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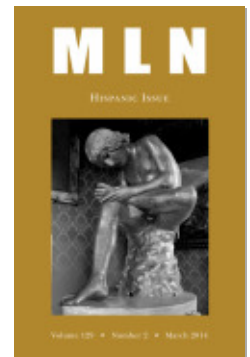
## Rome as Andalusia: Bodies and Borders in Francisco Delicado's Retrato de la Lozana Andaluza

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# Rome as Andalusia: Bodies and Borders in Francisco Delicado's *Retrato de la Lozana Andaluza*



Israel Burshatin

Francisco Delicado's attention to thresholds and crossings, both geographic and (para)textual, combined with the prevalence of speech in the novel, imbue his writing with a heightened sense of circumstance that has led critics time and again to hunt for intermedial metaphors to register the work's immediacy: "It is almost as if Delicado had equipped himself with a tape recorder and plunged into the streets and houses of Pozzo Bianco, catching all the nuances of the various languages and dialects to be heard in this district of Rome" (MacKay 179). The author certainly encourages us to regard his representational prowess as uniquely honed by experience and rendered in the language of Andalusian women:

Y si quisieren reprehender que por qué no van munchas palabras en perfecta lengua castellana, digo que, siendo andaluz y no letrado, y escribiendo para darme solacio y pasar mi fortuna, que en este tiempo el Señor me había dado, conformaba mi hablar al sonido de mis orejas, que es la lengua materna y su común hablar entre mujeres.<sup>1</sup>

A deeply personal work, we are meant to see it as emanating from the writer's own "physical torments" while convalescing from the French

<sup>1</sup>Delicado, "Cómo se excusa el autor en la fin del retrato de la Lozana en laude de las mujeres" 327; this and all subsequent citations from *Retrato de la Lozana andaluza* are from the edition by Joset and Gernert, and appear with section title or *mamotreto* number, followed by page number. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are the author's.

Pox, “siendo atormentado de una grande y prolija enfermedad, parecía que me espaciaba con estas vanidades” (329). The malady’s “prolix” quality reverberates in a critical reception that attends to Delicado’s bid for intimacy as a multi-media event. Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo’s comparison to silent film pornography is one such early and astonishing example. The traditionalist historian not only identified with those that “quisieren reprehender,” but effectively banished *Lozana* from his archive of Spanish imperial letters (Cortez 288). While he urged scholars to pay it no mind—“no es tarea para ningún crítico decente”—he went on to describe it as “más bien un cinematógrafo de figurillas obscenas que pasan haciendo muecas y cabriolas, en diálogos incoherentes” (Menéndez Pelayo 54). His prim censure helps us to locate the defining features of Delicado’s redrawn frontier worldliness, in which eventfulness and affect combine at a key historical juncture, just prior to the Sack of Rome, 1527.

The author’s dedication asserts the work’s circumstantial quality by conjuring a well-appointed retreat in which reading is synonymous with the charms of “la señora Lozana” herself: “encomendando a los discretos lectores el placer y gasajo que de leer a la señora Lozana les podrá suceder” (6). From plush domesticity we proceed to an erotics of space associated with Iberian expats in Rome.<sup>2</sup> These seductive bids for entry into a precarious community of translated Spaniards assert *Lozana*’s worldliness. For Edward Said, the articulated nexus between the novel and the world is one of Cervantes’s abiding legacies: “the western novelistic tradition is full of examples of texts insisting not only upon their circumstantial reality but also upon their status as already fulfilling a function, a reference, or a meaning in the world. Cervantes and Cide Hamete come immediately to mind” (Said 44). In *Lozana*, which is often cited as a precursor in the use of fictional or narrated authorial figures, the worldliness of its condition extends to gendered and regional speech, as well as the architecture of the printed book and the culture of the early modern print shop. The authorial persona acquires cross-class dimensions as a writer who also speaks as a more humble corrector, but one very much in his element in the book at hand. Having survived the occupation of Rome by the riotous imperial armies of Charles V, he relocated to Venice where he published *Lozana* and was also employed as corrector and editor.

<sup>2</sup>Joset follows Covarrubias’s *agasajo*: “apacible y agradable acogimiento que uno hace a otro cuando le recibe y hospeda en su casa” (n6.15, 373). Bubnova also explicates ‘plazer’ (120).

In the latter role he dubbed himself *el Delicado* in his new prologue to *Primaleón* (1534), thus transforming his name into an epithet.<sup>3</sup> Anthony Grafton captures the interstitial nature of correctors, characterizing them as “hermaphroditic figures who both set type and read proofs” (75). They were “Bartleby-like” by virtue of a cultural location betwixt and between material and intellectual production; these “poor devils of literature,” were “educated men [but] earned a low income and possessed little standing” (Grafton 75). Unlike most of these poor devils, *el Delicado* recalls his own authorial antecedents in his “Introducción del tercero libro” of *Primaleón*, in which he issues a public confession of a linguistic transgression committed several years earlier, in his own *Lozana*. Inculcating himself as one of these “nuevos romancistas” who stray from “la gramática española que es encerrada en aquella grande y famosa historia de *Amadís de Gaula*,” he nevertheless justifies his transmission of the provincial and gendered idiom of his now lost Roman neighborhood by appealing to an ethnographic truth that must be told (ed. Perugini 448). In a paratext inserted in a chivalric romance he comes out not only as *Lozana*’s author (a fact withheld from the extant *princeps*) but one committed to maintaining the idiom of his distant homeland: “cuando compuse La Lozana en el común hablar de la polida Andalucía, mas hícelo por mejor la rrender en la manera de su hablar” (ed. Perugini 448). Of equal weight but not as explicit is his adoption of the print milieu as an alternate homeland, producing an authorial confession from the relative safety of a copyist-corrector’s prologue. He thus privileges orality as much as the culture of correction. His worldliness is equally expansive, aspiring not only to control events, but also to loosen the bonds of linguistic decorum and desire. This apparent openness belies a more restrictive program: “Surely the novelistic imagination has always included this unwillingness to cede control over the text in the world, or to release it from the discursive and human obligations of all human presence; hence the desire (almost a principal action of many novels) to turn the text back, if not directly into speech, then at least into circumstantial as opposed to meditative duration” (Said 44). Viewed in this light, the novel-in-dialogue form inspired by Fernando de Rojas’s *Celestina*, the model of choice heralded in *Lozana*’s title page, emerges as more than an advertising gimmick or index of authorial envy, for Delicado’s valorization of speech expresses a transnational

