibea's monologue in Act 20 (586); and finally in Pleberio's lament in Act 21 (595). In addition, we know from Rojas's library inventory, made after his death in 1541, that he owned a copy of *Cárcel de amor*. Thus, beyond similarities of form and style, which reflect a broader literary canvas, there is evidence that *Cárcel de amor* was specifically on the mind and in the memory of *Celestina*'s author.

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3 F. Castro Guisasola, *Observaciones sobre las fuentes literarias de La Celestina* (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1973), pp. 183–85, documents reminiscences of *Cárcel de amor* in *Celestina*. I here cite only one in full, to which I will refer later in this article. In Act 4, Melibea says to Celestina: “Truly, if I were not mindful of my honor, and if I did not hesitate to publish his rashness and arrogance, I would see to it that your life and your words ceased at the very same instant” (Por cierto, si no mirasse a mi honestidad, y por no publicar su osadía desse atrevido, yo te fiziera, malvada, que tu razón y vida acabaran en un tiempo) (80; 315), echoing what Laureola says to the Auctor: “Had you been of Macedonia and not of Spain, your discourse and your life would have ended together” (Si como eres d’España fueras de Macedonia, tu razonamiento y tu vida acabaran a un tiempo) (14–15; 96). Severin cites further examples with full citations in *Tragicomedy*, pp. 29–30, and dedicates a chapter to a comparison of Pleberio’s and Leriano’s mother’s laments (ibid., pp. 105–15); see also her “From the Lamentations of Diego de San Pedro to Pleberio’s Lament,” in *The Age of the Catholic Monarchs, 1474–1516. Literary Studies in Memory of Keith Whinnom*, ed. Alan Deyermond and Ian Macpherson (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1989), 178–84. See also Luis Miguel Vicente, “El lamento de Pleberio: Contraste y parecido con dos lamentos en *Cárcel de amor*,“ *Celestinesca* 12, no. 1 (1988): 35–43.