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Un palmeral es su yo

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FROM THE EDITOR

I often say that it is an honor to be able to serve our readers and our profession as Editor of *La corónica*, but I am specially pleased and proud to have been able serve in the production of this volume. I feel that it gives the reader a good sense of who we are as a tightly connected and caring professional community. We have here a well-rounded and intellectually challenging collection of serious scholarship from around the world, with new colleagues publishing for the first time in *La corónica* and respected senior scholars who have returned to our pages to teach and share their latest research. From cover to cover we find a diversity of theoretical and methodological approaches to medieval literature, history and culture, an intelligent review and introduction to a burgeoning field, and a rigorous assessment of recent scholarship on medieval Iberia. It has been extremely satisfying to help bring all these authors together in what I hope you will discover to be an engaging and balanced publication.

In 2012 we lost a cherished mentor, and one of our most inspiring scholars. The news of María Rosa Menocal's death saddened us all, and as the new editor of *La corónica* I knew that we had to open our pages to share our sadness and celebrate the life of a beloved colleague. I want to express my sincere thanks to Lourdes Alvarez and Ryan Szpiech for putting together this eclectic cluster in memory of a pioneer who challenged all medievalists "to play the crucial role of restoring the faith of our society in the Academy's traditional responsibility to provide intellectual leadership of a compelling public nature" (6). More than a critical cluster, the collection of postcards, poems and essays is a beautiful, and sometimes provocative expression of María Rosa's capacious approach to medieval studies.

Turning now to the business of our journal, the Executive Committee of the Division of Medieval Hispanic Languages, Literatures and Cultures met at the Modern Language Association convention in Vancouver, and among many agenda items we discussed a few points that I want to share with our readers. *La corónica* states that English and Spanish are its languages of publication, but as our Editor-at-Large, George Greenia, wrote in volume 35.2, "[t]he

de la música española de finales del s. XVIII (1775-1800). Una nueva vía de investigación en la obra de L. Boccherini". *Revista de Musicología* 27.2 (2004): 699-741. *JSTOR*. Web. Septiembre 2013.

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A SEA OF STORIES: WRITINGS AND REFLECTIONS IN HONOR OF MARÍA ROSA MENOCAL

Guest Editors

LOURDES MARÍA ALVAREZ

AND

RYAN SZPIECH

on these contradictions, rather than attempt to reconcile them or imagine that only one of them can really be true. . . . [W]e should be attentive to the power of paradox and the revelations that lie in contradictions" ("The Finest Flowering" 248). This was a message she strove tirelessly to model in her scholarly career, which so uniquely embraced the paradoxical yes-and-no, the *sic et non*, of careful reading and inspiring teaching.

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This cluster includes contributions by nine of María Rosa's students, colleagues, and admirers, including five articles, a review in the form of a "brief note", an essayistic and personal "postcard-essay", and a few translations of poems by Muslims and Jews from the Iberian Peninsula.

The contributions are gathered loosely into three groups: The first two essays address one of María Rosa's perennial themes of interest, the frame-tale tradition. The last three essays address more broadly the notion of "influence" and the ways to "rethink the Arabic influence" on Spanish literature and culture. In between these clusters are two shorter, more personal pieces. The title of this collection, "A Sea of Stories", is an allusion to Salman Rushdie's *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (1990), an allegorical novel in the tradition of *1001 Nights*. The names of the protagonist, Haroun Khalifa, and his father, Rashid Khalifa, allude to the Hārūn al-Rashīd, Abbasid Caliph in Baghdad from 786-809, who was patron of the great Greek-to-Arabic translation movement that was a precursor to Iberia's later translations into Latin and Castilian, and who also appeared regularly as a character in the stories of the *1001 Nights*. Like many of Rushdie's works, the novel deals with the power of storytelling and legend as means of fighting political tyranny and social repression. This work was, along with Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh*, a favorite of María Rosa's. (I remember when she brought Rushdie to Yale to deliver the 2002 Tanner Lectures on Human Values, she organized a private lunch for students with him, and would only let us attend if we could show that we had read and digested both works.) As some of the essays deal directly with the frame-tale story tradition and the rest deal generally with other aspects of the legacy of the translation of medieval Islamic culture

to Christian and Jewish milieux, this title is also meant to gesture toward María Rosa's faith in the social relevance of the historical study of poetry and culture, and above all to the importance of narrative and storytelling in María Rosa's conception of history writing.

