

Mar Martínez Góngora. *La utilización masculina del espacio doméstico rural en textos españoles del Renacimiento.*

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This study examines the formation of masculine subjectivity and the anxieties it generates within the framework of Castilian rural domestic space. A variety of texts dealing with masculine uses of rural dwelling and perceptions of domestic economy are examined, with attention paid to the pivotal role of the abode in the formation of masculine identities. The study is divided into three parts, which focus on the humanist use of domestic space in texts by Antonio de Guevara, Pedro de Luján, and Fray Luis de León; the masculine subject in Renaissance poetry focusing on the

topic of rustic dwelling by Diego Hurtado de Mendoza and Fray Luis de León; and perceptions of the rural home in *Don Quixote de la Mancha*.

Martínez Góngora approaches the space of the house as a dynamic, fluid category. Aspects such as a strictly feminine attribution of domestic space are questioned. The home had both a masculine and a feminine dimension, and was conceived by men as a space for renovating the inner self. But in Spain, Martínez Góngora argues, the formation of subjectivity was shaped by significant changes such as the discipline and self-control imposed by a new centralized state. The sense of freedom and independence that private space supposedly provided was problematic. The Inquisitorial “pedagogy of fear” penetrated everywhere in the home, especially in *converso* and *morisco* households, and withdrawing to a secluded space became an unattainable ideal.

In *Relox de Príncipes* the home is also a privileged masculine space for reflection and introspection, crucial for structuring a schedule of *otium* and *negotium*, for shaping a masculine identity, and negotiating power relations. But Guevara’s discourse also delineated masculine anxieties caused by aspects such as, among others, sharing the private space of the household with a wife and other members of subaltern groups.

The abode is a space for masculine discipline in Luján’s *Coloquios matrimoniales*. The strategies of self-control and intensive training of the body associated with masculinity are learned within the space of the house, under the father’s authority. Luján’s ideal of manhood based on moderate conduct was shaped by a proto-bourgeois ideology in contrast to the *sprezzato* aristocrat of Castiglione’s courtier. Women’s economic contribution to the household, the impact in the public sphere of female productive work carried out within the home boundaries, had a key significance in *La perfecta casada*. Fray Luis’s “domestic capitalism” offered housewives a model of economic production within the space of their rural home. Women’s economic responsibility responded to concerns about deficient agricultural production that could not meet the demands of a market affected by demographic expansion. In Hurtado de Mendoza’s “Epístola a Boscán” and “Epístola a don Luis de Avila” the rural dwelling is the space where the aristocratic man can find a new purpose and meaning to life. The rustic residence is instrumental in the formation of a masculine identity shaped by transformations in a precarious agricultural economy. In Martínez Góngora’s view, Mendoza’s masculine poetic subject responded to economic changes and tensions between an aristocratic ideology and the value system of an emergent bourgeoisie. Fray Luis de León’s poem “En una esperanza que salió vana” explores strategies of resistance to inquisitorial control. The poem combines Neoplatonic philosophical perspectives and the poet’s traumatic experience in inquisitorial jails to construct an intellectual subject fashioned by the benefits of rustic withdrawal.

Irony shapes Cervantes’ presentation of Don Quixote’s frugal domestic space. The *hidalgo*’s home, characterized by austerity and discipline, becomes a metaphor for his spiritual emptiness and the inability of lower nobility to contribute productively to the Manchegan agricultural economy. The household reflected at a private level the politics of repression carried out by the absolutist state.

Overall the book is both erudite and suggestive, although its condensed style and digressions at times make it a difficult read. The reader would have benefited from a more nuanced discussion of key aspects such as the humanist conception of dwelling, or the absolutist Spanish state. Likewise, the study would be enhanced by additional material on the experience of a lived architecture, as the home remains an abstract, imaginary space.

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