ANUARIO Lope de Vega texto · literatura · cultura

NOTA

SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON A NEW EDITION OF THE *EXPOSTULATIO SPONGIAE*

Jonathan David Bradbury (Christ Church, University of Oxford)

Cita recomendada: Jonathan David Bradbury, «Some considerations on a new edition of the *Expostulatio Spongiae*», *Anuario Lope de Vega. Texto, literatura, cultura*, XVIII (2012), pp. 274-290.

Julián González-Barrera's new edition, translation and study [2011] of the *Expostulatio Spongiae* (1618), the rebuttal to Pedro de Torres Rámila's now lost anti-Lopean polemic, the *Spongia* (1617), performs a number of valuable services to studies on Lope de Vega: it makes widely available and accessible a key text in the literary controversies of the first third of the seventeenth century in Spain, in which Lope and his followers were heavily invested; it clarifies some of the circumstances which gave birth to this Latin work, building upon the idiosyncratic efforts of Joaquín de Entrambasaguas in *Una guerra literaria del Siglo de Oro: Lope de Vega y los preceptistas aristotélicos* [1946-1947], and Xavier Tubau's more recent doctoral analysis [2008]; it challenges the conventional understanding of the critical background to Torres Rámila's *Spongia* and the *Expostulatio Spongiae* to which it gave rise, re-evaluating the importance of neo-Aristotelian literary theory to the feud and re-positioning the dispute in the territory of Gongorism; it illustrates the miscellaneous nature of the *Expostulatio Spongiae*, underlining not only the interest of the varied forms marshalled to defend Lope but also the literary and cultural value of a number of these; it provides decent annotation to the text, not least identifying a good number of the classical and humanist references woven into the fabric of the *Expostulatio Spongiae* by its pseudonymous author, «Julio Columbario»; and González-Barrera's study also attempts to unmask the individual sheltering behind the pen-name.

So, what is the *Expostulatio Spongiae* about and what is its purpose?[1] Before coming to more modern treatments of the work, we should examine the diverse and contradictory attitudes towards the book contained in the investigations carried out by Miguel Ferrer in 1622 and continued later that same year by Francisco Pérez Roy, whose aim was to assess the suitability of Torres Rámila, erstwhile grammarian at the Complutense and author of the *Spongia*, for a place at the Colegio Mayor de San Ildefonso. In addition to the concurrent enquiries being made by Nicolás Cano Arco in Torres Rámila's homeland concerning his family's Christian pedigree, Ferrer and Pérez Roy were tasked with gathering opinion in Madrid, Toledo and Alcalá on Torres Rámila's character, paying particular attention to any damage done to it by two vicious satires and the *Expostulatio Spongiae* itself. Although none of the respondents questioned in these *interrogatorios* would admit to being in possession of a copy of the *Expostulatio Spongia*e, seven exemplars of which are extant, a number of them gave an impression of its contents.

Amongst the «gente crítica», as the priest Lucas de Montoya defined those figures involved in the affair (Entrambasaguas 1947:II, 96-97), Manuel Ponce and Pedro Blasco recalled that the work consisted principally of praise of Lope: «[…] el motivo del libro fue su alabanza más que la oposición ni injuria del Maestro Torres Rámila» [1947:II, 92] and «eran elogios en favor de Lope de Vega y […] no se acuerda que hubiese cosa contra el dicho Rámila sino solo que el libro se hizo a fin de juntar en él muchas alabanzas de Lope de Vega […]» [1947:II, 141]. Luis Tribaldos, on the other hand, defined the *Expostulatio Spongiae* quite simply as «apodos y dichos contra el dicho Rámila» [1947:II, 98], whilst for Juan Pablo Mártir Rizo «la sustancia del libro era llamarle [a Torres Rámila] ignorante pobre» [1947:II, 101], a criticism echoed by Juan Izquierdo de Piña: «solo contenía tratar de ignorante al dicho Rámila» [1947:II, 113]. For López de Aguilar, the *Expostulatio Spongiae*, as far as he could remember, inveighed particularly against Torres Rámila's «ingenio y estilo» [1947:II, 106], and for Jerónimo de Medinilla «lo que contenía el dicho libro era tratarle [a Torres Rámila] de defectuoso en Latín y Gramática» [1947:II, 124]. However, Lope himself proffered a slightly different judgement; on the second occasion