The first essay by David Wacks (who is, like María Rosa, a disciple and student of the late Samuel Armistead), looks at the notion of "relics" in the *Libro del caballero Zifar*. Wacks likens the opening anecdote of the text, in which Ferrant Martínez brings the remains of Cardinal Gonzalo Guidiel from Rome to Toledo, to a kind of *translatio* of cultural prestige through the "transfer" of spiritual and cultural goods to Toledo. Such a transfer is not unlike the *translatio* of cultural capital achieved through the translation of Arabic texts into Latin in Toledo in the twelfth century. Drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's discussion of "cultural capital", Wacks concludes that in both the *Zifar* and in Alfonsine and post-Alfonsine Castilian culture more generally, "the literary representation of the traffic in relics and in translations are symbolic tools for the construction of a uniquely Castilian intellectual and political identity in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries".

The second essay by one of María Rosa's students Juan Pablo Rodríguez Argente, also looks at the *Zifar*, taking it as "a defense of a Toledan identity". Viewing the text on both a religious level and on a social one, Rodríguez Argente notes the particular importance of the figure of Gonzalo Pérez Guidiel (ca. 1238-ca. 1299), a descendant of the "mozarabic" *Banu Ḥārith* family in Toledo who became archbishop of the city in 1280. Like Wacks, the author focuses on the implications of the prologue to the *Zifar*, in which the cardinal's body is brought back to Toledo. Noting the important details about the reception of the archbishop's body by all faiths in the city, he goes on to read numerous details in the *Zifar* as commenting on or referring to the question of Mozarabic identity in Toledo. The *Zifar* emerges as "una de las pocas voces que surgen del entorno mozárabe" in the city, a valorization of Toledo's Mozarabic element on the eve of its assimilation and disappearance in subsequent centuries.

The third contribution is by María Rosa's former colleague at Yale Univeristy,

Oscar Martín. It constitutes a personal yet scholarly reflection on her English edition of the *Song of the Cid* (Penguin, 2009). Martín considers a number of the various editions and English translations of the Cid that have been published since 1975, beginning with Ian Michael and Rita Hamilton's English version published in Manchester in 1975, and later republished by Penguin. He contrasts this with the recent edition published by Penguin in 2009 containing a new translation by Burton Raffel and introduction and extensive notes by María Rosa. Martín observes how this new edition turns the reading of the poem away from the traditional concerns over its historicity and poetic form to focus on how its interpretation in the twentieth century –politically motivated and ideologically charged– has determined the reception of the Cid as a particularly Christian figure and nationalist hero at once violent and anti-Muslim. Reading against the tide of this traditional image of the Cid, María Rosa's presentation stresses the multiconfessional and fluid cultural and linguistic world that undergirds the story. Most strikingly, Martín points out how María Rosa's own reading of the Cid hinges on the concept of exile – a theme that runs throughout María Rosa's work and finds its most eloquent voice in her 1994 book *Shards of Love*. Martín's sensitive and astute observations show us how this edition of the Cid –María Rosa's last book and one of her last publications– develops and successfully punctuates the conceptual work of her writing over the previous two decades by reprising this theme in a critically original and deeply personal way.

