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TER HORST, Eleanor, Edward FRIEDMAN and Ali Shehzad ZAIDI (eds.) *Studies in Honor of Robert ter Horst*. Fair Lawn, NJ: Transformative Studies Institute Press, 2017. ISBN: 978-0-9832982-2-9, 185 pp.

In the German academic tradition —from which *Festschriften* or *libriamicorum* derive— it is a privilege and distinction to edit and present a celebratory book in honor of a reputed colleague. This tribute to the scholarship of an inspiring academic seems to suggest a metaphorical passing the torch or, a way to continue the scholarship of the honoree. While this may be the case for many *Festschriften*, to judge from the three short-introductions by co-editors Eleanor ter Horst, Edward Friedman, and Ali Shehzad Zaidi, this volume, respectfully and conventionally titled *Studies in Honor of Robert ter Horst*, is above all a pure and simple act of love and gratitude to Professor Ter Horst's scholarship and life-long dedication to teaching, mentoring, and research.

It could not be otherwise, probably, considering the career of ter Horst. As Eleanor ter Horst (the honoree's daughter, a French and German scholar at the University of South Alabama —where she is Head of the Department of Modern and Classical Language and Literature) and Ali S. Zaidi (a former doctoral student of Robert ter Horst, currently Professor of Spanish at State University of New York-Canton) explain in their introductions, here we are in the presence of a true scholar and a principled academic, of the kind we rarely find in our universities. Respectively titled “*Ce vice impuni, la lecture*”: A Double life in Reading and Writing” (1-2) and “High Tea” (4-5), the brief texts of co-editors ter Horst and Zaidi offer the reader a glimpse of the profoundly human qualities of ter Horst. For his part, Edward Friedman, from Vanderbilt University, highlights ter Horst's erudition, and describes him as a “unique, fascinating and decisive presence” (3); his introduction is aptly titled “A Guide in the Desert” as both, Friedman and ter Horst, spent some time in the late 1970s in Arizona (ASU and UofA), as Hispanists and comparatists at the beginning of their prolific careers.

The volume contains a collection of essays interestingly tied by similar outlooks and topics. This is fortunate, for such books typically include an assortment of essays which, although frequently of interest, do not make a significant contribution to any specific field on account of their diversity. Gladly, this is not the case.

The volume consists of the three afore mentioned brief introductions by the editors, followed by eleven chapters on various academic issues (many of which open with a reference to an earlier work by Professor ter Horst), plus a final

section including all the academic publications of Robert ter Horst. The book ends with a brief and informative summary of the contributors' biographies.

As already mentioned, this *Festschrift* offers a rare coherence in terms of the topics examined: this, it should be argued, is as much merit of the editors as proof of ter Horst's compact career: former students and colleagues seem to share a stimulating coincidence of academic interests, and most readers will profit from this. To be more specific, nine out of the eleven chapters deal with Spanish late medieval and early modern literature, from *La Celestina* (ca. 1499) to the drama of Calderón (ca. 1622-1680). Additionally, some neighboring 20th century cultural texts within the realm of Spanish studies, such as film adaptations of *Don Quijote* or Unamuno's approach to the drama of Calderón de la Barca, are also examined. Only a piece on Mexican drama of the 1990s (which is linked to Greek classical theatre) and another (the last one) on 18th and 19th century American narrative, depart from this common thread although, as we will see, both fit easily into the main pattern of the book.

William R. Blue (Penn State University) explores in chapter one aspects surrounding the notion of travel (or "the adventure and adversity of the journey" 6) in the *Comedia*. He focuses on 'road plays' by Tirso, Lope, Ruiz de Alarcón, Rojas Zorrilla and Hurtado de Mendoza, and examines three kinds of space: sensible (that is, physical), conceptual (involving concepts, words, abstractions) and, in between the two, the lived space of the interactants. In a more specific sense, the author approaches such topics as the dangers of travel, food and lodging, conviviality, or road and inn conditions in Golden Age Spain. Notably, Professor Blue pays special attention to the liminality of the road, that is, its function in the plays as a border space, what in Lotmanian semiotics we would call a boundary, and the way it affects both plots and characters. It must be said that the volume, a metaphorical journey through Robert ter Horst's scholarly interests, is aptly headed by this essay.

