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Guía para o estudo da prosa galega medieval ed. by Esther Corral Díaz and Ricardo Pichel (review)

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While comprehensive and updated guides to medieval Spanish literature are readily available for students and researchers (one has only to think of Carlos Alvar and José Manuel Lucía Megías's *Diccionario filológico de literatura medieval española*, or Fernando Gómez Redondo's encyclopedic volumes on Castilian prose, meter, and poetry), there is a lack of similar in-depth studies of the literary production in the other languages of the Castilian crown during this period. Such is the case of Galician-Portuguese literature, an important but neglected tradition often studied in the context of Alfonso X's Marian devotion and the renewal of courtly culture in fourteenth-century Castile, whose prose is yet largely unknown to all but specialists. Aside from the political reasons behind this neglect, the most challenging obstacles to overcome remain the material ones. Considering Galician prose alone, we know of a significant number of lost texts, for example, the *Legenda aurea (Flos sanctorum)*, the *Segunda Partida*, and the *Vida y pasión de los apóstoles* by Bernardo de Brihuega. Most of the extant works survive as *disjecta membra*, single folios, in many cases recovered from the covers and guard leaves of manuscripts.

This *Guía* is a first endeavor to address this problem. It sets up a clear objective: to offer a panorama of the Galician-Portuguese prose produced in medieval Galicia from the end of the thirteenth century to the second half of the fifteenth. It thus excludes the much better studied prose of Portuguese origin, which means that, while the *Crónica de 1404* is discussed, the Count of Barcelos' *Crónica de 1344* is not. The editors examine all the extant prose works from

this linguistic tradition. It ranges from fictional works to technical prose. The editors start with the classical and medieval epic cycles: the Trojan (*Crónica troiana* and *Historia troiana*), Arthurian (*Livro de Tristam*), and Carolingian *matières* (*Crónica do Pseudo Turpín*). The *Guía* also includes historiography derived from the Alfonsine histories (*Geral estoria*, *Crónica geral galega*, and *Crónica de 1404*), the *Crónica de Iria*, and the *Crónica da Orden dos Fraires Menores*, and incorporates examples of hagiographic or doctrinal prose, such as the *Mirages de Santiago* and the *Livro das Confissõe*. Finally, the work looks at legal writings (the *Sete Partidas*, the *Foro Juzgo*, the *Foro Real*, the *Flores de Dereito*, and the *Ordenamento de Alcalá*) and technical prose (the *Tratado de Alveitaría*). This diverse array of works meets the stated goal of establishing a “corpus de primeira orde ineludíbel para o esclarecemento das interrelacións literarias non só a nivel local ou rexional, mais tamén a nivel peninsular e aínda europeo con respecto ás diversas empresas culturais acometidas nos reinos centro-occidentais de Galizia-León, Castela e Portugal” (252).

To achieve this purpose, the *Guía* follows a system common to most philological dictionaries with entries that correspond to each work organized in sections determined by the aforementioned genres. However, the work of the editors goes beyond the narrow scope of traditional dictionaries. Instead of limiting the contents of each entry to descriptions of the manuscripts and discussions of their transmission, they take a page from material philology and offer “toda a información dispoñíbel sobre a produción galega medieval en prosa vista en conxunto e tomando en conta as interrelacións co universo cultural castelán e portugués” in order to “dar continuidade crítica ao desigual ronsel de traballos globais sobre a prosa galega medieval aparecidos nas últimas tres décadas” (251).

Each entry contains three parts. The first is a header section that lists the extant witnesses of a work and any available editions. This section also includes the provenance of the manuscripts and the habitual codicological data. For further clarity, and as help to researchers, all this data is cross-referenced with *Philobiblon*'s textual and biographical entries. The second part is the study proper, a review of scholarship on the text, with an emphasis on recent publications.

As is clear from the list of works offered above, most of the texts discussed are translations from Castilian works or second-degree translations of Castilian versions of Latin and French. This comes as no surprise, given the political and cultural subsidiary status of Galicia to the Crown of Castile during the period covered in the book. Accordingly, the study section of each entry starts with descriptions of the original works and their significance in their original



context of production. However, the editors quickly turn their attention to the transmission of the texts to Galicia and finally to the translations themselves. This approach argues against a simplistic reading that considers these works to be nothing more than translations. Instead, they are placed in a wider context of circulation, consumption, production, and patronage of books in medieval Galicia. By doing this, the *Guía* offers a more complete image of the connectivity that characterized the production of these manuscripts, which often happened in a reduced number of cultural circles by translators employed by the same noble families (especially the Houses of Andrade, Castro-Lemos, and Lima-Batisela) or institutions (mainly the See of Santiago de Compostela). While the majority draw upon Castilian models, some works stand out. The *Crónica de Iria* recasts the *Chronicon Iriense*, the *Historia compostellana*, and the *Chronicon Compostellanum*. The *Livro de Tristam* comes from the French *Roman de Tristan*.

This guide explains and contextualizes how Galician translators and their patrons continued to use the classical and medieval materials and themes that had first been translated to Spanish, while adapting them to respond to the needs of their own political and cultural *milieu*. This happened with books derived from the Trojan cycle, which in Spanish were a tool for monarchic propaganda used to support the project of royal regeneration and legitimacy of Alfonso XI and Pedro I. In turn, when the *Crónica troiana* and the *Historia troiana* were translated in the court of the Andrade family, they were reoriented to praise chivalric values, support the nobiliary project of the house, and draw political parallels between Troy and Galicia.

The guide also shows the rapid translation experienced by some of the historiographical and legal works of the Alfonsine *scriptoria*—resulting in the *Geral estoria*, the *Crónica geral galega*, the *Crónica de 1404*, the *Foro Real* and the *Sete Partidas*. It makes their Galician counterparts valuable tools for the study of the original works, as many of these transmit primitive versions that do not survive in Spanish; the *Geral estoria*, for example, transmits one of the oldest versions of the *General estoria*. The study also includes, when available, information on current research projects or editions. Each entry finishes with a complete bibliography—making the general bibliography a bit redundant—and a single-folio color reproduction of each of the witnesses.

Somewhat outside the scope of book, there is an appendix that presents a list of additional entries on literary paratexts in prose included in collections of Galician-Portuguese lyric, such as the *Arte de trovar* from the *Cancioneiro da Biblioteca Nacional*, the explicative rubrics from the *Cancionero da Biblioteca*

Nacional and the *Cancioneiro da Vaticana*, and the *tituli* of the miniatures in the Rico and Florentine codices of the *Cantigas de Santa María*. However, it could be argued that their lack of independence—all ancillary sections of larger poetical works—is not merit enough for their inclusion in the volume. Furthermore, they do not fit the main criterion for the selection of works advanced in the Introduction, that is, that their production is “de orixe galega” (19), which is clearly not the case with the *Arte*. As Tavani points out, this *poetica* was probably written by “o próprio Conde [de Barcelos] ou um dos dois trovadores (João de Gaia e Estêvão da Guarda) que devem ter colaborado com ele na organização” of the primitive *Cancioneiro* (30), a fact acknowledged in the *Guía* (227). A similar argument could be made about the *tituli* of the manuscripts of the *Cantigas de Santa María*, given that the conditions of their production have more to do with Alfonso X’s political project and because the choice of language is the result of the status of Galician-Portuguese as the poetic *koiné* of its time.

Yet, aside from these minor criticisms, the *Guía* is a most welcome and necessary work, a first effort to systematize classic and recent scholarship on Galician prose. The volume offers its readers, both newcomers and specialists, a clear panorama of the role of *mouvance* in medieval traditions and how texts were received and repurposed for medieval Galician readers.

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