While the first three essays all consider aspects of the Castilian canon up to the fourteenth centuries, the last three look more broadly at other aspects of the reception of Arabic culture through translation, the rededication of monuments, and fiction. These last three begin with an essay by María Rosa's student S.J. Pearce who considers the enigmatic Hebrew preface affixed to the Hebrew translation of the Arabic *Treatise on the Doctrine of Resurrection* (*Maqāla fī teḥiyyat ha-metim*), a work ascribed to Moses Maimonides and understood as a self-defense against attacks by Maimonides' critics. The preface is attributed to an unknown figure, one Joseph ben Joel, and describes the alleged process of translation of the original from Arabic to Hebrew,

but it then seems to fictionalize this process by claiming that the Hebrew was translated back into Arabic and that this Arabic was finally translated into the Hebrew version we now possess. This Joseph ben Joel thus offers "a tortured, twisted history of four retranslations and the spectacular loss of text that necessitated them". As Pearce shows us, the text seems to offer a comment on the symbolic value of Arabic among Andalusī Jews of the thirteenth century, a value that also provoked a sort of anxiety of influence. By tracing the "tortured" invention of this false translation history, Pearce also shows how translation itself was valued as a redemptive process that was deeply implicated in the articulation of cultural identity among Jews just as it was for contemporary Christians in Iberia. Most importantly, Pearce's fascinating and little-known story speaks to one of María Rosa's most strongly held, Castro-esque arguments: that all of the cultures of Iberia were products of translation and transfer, and that it was the claims to purity, pedigree, and orthodoxy that led ultimately to the destruction of its many intertwined worlds.

The next essay by Gregory Hutcheson dovetails very logically with Pearce's story by tracing the history and fate of one of María Rosa's favorite Toledan monuments, the "Mezquita del Cristo de la Luz". Erected as the *Bāb al-Mardūm* neighborhood mosque in 999 during the period of the Cordoban caliphate, the building is one of the few remaining Muslim structures in Toledo, having survived the vicissitudes of time in part by being converted into a Christian church known as *La Virgin de la luz* in 1187, a century after the conquest of the city in the late eleventh century. Hutcheson considers the tangled and confused history of the monument and its various stages of archeological recovery and restoration beginning in the nineteenth century and continuing to the present, including the curious phenomenon of Arabic graffiti left behind by recent Muslim visitors. By tracing "efforts to recover the site's past imaginatively or selectively in the service of contemporary agendas", Hutcheson shows how the ambiguous and historically layered nature of the site has been simplified in the interest of its modern value as a tourist icon of Toledo's alleged "three cultures". A more nuanced reading allows us to see the paradoxical value of the site as "an ongoing series of

scripted and unscripted encounters" produced over the course of Spain's history.

The final essay by María Rosa's student Anita Savo turns to *Don Quijote*, and considers the oft-treated question of the Arabic legacy in Cervantes through the question of the significance of eggplants in the novel. While the eggplant (*berenjena*) is certainly tied to the common interpretation of the name of Cide Hamete Benengeli, Cervantes' fictitious Arabic alter-ego to whom he attributes the text, Savo's study shows that "the eggplant is replete with other cultural, etymological and medicinal connotations". Not only does the ersatz author derive his name from the eggplant, but some of the characters themselves all "bear the sign of the eggplant" in the text. Most interestingly, the plant has long been shown to be connected with madness and an imbalance of humors, making its place in Don Quijote's story all the more suggestive. The upshot of Savo's careful and perceptive consideration of the eggplant is to show how "Cervantes reminds us of the stakes involved in assuming a name and playing a role". This commentary has important consequences for the reading of Don Quijote's story, and even more for understanding Cervantes' broader arguments regarding truth, fiction, and history.

These original, penetrating studies, all reflecting in one way or another María Rosa's vision of history and literature, are embedded (in frame-tale style) within three other contributions, including two translations of poetry and a personal reflection. The first translation, which follows this introduction and opens the cluster, includes four short selections from the *Proverbios morales* of Sem Tob de Carrión, rendered freely and beautifully into English by Peter Cole. Cole was a close friend and collaborator of María Rosa's at Yale's Whitney Humanities Center, which she directed, and she often assigned his translations of medieval Hebrew poets of Sefarad in her classes. These selections, gathered under the title "More for Santob", are taken from the recent volume of poetry by Cole, *The Invention of Influence* (New Directions, 2014), which Cole dedicated to María Rosa. The other poem dedicated to María Rosa, which concludes this special issue, is by another of her longtime collaborators and friends, Michael Sells, with whom

she co-edited (also with Raymond Scheindlin) *The Literature of Al-Andalus* (2000), one of the volumes of the *Cambridge History of Arabic Literature.* This poem by Andalusi sufi Ibn al-ʿArabī, which Sells translated from the Arabic, is taken from Ibn al-ʿArabī's book of mystical love poetry *Turjumān al-Ashwāq* (*Translation of Desires*).

