

Diálogo de la lengua: A Diplomatic Edition. Juan de Valdés.

Ed. Kormi Anipa. MHRA Critical Texts 38. Cambridge: Modern Humanities Research Association, 2014. x + 134 pp. \$15.99.

Professor Kormi Anipa's introduction to and transcription of a manuscript of Juan de Valdés's *Diálogo de la lengua* offers an insightful analysis of the origins of the work and its place in the study of Spanish linguistics. Anipa expands upon Ignacio Navarrete's argument about the manuscript's significance even though it remained unpublished until the eighteenth century ("Juan de Valdés, Diego Hurtado de Mendoza, and the

Imperial Style in Spanish Poetry,” *Renaissance and Reformation* 28.3 [2004]: 3–25). Following recent historical work uncovering Valdés’s employment as an influential personal secretary for Emperor Charles V, Navarrete and Anipa take the position that the *Diálogo* has long been misunderstood either as a real casual conversation, mere literature, or as a means of teaching Spanish to disciples to aid the spread of his supposedly heretical religious doctrines. However, Anipa’s interest in linguistics rather than literary style led him to dig into the manuscript’s origins and highlight evidence that the *Diálogo de la lengua* was not written simply for a small group of Italians and Spaniards, but for Charles V’s aspirations to make Spanish an imperial language.

In supporting the thesis, Anipa establishes that the handwritten manuscript (MS/8629 in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid) is not the same as the first published edition of the book in 1737, and that MS/8629 was copied during Valdés’s lifetime in 1540. Anipa demonstrates Valdés’s careful plan for the work by inserting its table of contents indicated in marginal notations that relate back to Valdés’s comments at the start of the dialogue. Indeed, much of Anipa’s argument comes from these marginal annotations in different hands. Most intriguing is Anipa’s discussion of the transmission of the near-final draft from Italy to Valdés’s old friends in Spain. The manuscript came into the brief possession of Alvar Gómez de Castro (1516–80), a humanist scholar with close ties to one of Juan’s mentors at the University of Alcalá, Juan de Vergara. Anipa corrects the long-held erroneous belief that MS/8629 was owned by Gómez de Castro. Rather, the humanist borrowed it and made his own copy, which has since been lost or destroyed.

There is one piece of textual evidence overlooked by Professor Anipa that would support his position that some of the marginal notations were made by Valdés himself. Anipa states that trying to identify names in the dialogue is a wild-goose chase, but humanist convention often led authors to include names of individuals helpful to their career. Next to Valdés, Pacheco speaks as the most authoritative figure on the Spanish language. Juan had served at the court of Diego de Pacheco in Escalona and dedicated his first book to the old grandee. Internal chronology of the *Diálogo* dates it to 1535 or 1536. At that time the grandee’s son, Pedro de Pacheco, presided over a *visitación* (legal audit) of Viceroy Pedro de Toledo’s administration of Naples. To the surprise of Valdés and the viceroy, the audit’s report released in October 1539 indicted the viceroy’s administration with numerous charges of corruption. Valdés was a *criado* (servant) of the viceroy as well as the emperor. Placing the viceroy’s archenemy in the dialogue would not have been a good idea in 1540. That Pacheco is marked through in the manuscript and replaced by Torres adds credibility to Valdés making final corrections to it in 1540 before sending the manuscript to friends in Spain.

Professor Anipa has produced a skillful linguistic textual analysis and placed it in solid historical context. He provides ample support for his conclusion that the *Diálogo de la lengua* should be read as a sophisticated linguistic work to serve the needs of Spanish imperial ambition. All scholars and graduate students in the fields of Spanish linguistics, literature, and history will benefit from this work.

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