<sup>3</sup>“Introducción del primero libro de Primaleón hecha por el Delicado en este dechado de caballeros corrigiéndolo en Venecia,” ed. Perugini 433; see also Lucía Megías 233, 374.

ethos. But we should heed Said's caveat regarding heteroglossia as synonymous with a benign politics of representation (45). Delicado's version of polyphonic voicing advances not only diversity and playfulness, but also the bitter lessons of worldly disenchantment as the ultimate sense of things. Regardless of how convincing this bid for closure may appear to us, it is certainly at odds with the persistence of thresholds and new beginnings favored by *el Delicado* in his Bartleby-like persona. It is this friction between the continual appearance of paratextual liminal spaces and the transactional openings they afford on one hand and the "encerrada" of an absolute moral condemnation of "Roma putana" (M12, 49) on the other that accounts for much of the work's fugitive quality.

For all its vehemence, *Lozana's* exemplarity is but one of its strands, albeit one that draws considerable power from its unequivocal assertion of prophetic truths. Freely assembling characters high and low on the social scale, from exiles and prostitutes to princes of the church, the succession of Roman scenes also features an author figure who traverses the boundaries of text and paratext as they might be experienced by an astute reader, encountering "multiple points of entry, interpretation, and contestation" (Smith and Wilson 6). The frontispiece furnishes a graphic illustration of one such liminal passage by depicting some of the actors chronicled within; but the implied correspondence between image and narrative is not quite there, and it is this highly productive syncopation that we will see emerge in tandem with the work's explicit interest in ethnographic and historical documentation.<sup>4</sup>

The virtue of the frontispiece is of a different order. The gondola, passengers, banners, and titles enact a keen sense of displacement that is appropriate for both the depicted voyagers and the speaking subjects. In Delicado's richly conceived zones of transnational contact, frontiers are writ large and comprise itineraries that are rendered both literally and figuratively, the latter encoding an embodied sense of the world.<sup>5</sup> Border thinking and feeling also extend to the signifying possibilities of the book as an object comprising thresholds that open the way to diverse ways of being. Shuttling between discursive zones, the author, especially, exemplifies the dynamism of a subject who resists a univocal or stable identity. Acutely aware of the resources at its disposal, *Lozana* renders its truths obliquely, as if being far from home endows Iberian

<sup>4</sup> Delicado's front page is reproduced in the editions by Joset and Gernert (1) and Allaire (165).

<sup>5</sup> Delicado's Mediterranean place names harbor a relentlessly sexual subtext (Fontes 171–201).

transplants with a heightened capacity for both invention and distortion. Their ethnicity is as varied as it is also frequently undecidable. Some, like Rampín, seem to sort out neatly in terms familiar to those who in early modern Iberia concerned themselves with determining pure or tainted bloodlines or the extent of backsliding into alleged old habits of caste or religion. In Spanish Rome, we meet some who fled for fear of attracting inquisitorial attention. Others, like Lozana, defy the attribution of essentializing signs of identity or are elite figures far from home, such as a certain Monseñor, who is passionate about Andalusian cookery.<sup>6</sup> His is an especially interesting case since his nostalgia is expressed above all in culinary terms and in the distinctive, almost untranslatable language of regional cuisine. Upon meeting Lozana, he is eager to confirm that she is a fellow native of Córdoba and asks: “¿Sois de nuestra tierra?” (M 28, 146). For her part, Lozana is out to impress a fellow *andaluz* by rattling off some of the dishes in her varied Mediterranean culinary repertoire. Only *salmorejo* strikes the right chord for Monseñor, thrilled even just by the sound of the familiar but now seldom heard word: “¡Cuánto tiempo ha que yo no sentí decir salmorejo!” (M 28, 146).<sup>7</sup> His seduction by Lozana’s skilled deployment of the “mother-tongue” and culinary name-dropping—clinched by a promise to come and cook for him—brings to mind Monique Joly’s assertion of the primacy of the gustatory in a literature of affect often associated with Moriscos that exploits “la relación cargada de afectividad del hombre con la comida” (128). Monseñor’s culinary yearnings place him alongside his less privileged countrymen for whom cultural memory is both a joy and a frightening return to the catastrophes of Iberian history. Latent or casually recalled, the phantoms of the past flare up in the speech of several characters, Lozana and Rampín especially. These commonalities aside, ethnic or regional solidarity is a slippery concept, for dis-identification is an abiding element in the immigrants’ sociability.

Delicado criticism has privileged the *Portrait’s* chronicle of exile, especially for *conversos* or *marranos*. This has led to much speculation about who is or is not a *converso*, usually in connection with the author’s own obscure background. As illuminating as these attempts

<sup>6</sup>Lozana herself, argues Bubnova, is not “judía,” and cozies up to *marranos* only “cuando le conviene” (197). Perugini identifies the character of Monseñor with Cardinal Bernardino López de Carvajal, whose nephew awarded Delicado the vicarage of Cabezuola, in Plasencia (n910, 166).