Edward H. Friedman (Vanderbilt University) discusses in chapter two the intertextual dialogue established among a number of early modern sonnets and the way they all relate to their common source. The sonnets are Garcilaso's Soneto 1, Lope's sonnet 1 from *Rimas sacras*, and Colodrero de Villalobos' "Gran dicha es llegar un hombre a estar desengañado" and they all stem from Petrarch's sonnet 298 in *Il Canzoniere*. Friedman's fine essay does, at least, two things: first, it focuses on the ways in which these poems deploy their self-referential strategies, since the author holds the view that "every poem is, in some measure, a metapoem" (30); in this sense, the chapter explores the notion of self-examination, which seems to be especially appropriate as Petrarch's sonnet ("Quand'io mi volgo indietro a mirar glianni"), and its offspring, all four allude

to the well-known topic of the dilapidation of life and the final reckoning (much, I am persuaded, in the vein of Sidney's sonnet 18 in *Astrophil and Stella*). Second, Friedman –taking Garcilaso's poem as the center of his analysis–discusses a number of aspects related to this intertextual dynamic, most importantly “a type of disconnect between the borrowed elements [from Petarch] and the ultimate direction of the [Garcilaso's] poem” (26). Professor Friedman's concludes that, as can be noted from these recreations, Garcilaso —like Cervantes, he argues— “depends on the past for inspiration” (34), but inevitably reinvents it.

Chapter three, by María Antonia Garcés (Cornell University), and chapter ten, by Diana de Armas Wilson (University of Denver), have to be taken together as both are concerned with the same, extraordinarily relevant, early modern work, namely Antonio de Sosa's *Topographia e historia general de Argel* (1612). In 2011 both authors, Profs. Garcés and De Armas, had co-authored *An Early Modern Dialogue with Islam: Antonio de Sosa's Topography of Algiers (1612)*, published by the University of Notre Dame Press, an annotated edition and the first ever translation into English of this important work. De Sosa's work of ethnography is, the authors explain, the earliest such work by an European in a Muslim country, and it includes (in Garcés' words) “a fascinating account of daily life in Algiers during the last third of the sixteenth century” (37) by a contemporary and fellow prisoner of Miguel de Cervantes in Algiers, Dr. Antonio de Sosa (who, incidentally, also wrote the first biography of the man who, years later, would pen *Don Quijote*).

In her contribution to the present volume Professor Garcés examines, first, De Sosa's *Topography* at some length, focusing mostly on his “ethnographic description of Algerian inhabitants, mores and religious rituals” (38), and paying special attention to the narrative strategies through which the book offers what she calls “alternatively antagonistic positions” (45). This could be understood as the ideological maneuver through which De Sosa avoids —with the limitations derived from his age and condition as a prisoner— reproducing monological discourses about Muslim societies. Second, Garcés examines the centuries-long controversy surrounding the authorship of the *Topography*, a work which, until the 1970s, had been attributed to Diego de Haedo, bishop of Agrigento, since De Sosa's conflict with Philip II made it impossible for him to author such a book. Garcés succinctly elucidates this complex matter.