Together with the opening translations by Cole, these poems provide a frame for the academic articles within. The articles are also divided into clusters by Martín's brief note and by the creative interlude contributed by Israel Burshatin, also a longtime colleague and friend of María Rosa, who has written a number of moving vignettes (which he has called "postcards") in dialogue with her memory and her legacy. The use of these creative pieces to organize the frame for the literary and historical studies is meant to echo María Rosa's own vision and way of working, not only by forcing us to read our history and criticism through the lens of poetry, as she always did, but also to make this cluster in her memory be as much an offering of the heart as of the mind. These are words that María Rosa would find moving, and they capture an echo of the beauty of María Rosa's own critical voice. Like the *Cambridge History* volume co-edited by María Rosa, which ends with Sells' translation of the famous "Qasīda in nūn" of Cordoban poet Ibn Zaydūn, the translation by Sells here concludes the cluster on a high note of sublime longing, a dedication of love to María Rosa's memory. Ibn ʿArabī's words are a call to us all to carry on María Rosa's legacy by nurturing and defending her vision in our work and thought:

For her, we'll shade together from the noonday heat
in her tent, in secret, and fulfill the promise we made.

***

Despite the variety and richness of its articles, reflections, and poetry, this cluster can only but gesture to a few of the many aspects of María Rosa's work that stood out as memorable and worthy of further discussion. We offer them here as a tribute to María Rosa's profound impact on hispanomedieval studies and above all as a token of our deep gratitude for all that María Rosa has given us –and given so many others– though her life and her work. Above all, we offer them as the beginning of a conversation – one with each

other, with students, with our sources, with ourselves. And of course, as she would insist, with the past and the future, with our memory and our hope and our unique place in time.

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MORE FOR SANTOB

(DE CARRIÓN, 14TH-C. CASTILE)

Peter Cole
YALE UNIVERSITY

1. everyone's so high

Everyone's so high on "Yes."
Nothing has made me happier, though,
than the day I asked my lover if
she had "another"—and she said "No."

2. spell in praise

A choir of quatrains
in praise of the servant
who asks of me nothing
for what he does.

For years he's afforded me
spectacular favors,
as though in fact he
served out of love.

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"UN PALMERAL ES SU YO":

SIX POSTCARDS FOR MARÍA ROSA MENOCAL

Israel Burshatin

HAVERFORD COLLEGE

Un palmeral es su yo
y otra vez la eternidad
José Lezama Lima

1

In My Age of Babble

María Rosa Menocal

Standing where a hallway meets a staircase in an MLA convention hotel, you are there to greet and embrace, a "strategic location" if there ever was one, for collegial affection and earnest criticality.

In the opening chapter of *Shards of Love*, María Rosa Menocal assumes a resolutely Caribbean vantage point from which to critique with historical rigor some of the "old chestnuts" that abound in conventional

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understandings of literary periodization. Under scrutiny is the normative historicity enshrined in such terms as Medieval and Renaissance, which often mute the cacophony of languages and voices that freely rang out before the onset of rigidly hegemonic cultural formations. Never one to mince words, she praises "bastardy" as a way to recuperate cultural hybridity (27). The task of historicizing these other voices is no less compelling in our post 9-11 predicament of heightened xenophobia.[1] As a critic who consistently maintained a balance between the metropole and the periphery, Menocal would no doubt have appreciated the audacious paradox that was Francisco Delicado, a current scholarly concern of mine.[2] In the comments that follow I adopt Delicado's dialogic spirit and foreground a quality he offers in common with Menocal's vindication of the exilic condition. The sixteenth century expatriate Andalusian writer, editor, and priest conceived an eponymous protagonist and alter ego, "mi señora Lozana", who speaks across the centuries with uncanny relevance. Most exemplary is Lozana's ability to recognize frontiers the better to transgress them.