<sup>7</sup>“Un cierto género de salsa o escabeche con que suelen aderezarse los conejos, echándoles pimienta, sal y vinagre y otras especias” (Joset n146.14, 450).

might be to fix the nature of minority profiling during a time of great human suffering and rising imperial power, they can also distort our perceptions of the constructed nature of the Other in early modern epistemologies (Nirenberg, "Forum").<sup>8</sup> Of greater interest, I believe, is the *Portrait's* rendering of genders, ethnicities, and historical memory in the act of becoming, as they are shaped *in situ*, both in the pages of the book and in a Rome that is not only historically distinctive, but also refashioned out of subjective experience. Rather than assuming fixed identity positions or prefabricated cultural locations we might easily tag as Morisco, Jewish, *marrano*, Old or New Christian, the work offers instead myriad "vanidades" for its doomed hedonists.

As we will see in greater detail, the mismatch of image and text presented in the frontispiece is but one example of lives that hew to frontier sites repositioned in a wider symbolic, often Mediterranean, frame in which the pertinence of both written and visual texts veers to "folds, creases, and detours, where sense runs in multilateral movement, always falling short of the conclusion" (Chambers 18). Misplaced letters, jumbled lines of text, and coded speech are very much in the minds of correctors like Delicado, and these are made explicit in *Lozana* as well as in its avowed precursor, *Celestina*. As *Lozana* declares to a disappointed client, "corruta estaría la letra, no sería yo" (M 23, 115).<sup>9</sup> Errant meanings, double-entendres, coded speech and polyvalent gestural language all contribute to a symbolic economy predicated on the artful commodification of pleasure, beauty, and health.<sup>10</sup> But just as Spanish expats share a cultural memory steeped in a hermeneutics of suspicion, which they liberally apply to each other, in this early modern version of Roman *dolce vita* (Surtz 180), a political and human catastrophe lurks just ahead with numerous forecasts of doomsday scheduled precisely to occur in 1527, almost as a planned detonation. The prophecies thus retrace the originary "loss of Spain" motif—"cuando se perdió España" (M47, 233)—the quasi-mythical and nation-defining catastrophe understood to have been wrought by Muslim invaders. The trope of destruction associated with the legendary origins of multi-ethnic Iberia is a persistent one, infecting not only a putative point of origin, but also into the future, as in one of the closing segment titles: "Esta epístola añadió el autor el año de mil e quinientos e veinte e siete, vista la *destrucción* de Roma" (335,

<sup>8</sup>For the erasure of Arabic and Muslim culture in Delicado scholarship, see Corriente.

<sup>9</sup>"Hijos, estará corrupta la letra: por treces, tres" (Rojas 144).

<sup>10</sup>For Harst, "the discordance between text and illustration" remains a "paradoxical knot" that participates in an erotics of reading (183).



emphasis added). Significantly, both author and Lozana share common origins enriched by a profusion of relics of Spain's foundational *destrucción*. Silvano, a character privileged by his close association with the author, relates that antiquities are still being discovered in the author's adopted home town of Peña de Martos, a location placed alongside Lozana's own Cordoban birthplace in the work's imaginative geography, as shown in the illustration accompanying Mamotreto 47 (Figure 1). Given the rich holdings of the Peña, both author and creature are fated to experience trauma as a return. Hidden within the Peña are relics of illustrious provenance, such as Alexander the Great, Romans, Hercules, Visigothic collapse, and of more recent vintage, clashes along the frontier of the Muslim Kingdom of Granada. The historical collection enhances the filiations of both author and protagonist and brings them into the aura of chivalric histories: "Esta fortísima peña es tan alta que se vee Córdoba, que está catorce leguas de allí. Esta fue sacristía y conserva *cuando se perdió España*, al pie de la cual se han hallado ataútes de plomo y marmóreos escritos de letras gólicas y egipciasas. . ." (M47, 233). Anticipating the discovery of Granada's spurious relics, the "libros plúmbeos" in their unfamiliar script, the Martos inscriptions require editors and translators if they are to yield their meaning. In a similar manner, the impending "loss" or "destruction" of Rome requires the transplants' intervention if we are to grasp the uncanny nature of a "chronicle of a death foretold."<sup>11</sup>

So, what sort of place is Delicado's Rome? Should we regard it solely, in Francisco Márquez Villanueva's memorable phrase, as a *tablado español*?<sup>12</sup> The siting is, I would argue, rather more contingent and open to cultural bricolage. While evocations of an Andalusian scene are key in the construction of a cultural memory in exile, the pang of a lost homeland acquires new dimensions in a semiotics of space closely tied to carnal desire. Rather than a stable site of so-called faith-

<sup>11</sup>See Burshatin ("Narratives"); for Brownlee, the juxtaposition of material culture and historical romance produces a "destabilizing effect" in Pedro de Corral, *Crónica sarracina* (119). Corral's prophetic discourse suited 15th century imperial expansion (Grieve 122). See, also, Berlin for the instrumental use of mourning and nostalgia in Corral.

<sup>12</sup>"Pero, a pesar de su fondo romano, *La lozana andaluza* no ocurre fuera de un tablado español" (Márquez Villanueva 245). For Goytisoló, that stage would already lie in ruins, "Delicado sigue evocando una España habitada por gentes de tres castas y religiones cuando la convivencia ha terminado ya y el edificio fraguado por varios siglos de tolerancia se ha derrumbado sobre las castas vencidas" (40). Joset and Gernert, on the other hand, assert the incommensurability of Rome and Spain (M24, n85, 129). For Wolfenzon nothing is lost in translation: "Córdoba es especular a Pozo Blanco" (111). The work suggests otherwise, as in Ovidio's *ninguneo* regarding Lozana's prestige, "[e]n España no fuera ni valiera nada" (M56, 279).