In her essay (chapter ten), Professor De Armas discusses the difficulties of translating de Sosa's *Topography*, which she describes as those encountered by a ‘translator's translator’. De Armas first explains how her approach to this activity is quite alien to literalist schools of translation (like those once advocated by Vladimir Nabokov, among others) and, conversely, how she is heavily indebted

to Umberto Eco's approach to the well-known notion of equivalence, which he discusses in *Dire quasi la stessa cosa. Esperienze di traduzione*. De Armas takes Eco's notion of *dire quasi la stessa cosa*—although significantly she refers to it in Spanish, *decir casi lo mismo*, 'to say almost the same'—in order to confront the translation problems derived from De Sosa's introduction of transliterated terms, from Arabic and Turkish, into sixteenth century Spanish, and which De Sosa then had to translate into twenty-first century English, through a process that she defines as "negotiating the source text" (153). De Sosa also addresses a particularly controversial issue: whether to "screen" whatever ideas a modern reader may perceive as Islamophobic in the source; her decision as a translator of an early modern work—to trust readers "to understand the limitations of [De Sosa's] subject positions as a Christian captive" (155)—seems appropriate and fair to the text.

It is pity that Patricia Kenworthy (Vassar College) could not have seen the latest production of Calderón's *La dama duende* presented by Helena Pimenta and the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico three months after writing her essay on this play (chapter four). Indeed, Pimenta—a prestigious theatrical director, especially well-versed in Calderón and Shakespeare—not only directed a celebrated and laureate production of this Calderonian *comedia de capa y espada* (cloak and dagger play), but she has given a number of plenary lectures in various institutions (including the University of Milan, in Italy) in which she has explained how she perceives the play as structured around two elements: circularity (in terms of plot and staging) and the uncertainties and contradictions of the Spanish individual of the Baroque. More precisely, the success of Pimenta's production hinges on the clever way in which she has resolved the theatrical problems posed by the staging of this complex play, in order to communicate the magic ('*dama duende*') and puzzlement derived from the apparently inexplicable movements of the lead female character.

This play is one of the many works from the Spanish early modern period that ter Horst had discussed (as Kenworthy explains), but, interestingly enough, the author of the essay seems to focus not on the ground previously covered by ter Horst but on those elements that, a few months later, Pimenta had already considered central for a correct understanding of the theatrical experience, namely "space and staging" (55). These—as some other previous scholars had established—may be expanded to include "the (fictional) architecture of the house, the placement of the *alacena* and the furniture, and the setting of each scene" (55). To be more specific, Kenworthy examines such topics as the contiguity (or not) of the rooms of Ángela and Manuel, the location of the first scene from the first *jornada*, and the actual nature of the *alacena*, or glassware

cupboard, which —and hence the magic and appeal of Calderón’s play— simultaneously conceals and communicates, *engaña* and *des-engaña*. As Professor Kenworthy aptly concludes, “the *Comedia* is, literally, poetry in motion” (63).

Adrián Pérez Melgosa (Stony Brook University) examines in chapter six a not so well-known aspect (if there is such a thing) of Cervantes’ *Don Quijote*, namely “the existence ... of a theory of visuality”, which the author calls an “epistemology of enchantment” (82). Pérez bases his study on, firstly, the less-known fact that *Don Quijote* is the literary work most frequently adapted to film (although, one may add, seldom with success); second, the novel presents, among other things, an exploration of the ways in which image and letter represent and interpret the world. Significantly, the author recollects how, as Professor TerHorst used to explain in class, *Don Quijote* could not only be described as the “inauguration, culmination and exhaustion of the narrative possibilities of the novel” (83), but also as a work intensely concerned with visuality, as in the frequent instances of characters trying to see amidst darkness. For most of the essay, the author discusses four audiovisual productions, two of which were completed, namely Willem Pabst’s *The Adventures of Don Quixote* (1933) and the television series by Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón, *El Quijote de Miguel de Cervantes* (1992, with Fernando Rey and Alfredo Landa). The other two —by the time the author wrote this essay— were not: Orson Welles’ uncompleted *Don Quixote* (1955-1985, then edited by Jesús Franco and released in 1992) and Terry Gilliam’s *The Man who Killed Don Quixote*. It is well known that Gilliam’s ambitious project (which he started as early as 1989) came to be known, like Welles’, as an example of production hell, as the author seemed unable, for a number of reasons, to finish it. Consequently, Pérez closes his essay with Gilliam’s lament that he could not “render visually ... the world that ... Don Quixote believed that he saw” (95). Gilliam’s eventual success in producing and releasing the film at Cannes in 2018 (it was also nominated for some Goya awards), which the author could not include in his essay, might have added a new dimension to Pérez’s illuminating discussion on the limits of cinema and Cervantes’ *Don Quijote*.