Menocal performs her own brand of *cubanía* or Cubanness, one tinged with a lyricism evoked through the figure of James Joyce. From the unassailable *atalaya* of a global Caribbean consciousness she shares an important lesson in Latin American literature imparted by her distinguished colleague at Yale, Roberto González Echevarría. "Our shared exile", she writes, provided her with the necessary affective and intellectual toolkit to appreciate most fully his study of Nicolás Guillén. "Such is the stature of Guillén as tribal poet, and this too is shared with Martí, that I did, in fact read [González Echevarría's article] because I had a distinctly Joycean singsong memory of some fragments of his verses, sung to me, no doubt, in my age of babble" (*Shards* 28).

[1] For Gregory Hutcheson, the events of 2001 marked a turning point in our scholarly practice: "Where I found most common cause with Menocal was in the sudden requirement felt by many Hispanomedievalists in the US to renegotiate the matter and message of their research" (141).

[2] See Burshatin.

2

A Land of Perpetual Leave-Taking

Henry Kamen

Do you remember that MLA in San Francisco? After the swings of tedium and excitement peculiar to large academic conferences, we repaired to a very dark and inviting bar for a nightcap "entre cubanos" –you, José Piedra, and I. At one point our conversation went down memory lane, not surprising given our origins, diverse as they are. I was age twelve when we boarded a non-stop flight from Havana to New York, the son of parents who had experienced prior displacements from Poland and Lithuania, fleeing from a series of twentieth century catastrophes, such as the collapse of multi-ethnic empires, rise of cruel nationalisms, and the Soviet and Nazi occupations. With the passage of time, screen memories –in my case, those mediated by childhood photos taken in Santiago and Havana by my mother with her Leica– assimilate the recollected fragments of lived experience. As I look back to that laughter-filled night in a bar in San Francisco your Cuban memories strike me as more distinctly familial and oral, part of a rich tradition that encompasses histories that also record your family's sagas. You and José both relayed funny episodes recounted by "señoras" in the family, embroidering and gossiping, swaying back and forth perched on their rocking chairs in the Havana Yacht Club, and later recounted "en el exilio". Chance, history, and family ties had uniquely placed you where you could capture the swings not just of those iconic "caoba" and "mimbre" loungers. Possessed of a Cuban or Caribbean double consciousness, you read generously and profusely, in the manner of a hybrid subject, equal parts metropolitan and peripheral, whose capacity for empathy is palpable.

In *The Disinherited,* Henry Kamen examines the shaping of Spain's painful modernity in relation to successive generations of peninsular exiles. Focusing on a staggeringly long span of five centuries' duration, from 1492 until Franco's death in the mid 1970's, he privileges two foundational traumas--the conquest of Granada and the expulsion of Jews. These two Iberian catastrophes haunt a cultural memory in which the homeland is synonymous with "a land of perpetual leave-taking", a place where "exile

became the spectre that haunted [its] cultural destiny" (4).

3

In fall of 1981, while you were an assistant professor at UPenn and I was in my second year on the Haverford faculty, I hosted a visit by Colin Smith. Speaking on Per Abbat, whom he theorized was the author and not just a copyist of the extant manuscript of the Poema de mio Cid, *he also challenged, not too persuasively, the considerable evidence that supports the oral-formulaic genesis and transmission of pan-Hispanic balladry and epic. Your intervention after the talk was an exemplary performance of impassioned scholarship; my students were awestruck. A more subdued version of your remarks appears in your edition of the "Cid": "The peculiarities of the mutilated manuscript have, from the outset, seemed to invite persistent and divisive disputes. . ." ("Introduction" xx).*

