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*Humanismo, gramática y poesía: Juan de Mena y los autores en el canon de Nebrija* by Juan Casas Rigall (review)

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Juan Casas Rigall's *Humanismo, gramática y poesía: Juan de Mena y los auctores en el canon de Nebrija* analyzes the nature of the *auctores* in the work of Nebrija in order to evaluate the role of Mena and other fifteenth-century literary figures as examples of grammar and literature. In part, this study stems from the disagreement between María Rosa Lida and Francisco Rico regarding Nebrija's assessment of Juan de Mena and his contemporaries as exemplars. These two figures of twentieth century criticism adopted opposite stances on the question, with Lida arguing “Puede inferirse [...] la preeminencia absoluta que Nebrija otorgaba a Mena” (332) and Rico responding “Nebrija no estima a Mena ni como *pattern* de ‘uso’ lingüístico ni como ‘autor’ de literatura valiosa” (136). Casas Rigall turns this unresolved issue into an opportunity to deepen understanding of the question at hand by exploring Nebrija's place in the classical and medieval tradition and what can be surmised from Nebrija's broader works and biography.



By placing the nature of the *auctoritas* within its historical setting among the works of Quintilian, Valla, and other authors of grammars and their common practices, Casas Rigall illuminates the expectations that Nebrija fulfills in order to supply his works with Castilian and Latin grammar examples. He begins by adeptly demonstrating the changing nature of the role of *auctores* in grammatical works across time from one of many criteria in grammatical correctness in older texts to the primary point of departure for grammar texts by Nebrija's time. By arguing that Nebrija followed the established tradition to seek out examples for his grammar texts, Casas Rigall concludes that no reproach of Mena is apparent in Nebrija's *Gramática*. Though Nebrija does not praise Mena in the *Gramática*, tradition dictates that there was no expectation that he should do so. Rather, Nebrija praises Mena's work overtly in the commentary to his *Vafre dicta philosophorum*, stating "Hoc pulchre noster Johannes Mena expressit atque imitatus est" in reference to Diogenes Laertius, while referring to Mena throughout as *poeta noster*" (Casas Rigall 36).

In response to Rico's claim that Nebrija criticizes Mena's work by making him the example of grammatical vices, Casas Rigall explains that the decision to exemplify grammatical vices with Mena's verses is simply a didactic habit inherited from earlier grammars. Mena's are largely pardoned for any potential transgressions they exhibit because they can be attributed to poetic license. In the same vein, earlier grammars did not criticize Virgil by using verses from the *Aeneid* as examples of vices; poetry can necessitate grammatical vices. In contrast, Casas Rigall argues that the examples of vices in the *Gramática* that reproduce sentences of prose, particularly those of Enrique de Villena, are indeed intended to criticize their inelegant usage because prose does not enjoy this same caveat.

Though not its stated goal, Casas Rigall's volume subtly succeeds in connecting Nebrija to his foreign and domestic past, present, and future. Nebrija emerges as a participant in scholarly traditions, spanning centuries, who takes it upon himself to wed inherited models with new content. By situating Nebrija and Mena *vis-à-vis* Latin grammars, Italian humanist thought, early printing in Castile, political ideology contemporary to Nebrija, Golden Age reception, and other areas of knowledge, Casas Rigall shows the interconnectedness and relevance of these two figures to an exceptionally broad web of cultural references. At times, this rises to the level of challenging such entrenched divisions as pre-modern vs. early modern, domestic vs. foreign, or Latin tradition vs vernacular tradition.

Nebrija appears as the figure who straddles these divisions as he weighs how to incorporate Mena into his project.

The stages in Casas Rigall's argument provide an admirable evaluation of the evidence and prior arguments surrounding the Mena–Nebrija relationship. The most noteworthy new evidence he presents pertains to the realm of the tradition of Latin grammars and the use of *auctores* within it. Nevertheless, many of the conclusions he reaches are productive mostly insofar as they eliminate possibilities. Indeed, Casas Rigall's argument convincingly nullifies Rico's initial claim, but it does so without supporting Lida's overly optimistic view. In this regard, much of the study serves as a superb analysis of the state of the question and defense of a third option rather than a revolutionary reconsideration.

Casas Rigall's work is informed and informative as it provides an excellent example of some of the best philological study. Of particular interest in the volume are sections 1.2 and 1.3, which situate Nebrija's work within the broad currents of a history of grammars and section 3.2, which analyzes errors and inconsistencies in Nebrija's "Suppositum de autoribus grammaticae Latinae" and its potential value as a source of information regarding his views on authority. Also of note are the text and translation of Nebrija's "Suppositum" and two poems, the "Salutatio ad patriam" and "Ad Artemsuamauctor," that appear as appendices to the volume.

Curiously, in a study that strives so effectively to answer the question "what constituted authority for Nebrija?," it remains silent on the question "what constitutes authority for Casas Rigall?" The author admirably brings copious examples from grammatical forebears to shed light on Nebrija's use of examples with little mention that he is accepting his own examples' implicit authority. The careful and nuanced treatment that Casas Rigall gives to the study of authority in Nebrija leads the reader to want even more discussion of the dynamic nature of authorization and authority as necessary components of any successful argumentation. Still, the more modest scope of this useful and informative volume allows it to accomplish what it sets out to accomplish effectively with concision and skill.

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*Carl, Carolina. A Bishopric between Three Kingdoms: Calahorra, 1045-1190. The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World 43. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2011. 292 pages. ISBN: 978 90 04 18012 3*

After the capture of Calahorra by King García Sánchez of Navarre in 1045, the episcopal see, like a great many others in the Peninsula, was to find its fortunes subject to political and ecclesiastical conditions far removed from the circumstances of the Visigothic period. In this new study, based on published primary sources, Carolina Carl traces the history of the bishopric from its restoration until the end of the episcopate of the formidable Rodrigo Cascante in 1190.

The central argument of the book is that the oft-changing political fortunes of the Christian kingdoms determined the development of the diocese during this period. As a frontier see, Calahorra was initially strongly favoured by the crown of Navarre in the decade after its recovery. But too close a tie with one royal partner, would prove somewhat detrimental when power shifted to another, first in the form of Alfonso VI of Castile, then, once Calahorra had established a Castilian identity, with the appearance of Alfonso I of Aragon, largely unwilling to allow the see to share in the greater benefits of his conquest. The see made hay in the 1150s, while the *Infante* Sancho shone in the kingdom of Nájera, and the Almohad advance in the south allowed Rodrigo Cascante, in alliance with Alfonso VIII of Castile, to pursue his territorial advance in the north, until late on, when Alfonso II of Aragon looked the better option for the bishop. This book is at its strongest when describing the fluctuating political fortunes both of the diocese and the various kingdoms.

While Calahorra was subject to the contests of kings it was perhaps surprisingly