Randolph D. Pope (University of Virginia) studies the function of contemplation, and more specifically the presence of portraits in the plays of Calderón, in chapter seven. Pope borrows from Robert ter Horst’s earlier work on this same topic in order to underline the various ways in which art — painting and sculpture— were not only present in Calderón’s works, but were an inherent part of the way in which the playwright viewed the world. In this sense, the author establishes a distinction between what he calls “the useful abstractness of ideas” communicated through language in Calderón’s work, and a more

passionate and immediate source of experience, provided by painting. Also, Pope underlines a link between this concern in the texts of the early modern playwright and the novels —*nivolas*— of Miguel de Unamuno. For Unamuno, the author argues, portraits were centrally important on account of their function of their mute testimony, their ability to problematize the contradictions of life (like Shakespeare's), in a way in which Calderón's theater —the author claims— does not. Portraits play a decisive role in *Niebla* and *Abel Sánchez*, since Unamuno is concerned with the confrontation between life and art (after all, life is a dream for Calderón, an idea which Unamuno shares). Portraits, Unamuno believed, last longer than life (*ars longa, vita brevis*), and —the author suggests— so do texts.

Chapter nine, by Professor Florence Byham Weinberg (Trinity University), discusses (in a reedited and updated work originally published in the 1970s) a frequently neglected aspect of Fernando de Rojas' *La Celestina*, namely, its symbolic dimensions. This canonical work of Spanish late fifteenth century literature has conventionally been studied as a representative of Renaissance realism, as María Rosa Lida de Malkiel among others have convincingly argued; hence, language, customs, or characters have traditionally been considered to function as realistic depictions of life in Spain during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. But Professor Weinberg —in the vein of Marcel— reads the *tragicomedia* differently, not as a faithful portrayal of reality but as a powerfully symbolic work. For this, she employs Edwin Panofsky's notion of the symbol in the visual arts, conveniently reconceived to be applied to a literary text. This way, among the secondary subject matters developed in the work, Professor Weinberg locates and examines such elements as the topoi of classical antiquity, courtly love, late medieval and early modern *loci communes* or the Judeo-Christian and Neoplatonic traditions. More specifically, Weinberg's illuminating essay addresses the Hawk, the Wall, and the Garden, Calisto's Home and Celestina's Hovel, Celestina as Loveable, Terrible Mother and Spinner/Spider, the Thread, the Cord, the Chain, the Lute, the Ladder, the Tower and, logically, the Fall. Through all these motifs and topics —Weinberg concludes— Fernando de Rojas “tries to convince his readers to reject ensnaring ‘animal’ passion and keep to the ‘upper path’ of rational behavior and intellection” (144).

Robert ter Horst's 1996 essay on the two main Spanish versions of the Don Juan legend, Tirso's and Zorrilla's, is expanded by Eleanor ter Horst in chapter eight in order to include E.T.A Hoffman's *Don Juan*. In this essay, Eleanor ter Horst takes what had been formerly perceived by Professor ter Horst as “an interplay between similarity and difference” (111) in the Spanish texts and she departs from there to address other related texts and topics. Hoffman's Don Juan is firstly linked to Goethe's Faust, since what in the former was an endless pursuit

of sexual conquest, in the latter took the form of the pursuit of knowledge. However, the actual direct source for Hoffman's novella is —Eleanor ter Horst argues— not so much the Spanish texts or Goethe's as Mozart's opera *Don Giovanni*. Thus, the author of this essay establishes an insightful intertextual dialogue among various literary/linguistic and musical texts. Also, she addresses other related rhetorical issues such as the indeterminacy of relationships between different texts, and the relative stability of identity and processes of competition. Hoffman, the author concludes, merges Faust and Don Juan, although sexual relationships between male and female are always, inevitably, at the center of all German or Spanish versions of the Don Juan legend. Similarity and difference lead to conflict and competition, both in the Spanish and Hoffman's versions of Don Juan, and this is best explained in the clever way in which Eleanor ter Horst combines Mozart, Hoffman, the narrator of his Don Juan, Mozart's Don Giovanni/Don Juan and even Faust.