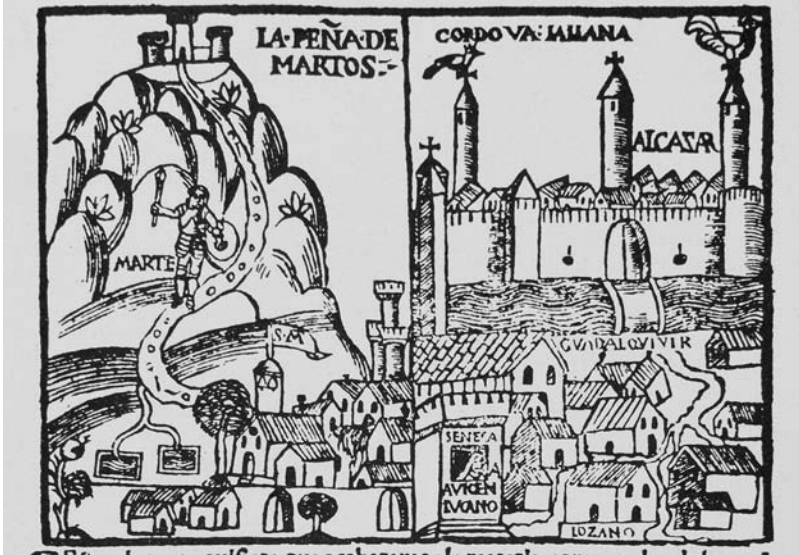


Fig. 1. *Peña de Martos* and *Córdoba la llana*. Delicado, *Retrato de la Loçana andaluza* (Venice? c. 1530; mamotreto 47, K1r, detail); this and the following image reproduce the facsimile edition of the unique copy at Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, published with permission by Tipografía Moderna /Artes Gráficas Soler, Valencia. Copy at Special Collections, Magill Library, Haverford College. Photo by Bruce Bumbarger.

ful translation, *tablado español* functions as an occupied space subject to reversibility and transgression, a threshold whose strategic value stems from its apparent friendliness to recoding. As with the opening illustration, Rome serves as an inviting liminal site to be reimagined by its cosmopolitan and garrulous residents, while also retaining the logic of its built environment.<sup>13</sup> In the convergence of memory and place, an event as ordinary in the papal capital as spotting a member of the church hierarchy walking down the street turns into an occasion for recalling less-than-exemplary churchmen back in Córdoba and for the importation of a scopic regime of cultural difference that leads to the first in a series of adumbrations of the Sack.<sup>14</sup> Rome as Andalusia is a phantasmatic site that both entices and repels.

<sup>13</sup>For Delicado's Rome see also Imperiale 30–31; 42–46.

<sup>14</sup>Edwards parses Lozana's memories of Córdoba (77–81).

Early in the narrative, just before Lozana and Rampín spend a strenuous night-and-a-day of nearly non-stop sex, the young guide mentions the year when retribution comes due for Rome's dissolute ways—"El año de veinte y siete me lo dirán" (M12, 48). More surprising is that Lozana, a recent arrival just getting to know her way around town, also sounds the alarm of collective penance ahead. Rampín blames bishops and cardinals as the main culprits for the coming disaster: "Los cardenales son aquí como los mamelucos" (48). Speaking in the manner of an Old Christian, for whom Mameluke debauchery would be a trope for unrestrained and queer sexuality, Rampín is unusually qualified to sit in judgment of behaviors he knows all too well from personal experience. The trigger for the prophetic turn is Lozana's translational take on the city and a habit of reading *a la andaluza*, as in the mirage of an arrogant Cordovan bishop. Most impressive is her affinity for the ethics of collective penance: "Por ellos padeceremos todos" (M12, 48), she predicts, thus evoking the precedent of *flagellum Dei* in Iberian historiography (Deyermond; Flesler).

The figure of synecdoche at the heart of catastrophe—a singular misdeed that results in punishment for all—evokes other such bold substitutions or crossings of thresholds, such as the perspectival portrait of the author (or more aptly, the "author function"), who moves across such discursive zones as dialogic scenes, chapter summaries, letters, etc. These ontological crossings disclose multiple facets poorly served by the unitary term, "author." By traversing the margins and spaces of the printed book, the author challenges the primacy of the fable and locates a textual boundary that, paradoxically, stands in order to be transgressed. Segmentation in discourse thus shades into a frontier imaginary transposed to a papal Rome undergoing relentless commodification. For Rampín, most of the city's inhabitants partake of the business of sex. "Es la mayor parte de Roma burdel, y le dicen: 'Roma putana'" (M 12, 49).<sup>15</sup> But if this Andalusian version of Rome is home to a multitude of "sweethearts," what role does this eroticization of the frontier play in the implied struggle for dominance, be it political or economic? David Nirenberg has addressed a similar phenomenon in the medieval Iberian frontier, where sexual fluidity, along with the anxiety it produces, is closely linked to a shifting border that serves as a contact zone for Muslims, Jews, and Christians. And strategically

<sup>15</sup>In contrast, Granada is the place for true love: "¿Qué pensáis, que estáis en Granada, do se hace por amor? Señora, aquí a peso de dineros, daca y toma, y como dicen: 'El molino andando gana,' que guayias tiene quien no puede" (M30 150).

positioned therein are prostitutes; they “came to play the role of specialists in the recognition (and ideally, the rejection) of religious difference” (“Conversion” 1075). Often marked by distinctive sumptuary restrictions, the vigilant prostitute of the borderlands emerges as connoisseur of cultural “passing.”<sup>16</sup> Although Lozana should by rights excel in the role of cultural policewoman, she mostly fails in her initial reconnaissance of Rome and, paradoxically, also enables the production of cultural critique. In that first walking tour that takes them across the city center, where Rampín points to such landmarks as la Zecca, Campo dei Fiori, Piazza Navona, the Colosseum, and Ponte Sisto, they finally reach Via dell’Orso, a street near Delicado’s own parish, S. Maria in Posterula, which was also home to a famous inn inhabited by a number of courtesans (ed. Perugini n328, 61; n317, 59). The women’s distinctive attire catches Lozana’s eye:

Lozana.—¿Y aquellas qué son? ¿Moriscas?