4

> . . .con los cristianos será cristiana, y con los jodíos, jodía, y con los turcos, turca, y con los hidalgos, hidalga, y con los ginoveses, ginovesa, y con los franceses, francesa, que para todos tiene salida" (M9, 38).
>
> Francisco Delicado

Delicado's *Lozana Andaluza* positions itself transnationally as it stages scenes in the lives of Iberian ex-pats in Rome on the verge of a prophesied "destruction" by Charles V's imperial army. Hidden from history over the span of three centuries, *Lozana* came to light only in the mid 1800s when the unique surviving copy was discovered in Vienna. Its emergence in an age determined to write narrowly coherent national literary histories meant that *Lozana* was initially accorded the blinkered logics of traditionalist scholarship. Among these was Menéndez Pelayo's. His warning against reading such a scandalous and pornographic work was absolute; not even philologists were exempt. Confronted by Roman scenes of speaking that so richly reproduce the "babble" of early modern Iberian "vivencias", *Lozana*'s readers also encounter a full panoply of ethnic types, dialects, costumes, and foods marked by such diverse filiations as *converso*, *marrano*, *morisco*,

Andalusian, Catalan, Castilian, African-Hispanic; these are enlivened with dissident genders and sexualities graphically depicted. Given the work's culturally prolix quality, it should not surprise us that scholarship has at times stubbornly resisted its piquant charms. In the case of Arabic loan-words or Andalusi cultural referents, Federico Corriente has argued persuasively that even the best intentioned and most rigorous efforts often fail to recognize or properly to contextualize Muslim derived traditions, while favoring instead to generalize the extent of *converso* or *marrano* clues as the necessary and sufficient model of cultural diversity (Corriente 64). Even if we are not fully persuaded by Corriente's assertion that Delicado's praise for Peña de Martos, his "patria chica", is a clue to the author's Morisco origins, he does offer a useful corrective to the lamentable habit of treating Iberian cultural identities as singular and discrete events, rather than as the messy agents of what Menocal calls "bastardy". Corriente's critique shines a light on an often forgotten aspect of *converso* cultural practices, their imbrication in Muslim or *mudéjar*-informed networks or traditions. He goes on to challenge the very notion of *cultura conversa*, "puesto que vemos que no hay tal, ni la constituyen las alusiones culinarias y profesionales, puesto que eran compartidas con mínimas diferencias por ambas comunidades, ya en la Península Ibérica, y luego en el exilio" (Corriente 64). Rather than assuming a strictly Muslim or *converso* or *marrano* cultural sphere, he reminds us of "la casi total adopción por los judíos andalusíes de la cultura islámica" (Corriente 60). Furthermore, the convergence of cultural habits, cuisine, and other practices found in *Lozana* evoke those of Mudéjar communities, which witnessed with extraordinary richness accomplishments in astrology, physiognomy, and medicine. Given the importance of prophetic truths in Lozana and the extent to which they recapitulate the destruction motif associated with the "loss" of Visigothic Spain, Corriente proposes an alternate referent, the Morisco tradition of prophetic discourse, "los jofores moriscos" (60).

5

> Anyone within rock who doesn't know Layla is an ignoramus. It is music I have been listening to, and singing with, for more

than twenty years and which I would unflinchingly describe as central to my own culture (*Shards* 149).
María Rosa Menocal

You are not going to believe this: in the midst of writing these postcards and brief commentaries I take Kelly Drive out to campus from Center City Philadelphia. The car radio is tuned to WXPN, your alma mater's station. I barely hear the title of the next song, but there is the inimitable Eric Clapton, and the radio display reads, "Layla".

6

. . . una muchacha viene a pedirle cuentas al narrador de por qué la trata así y de por qué la hace vivir esa serie de aventuras.
Severo Sarduy

Among the most sympathetic and perceptive readings of *Lozana* in the course of its twentieth-century reception are those from fellow writers of fiction whose own exemplary locations make them exponents of postcoloniality *avant la lettre*, at home in both the metropole and the periphery. Novelists such as Juan Goytisolo and Severo Sarduy have claimed Delicado as a model for their own experiments with both narrative form and the politics of nationhood and gender.