The essay (chapter five) by Professor Kirsten F. Nigro (The University of Texas at El Paso) introduces a contemporary corpus of texts dealing with a sad and tragic reality: the systematic murder of hundreds of women of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, a city across the border from El Paso, Texas. To begin with, Professor Nigro has aptly decided to borrow the term *femicide* (not feminicide, the murder of a woman) from Australian sociologist D. Russell, which involves an ideological statement: these murders are hate crimes, since these women from Juárez are murdered (and frequently raped and tortured) *qua* women. And the present essay examines two Mexican plays dealing with this topic, namely: Perla de la Rosa's *Antígona, las voces que incendian el desierto* (2004) and Sara Uribe's *Antígona González* (2012).

According to Nigro, De la Rosa's *Antígona, las voces...* is a clear hypertext (in the Genettian sense) of Sophocles' *Antigone* (the hypotext, or source, for Genette): Thebes stands in for early 1990s (when the femicides started) Ciudad Juárez, and, in general, De la Rosa's play follows quite closely the Greek classical play, culturally relocated to the US-Mexican border. Uribe's play, on the other hand, is not so much an updated rewriting of *Antigone* as a mosaic of various quotations (some classical, some from popular cultural texts), which constitute a collage of sorts. This structure seems to reproduce, semiotically, the dark overtones of the reality dramatized: the play is permeated, Professor Nigro argues, by “seemingly disembodied, free-floating voices” that seem to point at all those “bodies in suspension, waiting to be found, buried and finally put to rest” (76).

The last essay in this volume (chapter eleven) is by Ali S. Zaidi. Here Zaidi argues for what he calls a “futuristic bent” (163) (or arc) in early American

literature; by this, Zaidi means not only the ability to anticipate a future that could not be perceived clearly until well into the nineteenth century, but what he calls “a dynamic conception of political and social existence” (163). Thus, the author identifies an anticipatory concern with the rights of women in Charles Brockden Brown’s novel *Alcuin* (1798) more than a century before the nineteenth amendment to the US Constitution secured the right to vote for women. Another novel by Brown, *Arthur Mervyn* (1799-1800), similarly revealed an awareness of the future by problematizing some of America’s major contradictions, anticipating the concerns of other authors decades later. Venture Smith’s narrative exploration of slavery or Washington Irving’s examination of such centrally relevant themes for the new Republic as innocence and amnesia, including “a disconcerting future” in *Rip van Winkle* and “the plight of Native Americans” (“Traits of Indian Characters”, 167) are among the examples that Zaidi examines as evidence of this constant presence of a dialogue between past and future in late eighteenth-century and early-nineteenth century American narrative. It is this constant semiotization of the past that, Zaidi claims, allows Hawthorne’s decrepit Fort Ticonderoga to become the proleptic sign of a potentially bright future for the United States.

This collection of essays represents, then, some of the best criticism in the field of Spanish studies (plus the bonus of some incursions into German and American literature and culture). As in most Festschriften, the contributors manifest their strong ties to the scholarship, and personality of Robert ter Horst. But, unlike the laudatory essays in such books, the essays in this volume expand, complement, or simply revisit some of the many fields in which ter Horst distinguished himself during his long, prolific, and brilliant academic career. This is how these essays enter into dialogue with a past that, inevitably, addresses its present, in various forms and under diverse guises, but always with the distinguishing mark of, as can be seen from his former students’ accounts, a true humanist. Scholars —as Professor Zaidi argues in this volume— after all’s been said and done, are best honored through scholarship.

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