Rampín.—¡No, cuerpo del mundo, son romanas!

Lozana.—¿Y por qué van con aquellas almalafas?

Rampín.—No son almalafas; son baticulo o batirrabo, y paños listados.  
(M12, 49)<sup>17</sup>

Lozana’s misreading of Roman women as *moriscas* is as baffling as it is productive; it is puzzling, nonetheless, as she spent some of her formative years in Granada in the immediate post-conquest period. At age eleven, Lozana and her mother attempted to gain title to a house that was supposedly part of her father’s inheritance. While the property was lost in her father’s gambling debts, she came away from Granada with important skills in her Celestinesque toolkit: “ella fue en Granada mirada y tenida por solicitadora perfecta e prenosticada futura” (M1, 13). Exquisitely educated in rhetoric and divination, the young Aldonza would also have learned that *almalafas* were customary attire for the female inhabitants of the former Nasrid Kingdom. Her confusion at the sight of Roman fashions exasperates Rampín, who displaces the national question whether the costume is Granadan or Roman. What is *almalafa*, after all, but just a striped garment to cover a lady’s ass or tail (“baticulo/ “batirrabo”); it is pure sexy material, in other words.

If, as Nirenberg observes, the prostitute excels “in the recognition (and ideally, the rejection) of religious difference” (“Conversion”

<sup>16</sup>See, also, Fuchs, *Passing*.

<sup>17</sup>Perugini explains that *baticulo* described the portion of armor covering the backside (n350, 64). Allaire remarks on the ribald play of suffixes, *culo* and *rabo* (n20, 216).

1075), Lozana has failed the test even though her origins would commend her expertise in ethnic detection and mimicry; she is otherwise a frontier actor par excellence, both in Andalusia and abroad. And thus we're led to wonder about her incompetence in ethnic profiling. One possible answer lies in the emergence of a belated frontier and a multi-tasking subject (prostitute, pimp, healer, beautician) whose penchant for freedom and "traveling theories" privileges perceptions that are stuck in another time and space. Despite a deep knowledge of national and ethnic styles and multilingual fluency (including *habla de negros*), Lozana appears to stumble over that most visible of ethnic or national markers, women's dress. The "slip" is a defining performance of the transnational, as it enacts a necessary deterritorialization inherent in border crossings (Balibar). Rampín's intervention hastens the process. For now we are literally amidst the folds of fabric, clothing that is local and eroticized—"ass" or "tail robe"—in a setting where commerce and reification trump the business of policing cultural boundaries.<sup>18</sup> Nostalgia for Andalusian culture pales before the promise of unparalleled freedom offered to an immigrant who has narrowly escaped death at the hands of her father-in-law's henchmen. The scene conjures up an economy of eros that displaces the pertinence of Iberian cultural politics on one hand, while disclosing the logics of colonized Granada on the other. And thus the distinctive styles of a superseded hegemon are called upon to serve a historical memory whose relevance has been shaken. Much of it composed by 1524, the *Portrait* translates the fashions of Granada's women as "romanas," just at the moment when contemporary *moriscas* and their distinctive dress are targeted back home.<sup>19</sup> Lozana's cultural gaffe shows her as an immigrant out of place, but who persists in trying to master Roman sophistication and its singular depravity. Her solecism is productive nonetheless, since the dialogic exchange with Rampín redeems the error as an occasion to celebrate corporeality, parody, and word play, elements that adhere more readily to the values of Iberia's "disinherited," whose idea of home had turned into "a land of perpetual leave-taking" (Kamen 4).

As the dialogue continues, Aldonza inquires further into the meaning of the striped fabric panels. Her curiosity about "stuff" that is always already marked as a trope of difference suggests that for this courtesan, a frontier tradition associating her trade with the mainte-

<sup>18</sup>See, also, Fuchs, *Exotic* 11–30.

<sup>19</sup>In 1513 Queen Juana issued a decree banning *almalafas* (Harvey 71–72).

nance of boundaries is a habit difficult to kick. This urgent curiosity into all things Roman motivates her perambulations; as she instructs Rampín, “por do fuéremos que me digáis cada cosa qué es y cómo se llaman las calles” (M 12, 46). While her native informant is compliant, he also lets loose with bawdy word play and historicization. For Rampín, this awareness of being a historical subject is understandable in a son of Iberian transplants. And thus we proceed from the denial of phantom *almalafas* to an unexpected encounter with Spanishness projected unto a late Hellenistic sculpture (1st century B.C.), commonly known as Spinario or Cavaspina, but Hispanicized in Rampín’s account as *Rodriguillo español* (Cover image).

The Spinario is a bronze figure of a seated nude youth, absorbed in the task of extracting a thorn from his left foot.<sup>20</sup> Ever the trustworthy guide to Roman habits and places of note, Rampín even furnishes the statue’s correct location on the Capitoline Hill, where it was a popular destination for visitors since the museum’s founding in 1471 by Pope Sixtus IV. Without losing its obvious erotic appeal, the bronze here turns into a *lieu de mémoire* for the first arrival of Spaniards in large numbers in the papal capital. An image from the past that also bears on the present and future, the sculpture acquires the testimonial aura of a mute witness to the shifting fortunes of nations while preserving its materiality as a celebrated monument not to be missed by visitors of all ranks and nations.<sup>21</sup> In a manner much like earlier references to the founding of the Spanish Inquisition or the first outbreak of the French Pox, the sexy youth becomes the sign vehicle for the rise and inevitable decline of Iberian fortunes, in whose sweep Rome will also come to grief:

Lozana.—¿Y qué quiere decir? ¿Que en toda Italia llevan delante sus paños listados o velos?