In an interview first published in 1977 by Emir Rodríguez Monegal, Sarduy recalls a 1951 essay by the Cuban critic, José Rodríguez Feo, co-founder of the pivotal journal, *Orígenes*, in which he published "Un excéntrico: Francisco Delicado". Sarduy credits his compatriot for acquainting him with Delicado's inspiring use of boundary-crossing devices, such as metalepsis, by which a narrator suddenly pops into the diegesis. Sarduy's account of what I would like to call Delicado's frontier re-enactments across inscapes and worlds has its own unique charm. The Paris-based Cuban writer offers a clear and unpretentious account of devices that usually seem abstruse. Sarduy also infuses the episode with a modern, transnational, and unmistakably Cuban worldliness: "Ya José Rodríguez Feo hablaba en la revista *Orígenes*, de *La Lozana Andaluza*, una novela española del siglo XVI. Ocurre allí que el personaje de una muchacha viene a pedirle cuentas al narrador de por qué

la trata así y de por qué la hace vivir esa serie de aventuras" (Rodríguez Monegal 1804). While the *Orígenes* reference was more precisely calibrated (Rodríguez Feo 304-305) –Lozana speaks not directly with *Autor*, as Sarduy recalls it, but with a friend of his, Silvano, who was acquainted with the writer at home, back in Andalucía– Sarduy's metafictional point is well taken. She does, in fact, ask Silvano why would the author adopt a different birthplace, disavowing Córdoba (Lozana's own home town) and claiming instead Peña de Martos as his "patria chica" (Delicado, M47 230-236); a question about one's origins would not be an insignificant one in inquisitorial Spain and one which is a common preoccupation for many of the displaced Iberians in *Lozana*. As Catalina Quesada Gómez notes in a study that traces Genette's notion of metalepsis in contemporary Latin American writing, metafictional games, such as an author chatting with one of his or her protagonists, call into question the stability of power relations as they are expressed in discourse. I would add that these boundary crossing encounters presuppose a dialectic of violence and/ or symbiosis, a process that maps with uncanny pertinence unto notions of *convivencia*. While Quesada Gómez refers to the slippage across mimetic categories as "continuas filtraciones" (295), the Cuban vernacular expression of "colarse", to sneak in past vigilant guardians, captures more accurately the tenor of Delicado's Roman *dolce vita* as well as Sarduy's own transnational *cubanía*. Passages across discursive zones emblematize in Delicado the dynamism of both author and Lozana. Like Rampín and many of the *Retrato*'s scores of actors, they resist univocal cultural locations or stable identity positions. With her customary eloquence, Lozana takes a page out of the lives of prostitutes and promotes it to a general good -- "las putas cada tres meses se mudan por parecer fruta nueva" (Delicado M34, 173). And, she adds, what is good for courtesans is good for the nation, and worthy of the Lord's protection: "Señor, quien se muda, Dios lo ayuda" (173). As Menocal observed regarding El Cid's banishment, displacement can also afford "opportunities for triumph and redemption" (*Song of the Cid* xvi); there are, indeed, undeniable "virtues of exile" (Szpiech).

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IN A BETTER AND OLDER LANGUAGE:

THE REDEMPTIVE POTENTIAL OF ARABIC AND ITS TRANSLATED FICTIONS

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"The dead shall be raised".
— I Corinthians 15:15, inscribed in the lintel
of the Grove Street Cemetery gate, New Haven, CT

A man in possession of a strange, esoteric and rare medieval manuscript written in an indecipherable old language is approached by a literature-loving friend who beseeches him to make the incredible text accessible by translating it and adding a suitable prologue. It was once a widely-read and -regarded text, but now, owing to social, religious and intellectual controversy, most of the copies have been destroyed –burned or sold for rag– but this hardly matters as so very few people would have been able to read it in its original language, anyway. The man gives in and labors away translating – or does he? The manuscript tells a story of books and death; and

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