

*Du nom au genre: Lope de Vega, la tragedia et son public.* Florence D'Artois. Bibliothèque de la casa de Velázquez 68. Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2017. xii + 360 pp. €29.

In an age when classical tragedy had fallen out of fashion in Spain, Lope de Vega wrote six plays with the moniker *tragedia* and around thirty works with the hybrid label *tragicomedia*. In *Du nom au genre* (From name to genre), Florence D'Artois investigates this obvious contradiction, asking what playwrights and playgoers thought about tragedy in an environment controlled by the commercial success of a different formula, the *comedia nueva*. As D'Artois argues, the answer is more discursive than textual inasmuch as Lope and his audiences rejected Aristotelian precepts of tragedy in both form and content.

D'Artois takes a systematic, often-chronological approach to the presentation of her research. Specifically, *Du nom au genre* consists of classification and, to a large extent, periodization of Lope's tragedies. This elegant volume contains an introduction; six informative chapters; a conclusion; a list of sources; a bibliography; a summary in French, Spanish, and English; and a useful name and subject index. It is worth noting that the Bibliothèque de la Casa de Velázquez has long been recognized for publishing the scholarly work of Hispanists writing in French, and this monograph is based in large part on D'Artois's doctoral thesis, which she wrote under the supervision of Jean-François Canavaggio.

D'Artois's point of departure is a list of tragedies and tragicomedies that Edwin S. Morby attributes to Lope de Vega (1943). Chapter 1 continues with Aristotelian theories of tragedy and a discussion of how Spanish dramatists understood and attempted to adapt the genre. Of particular interest is the "representability" (or the purported lack thereof) of tragic play texts prior to Lope's meteoric rise. In chapter 2, D'Artois contrasts Lope's tragic plays (1575–85) with his tragic *comedias* written around the turn of the century when the *comedia nueva* as a generic formula had won over playgoers. In chapter 3, D'Artois explores a lengthy period (1590–1615) when the label "tragedy" is dropped from most titles of Lope's tragic works. Therefore, in chapter 4, she pays close attention to the positioning of three Lope plays as tragedies or tragicomedies in relation to audience demands: *El marqués de Mantua*, *El príncipe despeñado*, and *El bastardo Mudarra*.

In chapter 5, D'Artois turns once again to a theoretical discussion of tragedy by focusing on Lope's thoughts on the subject. D'Artois concludes that Lope's approximation is "déroutante par son caractère asystématique et contradictoire" ("bewildering for its unsystematic and contradictory character," 192), and she argues that, in contrast with a rigid adherence to the Aristotelian definition of *tragedy*, Lope relies on discursive elements found in epic poetry, especially the *grandeza* (majesty, grandeur) of his protagonists. This argument continues to unfold in chapter 6 with D'Artois's close readings of plays from the same period (1590–1615) that articulate well with Lope's epic poetry. This methodology is in keeping with current trends in Lope studies (e.g.,

Elizabeth Wright [2001]). Here D'Artois demonstrates a slow evolution as the Phoenix's tragedies move away from themes of *grandeza* toward the *caso grave*, which includes serious treatments of adultery, rape, and uxoricide. To this end, the critic's interpretations of *La Estrella de Sevilla*, *La inocente sangre*, *El duque de Viseo*, and *Estefanía la desdichada* will be of great interest to Lope scholars.

Chapter 7 is reserved for what D'Artois describes as another shift in tone in Lope's tragedies (1620–35), which, according to the author, tend to distance themselves from pathos by embracing ethos. She is correct in stating that many critics are curiously silent on this dynamic; indeed, an appeal to ethos is incongruous with Aristotle's pathos-driven characterization of the genre. In this light, D'Artois contrasts Lope's mythological tragedies (e.g., *Adonis y Venus*, *El marido más firme*) with *El caballero de Olmedo* and *El castigo sin venganza*, which were inspired by popular tales originating in the Middle Ages and early Renaissance.

In conclusion, *Du nom au genre* makes a significant contribution to early modern studies by spotlighting Lope de Vega's evolution as a dramatist and poet. Notwithstanding, D'Artois also reveals the trajectory that tragedy followed when the *comedia nueva* dominated Spanish drama both on stage and in print. From this vantage point, this ambitious volume deals with much more than the career of a single playwright, albeit one of Spain's finest and most prolific. D'Artois provides students and scholars with a richly detailed history of a genre.

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*Luís de Camões: The Poet as Scriptural Exegete*. John V. Fleming.

Colección Támesis Serie A: Monografías 367. Woodbridge: Tamesis, 2017. xii + 220 pp. \$99.

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“This book attempts an introduction to a very beautiful and complex poem” (vii): Professor Fleming goes about this purpose in a strange way. The volume's first chapter is dedicated to defending a thesis, that Camões's poem (usually called *Babel e Sião* or, from its first line, *Sóbolos / Sobre os rios*) is scriptural exegesis of a psalm. Chapter 2 is on the psalm itself, *Super flumina*, number 136 in the Vulgate. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are purportedly on texts (especially by “Theodulus,” Boethius, Augustine, Dante, and Boscán) that the author believes to have been especially important in composing *Babel e Sião*. Chapters 6 and 7 approach issues of the poem's own inner structure. All this, however, includes many digressions of several kinds, often of doubtful relevance to the subject. The book ends with a version of Camões's poem, taken from two modern editions; a translation (so-called “literal”) of it into English by Fleming himself; two versions of the psalm; and a bibliography that is to be commended for including items on early modern Portuguese literature rarely to be seen in an English scholarly book.