Rampín.—Después acá de Rodriguillo español van ellas así.

Lozana.—Eso querría yo saber.

Rampín.—No sé más de quanto lo oí así, e os puedo mostrar al Rodriguillo español de bronce, hecha su estatua en Campidolio, que se saca una espina del pie y está desnudo.

Lozana.—¡Por mi vida, que es cosa de saber y ver, que dicen que en aquel tiempo no había dos españoles en Roma, y agora hay tantos!

<sup>20</sup>The Spinario has been documented since at least 1165 and by 1471 was installed in the Palazzo dei Conservatori on the Capitoline Hill, its current location (Schradler n6, 55).

<sup>21</sup>The accompanying illustrations in the Venice edition notwithstanding, Checa notes “la práctica ausencia de representaciones o evocaciones plásticas” (9). The *Rodriguillo* reference, therefore, is remarkable given the visually restrained context.

Verná tiempo que no habrá ninguno, y dirán, «Roma mísera,» como dicen «España mísera.» (M12 50)

Both metal and flesh—*bronzo* and *desnudo*—the protean Spinario marks the location of a privileged historical vantage point, one that affords a bifurcated view—back to the deftly mythologized fifteenth-century origins of the Spanish colony vested in the alloy, while also offering a proleptic account of the colony's dispersal just a few years hence, on account of its carnal sins, figured by the sculpture's lustful embodiment. While no historical witness is at hand to settle the matter of the colony's first arrivals, Lozana's intuition of doom places her, along with Spinario, at a juncture of epochs and peoples. From this liminal location Lozana recovers the prostitute's role in a frontier culture and reinterprets, Cassandra-like, vigilance as augury as she renders the mutable lad as the signpost of yet another diaspora to come. But her admonition falls on deaf ears. Interestingly, she equates the anticipated collapse with Spain's current woes, the exact nature of which remain teasingly unspecified, thus allowing the reader's own misfortunes to inform the lament.<sup>22</sup>

By turning the self-absorbed boy into both historical and sensual material, Rampín augments the Spinario's symbolic profile.<sup>23</sup> The guide's exercise in ecphrasis is a brilliant performance that brings together both flesh and bronze without sacrificing the boy's priapic appeal, one which Bruno Damiani foregrounds to comic effect in his English translation, in which "está desnudo" becomes "as naked as a jaybird" (41). The prospect alone of coming face to face with this artistic marvel, made especially vivid in Rampín's seductive speech act, piques Lozana's ardor: "¡Por mi vida, que es cosa de saber y ver!" In his hyper Spanish guise (not just a *Rodriguillo*, but also, redundantly, *español*) the sexy sculpture turns all too human and catches a Spanish "bug." In common with Rome's Iberian settlers, Rodriguillo is afflicted with history, trauma, and diaspora. Lozana's own portentous warning marks a radical shift of registers, from the sensual to the allegorical. Thus moralized, Rodriguillo emblemizes a contemporary Spain that

<sup>22</sup>Joset characterizes the expression, "España mísera" as "frase proverbial," but one that is unattested, and conjectures that it would have been uttered by Italian subjects then living under Spanish rule, expressive of hatred for their foreign occupiers (n50.37, 408–09).

<sup>23</sup>Benjamin of Tudela reports that during his visit to Rome, around 1161, among the statuary in front of the Lateran Palace stood "Absalom son of David," thus transforming the future *Rodriguillo español* into the sort of image capable of connecting the Lateran to "biblical Judaism" (Champagne and Boustan 479).

deserves to be mourned or pitied for its abject condition: “y dirán, ‘Roma mísera,’ como dicen ‘España mísera.’” As with the cover page’s equivocal referentiality, Lozana’s surprising turn to sententiousness is consistent with Delicado’s rhetoric of the borderlands, in which frontier actors acquire some of the characteristics of the Other, however those foreignizing features might be construed. Just as the name *Lozana* impresses as a fiction of wellbeing that is rendered, paradoxically, by a disfigured beauty, her vision of the approaching Sack of Rome turns her into an unlikely messenger for an austere regimen that neither she nor the narrative embraces.<sup>24</sup>

In the face of Lozana’s momentary conversion from voluptuary to moralizer, Rampín’s own profile participates in an erotics of mutability that rises to exemplary status. As a feature to be emulated, moving from place to place is something that courtesans must do, but it is also the common condition of both frontier and diaspora. With her characteristic verbal authority, Lozana promotes to a general principle a strategy associated with the marketing of whores. Her service providers, for sure, ought to relocate frequently: “Las putas cada tres meses se mudan por parecer fruta nueva” (M34, 173). With her customary gift for translating the quotidian into the normative, she spins out a maxim for Escudiero, a randy rogue out to get laid without having to pay, and declares that what is good for whores is good for all and worthy of the Lord’s protection: “Señor, quien se muda, Dios lo ayuda” (173). Transformations are a blessing and the erotics of the frontier as a space of transitions writ large lend a sheen to the business of sex.

In the aura of this eroticization of the border, Rampín emerges as a louche exemplar of the frontiersman (*frontero*), facilitated by his specular kinship with *Rodriguillo español*. By referring to the sculpture by a name that seems rooted in popular usage, Rampín suggests a point of identification with the enthralling youth in the Capitoline museum, whose vulnerable pose invites the spectator’s intervention and conjures up the illusion of intimacy.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, Rampín’s own cultural marginality as a *marrano* evokes medieval versions of the Thorn

<sup>24</sup>For “fictions of wellbeing” see Solomon; see, also, Dangler 136; McInnis-Domínguez 330.

<sup>25</sup>*Rodriguillo español* is listed twice in the 1607 inventory of Philip II’s collections, one sculpture in marble and another in bronze: “Una estatua de bronce de *Rodriguillo español* que se está sacando una espina, assentado sobre un tronco de bronce y un pedestal de jaspe blanco y columna quadrada de jaspe azul” (F. J. Sánchez Cantón, “Inventario,” qtd. in Deswarte-Rosa 56, emphasis added).





Fig. 2. Lozana and Rampín, along with associates and clients, at her Roman home and workshop. Delicado, *Retrato*, "Tercera parte" (mamotreto 41, H4v, detail).

Puller in an earthier vein.<sup>26</sup> Especially attuned to this priapic variant, Rampín's rough edges and insatiable sexual appetites acquire a Roman pedigree. By citing a sculpture bearing an uncanny resemblance to the actor's own culturally marginal profile, the *Retrato* effects a queer correspondence, one that echoes through Rampín's double portrait at his labors with such sexually suggestive equipment as a mortar, pestle, and bellows (Figure 2). Just as the frontispiece gets our hopes up that Lozana is among those lucky enough to resettle in Venice, Rampín's eccentric appeal is assimilated to the genre figure's outsider status. But lest we find comfort with this glimmer of subaltern representation, Rampín's thematic role as *marrano* furnishes an occasion for racialist scorn to be heaped on a youth who only recently was baptized into the church. The Rampín-Rodriguillo pairing discloses several common features. Both are sexy, close in age (11 or 12 years old), and plebeian. Also resonant is the fact that these twinned figures mimic

<sup>26</sup>Moralejo Alvarez notes à propos the Spinario carvings in the cathedrals at Orense and Chartres that "la alusión a la licencia sexual es la nota más definida y relevante de los espinarios medievales" (339).

the *Portrait's* most powerful duo of resemblances, which stretch across ontological and gender boundaries, that of the author and Lozana.<sup>27</sup> In enacting a similarly sanctioned misreading, whereby a character's fate passes for that of her author and vice-versa, Rampín's cultural location is folded into Rodriguillo's assertive Spanishness ("*español*") while retaining the eroticism of transformations.

Rampín's shifting personae outstrip even his mistress's, whose syphilitic lesions call into question the pertinence of a name acquired in the flower of her youth, when it could in fact serve as a corporeal sign. Although Rampín also attracts alternative names, his are not just ephemeral, they are also paradigmatic and culturally significant. Hailed by other fellows in Lozana's circle as both Rodrigo and Abenámbar, these shifting interpellations are strategic rather than definitive and are therefore more pertinent to the contingent nature of a translated border zone than they would be back in Andalucía. A lad so responsive that he more than satisfies his mistress's sexual urges, he is equally effective at servicing the author's writing needs as well. *Autor*—Delicado's alter ego in the diegesis—pays the youth to fetch him the requisite materials with which to record a memory: "Toma, tráeme un poco de papel y tinta, que quiero notar aquí una cosa que se me recordó agora" (M 42, 215). Blessed with such versatility—and with the added cachet of writerly resourcefulness—it should not surprise us that national or ethnic designations gather around him as they do for *Rodriguillo español*. Rampín's turn as Rodrigo occurs with nationality under erasure: "¿Qué es eso, Rodrigo Roído?" / 'What's it all about, Rodrigo Rowdy?', is how one of Lozana's tricks addresses him.<sup>28</sup> Although deprived of national designation and graced instead by an epithet that fixes his wild affect, the name evokes a series of illustrious *prohombres*, such as Rodrigo, *el último godo*, the last of the Visigothic rulers; the epic hero Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar, *el Cid Campeador*; and the Valencian Rodrigo Borgia, who as Alexander VI held the papacy from 1492 to 1503, a time when many fellow Spaniards settled in Rome.<sup>29</sup> His *morisco* moniker, derived from the widely circulating ballad, "Abenámbar, Abenámbar, moro de la morería," is bestowed by

<sup>27</sup>The character *Autor* discloses that he and Lozana are fellow Andalusians: "es de mi tierra o cerca de ella" (M17, 81). For Beltrán the author's many guises extend to the print shop as well: "the mind that planned the typographical lay out of the page" (94).

<sup>28</sup>My translation modifies Damiani's (151). Perugini, however, transcribes "Rodrigo Roy," and conjectures "alusión al Ruy Díaz" (n1060, 191).

<sup>29</sup>See, also, Damiani and Allegra (n37, 125). Dandeleit writes that during his reign, Alexander "filled his court with Spanish soldiers and courtiers" and the Spanish population "probably numbered in the thousands" (26).

another of his mistress's clients. As in the haunting ballad of a conquest reimagined as a courtship ritual, the erotics of Nasrid Granada combine with the native informant role played by both the ballad actor and Lozana's assistant. But the lad's auspicious renaming soon turns ugly in a scene that stages Rampín's *marrano* ancestry as a gross eating disorder that ruins an otherwise jolly dinner party. Lozana, suddenly adept in lineage tracing, Inquisition style, diagnoses Rampín's sensitivity to pork as an affliction inherited through the paternal line: "Señora, no quería que le quebrase en ciciones, porque su padre la tuvo siete años, de una vez que lo gustó" (M34, 177). Having thus established Rampín's Jewishness as an eating disorder, Lozana joins in hazing an otherwise exemplary mate: "Hijo mío, ¿tocino comes? ¡Guay de mi casa, no te me ahogues!" (177). The ethnic dig echoes a well known proverb that is often cited as betraying "antisemitismo tradicional" (Allaigre n28, 342; Joset n58, 177; n28, 342). Commentators consider this an indelible stain on Rampín. Such a conclusion misses what I regard as the actor's most abiding identification, his Rodriguillo-like signature as a trope of nationhood. While lacking the implied beauty associated with blood purity (*cristiano lindo*), Rampín is a wild card for otherness, eccentric even in his gait—"Veislo, viene anadeando" (M40 203), notes his mistress. This rowdy, industrious, clumsy, clever, affected, bestial, or *marrano* youth is one who merits our gaze ("Veislo") and in return offers an urban choreography that ranges across mean streets, bedroom antics, and cultural translations worthy of that most celebrated of native informants along the Granadan frontier, Abenámbar himself.

However ghettoized Rampín's "cuerpo de la salud" (M34, 176) appears in this episode, his sexual vigor turns him into an object of wonder. Equally powerful, if paradoxical, is Lozana's own allure, her scarred forehead and collapsed nose notwithstanding. Both are passionate and each in his or her own way is disfigured. They are well matched for an initial hook-up that screams queerness by virtue of the affect they provoke, rather than just the sex-acts themselves. Rampín's aunt admits a passion for Lozana that serves as a warm-up act for the marathon sex that follows. Inquiring where they plan to spend the night, while also confessing her own lust for the new girl in town, she gushes, "por mi vida que tiene lindo cuerpo" (M 14, 58). The aunt is so turned on that she wishes she could transition to manhood: "Yo quisiera ser hombre, tan bien me ha parecido. ¡Oh, qué pierna de mujer" (M 14, 58). Expressing female same-sex desire with the nearly identical phallic language used by Celestina in her seduction of Areúsa

in Fernando de Rojas's tragicomedy, the aunt challenges Rampín's ability to satisfy the voluptuous guest: "A otro que tú habría ella de menester, que le hallase mejor la bezmellerica y le hinchese la medida" (M14, 58; Burshatin, "Written" 444-45; Velasco 63). Presumably, that ideal sex partner would be the aunt herself! In the bedroom scene that follows, Rampín's performance proves more than adequate, not least on account of his oversize and shapely member—affectionately and onomatopoeically dubbed "dinguilindón," (61) one that earns his partner's high praise: "en mi vida vi mano de mortero tan bien hecha. ¡Qué gordo que es! Y todo parejo. . . No es de dejar este tal unicornio» (64-65).<sup>30</sup> Still "just a lad" (Damiani 53) and dependent on his mistress, Rampín's sexual inventiveness finds consummate rhetorical expression with a topsy-turvy image of a church—temple on top and turret at bottom: "Soy contento; a este lado, y metamos la ilesia sobre el campanario" (M14, 67). These distinctive icons of the faith and visual reminders of Christian dominance in a frontier culture enter the lover's discourse as a graphic depiction of how to copulate in a "non-missionary" position. Rampín's sly reversal casts "ilesia" as a fully embodied female who rises triumphant, but not exactly, over Sinagoga or other unbelievers. The victory, rather, is of flesh over spirit. A transgressive sexual position associated in misogynistic thought with female rule, it also conveys a more ominous turn of flesh overpowering the spirit (Davis; Nirenberg, "Figures" 424). With Lozana as the "top" in this relationship, Rampín's bell-tower—the quintessential motif of Christian hegemony rising over town and country in narratives of Reconquest—is now laid low to designate the male partner's assuming the subordinate sexual role of "bottom."

This brilliant performance of sex *a lo divino* is as exhilarating as it is ultimately a fugitive truth of the sort examined in the opening of this essay. As Trujillo, one of many wits that populate Spanish Rome, seems to understand, passion (broadly defined as both embodied longing and suffering) is always already a text-bound phenomenon. The priapism that has him in agony makes him seek out Lozana's medico-sexual therapies: "y la pasión corporal es tanta que puedo decir que es interlineal" (M 50 248). A commentary, a gloss, or Derriean supplement, Trujillo's sexual disorder overflows the boundaries comprised of lines of text, margins, chapter headings, and such. The

<sup>30</sup>Lozana's praise for her partner's member uses the image of the pestle. The illustration of Lozana's workshop depicts Rampín twice, lower left and right. In both he is seated in front of a mortar and his name appears just below it. His portrait on the left has him working the pestle with his left hand; see Figure 2.

language of manuscript copyists or print correctors comes to the aid of expressing the incessant ardor of a hyper-sexed “unicorn,” a body so alienated from the ideal *cuerpo de la salud* that it must look to a printed volume—a *cuerpo de libro*—for the location, if not the cure, of its disorder.<sup>31</sup> Valerián, another sly neighbor also familiar with book talk or philology, is just as hungry for Lozana and equally bedeviled by her empty promises, “que cada día me promete y jamás me atiende,” which reminds him of a maxim whose meaning is in need of updating: «¿Sabéis cómo se da la definición a esto que dicen: ‘Roma la que los locos doma y a las veces las locas’? Si miráis en ello, a ellos doman ellas, y a ellas doma la carreta” (M30, 154).

Lozana’s fate will be indistinguishable from that of Rome’s “locas” afflicted with syphilis. Valerián’s ambivalence is an exemplary moment in Delicado’s version of the borderlands. To define a maxim is to rein in the multilateral movements of sense and to assert in their place “the strong imprint of meaning known as destiny” (Barthes 65). This turn to a univocal truth, tightly “encerrada,” comes with a strong measure of the crude misogyny that underlies the moralistic rants against “Roma putana.” While Valerián is still out cruising for sexual favors, his speech performance is that of a repentant sinner who yearns for a transcendent truth. In this instance, the agent of rough justice is the French Pox. He welcomes it even as he lusts after Lozana. The cruel hope will be realized, for we as readers have known all along that both the Sweetheart and *el Delicado* are already infected.

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<sup>31</sup>For “cuerpo de libro” in Cervantes, see Dopico Black.

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