1. *Expostulatio Spongiae* is used both as the title for the work as a whole, and as the sub-title for the central part of the text, in which Columbario deals with the particular criticisms levelled by Torres Rámila in the *Spongia*, as opposed to the other sections which constitute the counter-polemic. I shall use the full form when indicating the work in its entirety and the short form of *Expostulatio* when referring to the specific sub-section.

that he was visited, he attributed authorship of the *Expostulatio Spongiae* to the young Frenchman Simon Chauvel, and stated: «el dicho libro contenía defensas de las obras de este testigo [Lope] sin hablar en sus costumbres y calidad del dicho Rámila» [1947:II, 120]. All of these claims are true, but they are all also partial; the *Expostulatio Spongiae* is all of these things and more, as González-Barrera and a careful reading of his edition bear out.

The varied elements of the *Expostulatio Spongiae* are all significant, albeit in differing ways, but as González-Barrera and, before him, Tubau and Entrambasaguas, point out, the work is still more famous by reputation than known for its finer details. As such, a brief overview of its contents is in order: the main body —or bodies— of the book is —or are— preceded by a heterogeneous set of preliminaries, comprising two sets of errata, a list of illustrious men who have praised Lope and who are mentioned in this work, a supposed French privilege, disguising the fact that the *Expostulatio Spongiae* was not printed in Troyes as stated but, rather, surreptitiously in Madrid, an emblem, a dedication to the Duke of Sessa by Julio Columbario, and two prologues to the reader by him also [González-Barrera 2011:116-133];[2] next, we have the *Elogia Illustrium Virorum*, a collection of laudatory pieces by men of good standing eulogising Lope, many of which are culled from the preliminaries of Lope's own works and many of which require translation into Latin from their original Castilian [2011:134-163]; after another emblem the *Expostulatio* of Columbario properly understood begins [2011:166-227]; following this main component is a short poetic dedication, to the Duke of Sessa once more, and signed by Francisco López de Aguilar, which precedes the *Varia Illustrium Virorum Poemata*, a collection of original poems in praise of Lope, most of them by named authors, some of whom had themselves been slighted in Torres Rámila's *Spongia* [2011:228-269];[3] then we are given an *Oneiropaegnion* by Columbario, a first-person narration of a dream in which the author converses with one of Lope's critics, a certain Satirión, generally identified as Cristóbal Suárez de Figueroa, before seeing Torres Rámila's attempt at self-justification deflated by Lope's just

2. In this edition, González-Barrera provides the original Latin text on even-numbered pages and his Castilian translation on the facing odd-numbered pages. Citations from the work will use this translated text.

3. On these poems see: M.D. García de Paso Carrasco and G. Rodríguez Herrera [1999, 2000-2001].

rebuke and a savage beating by the crowd [2011:272-301];[4] finally, despite a poetic colophon to the work, there is yet one more element, an *Appendix ad Expostulationem Spongiae* from the hand of Alfonso Sánchez de Moratalla, professor of Greek and Hebrew at the Complutense, which is a short treatise defending Lope on artistic grounds [2011:304-327].[5]

The text as a whole, and, in particular, the section explicitly labelled the *Expostulatio Spongiae*, are conceived by Columbario as a direct response to the scandalous accusations and unfounded criticism contained within Torres Rámila's *Spongia*, a defence which must be mounted lest others think they can attack the *Fénix* with impunity. Such a reaction is now urgent, and, in his address to the «kind reader» at the beginning of the text, Columbario begs pardon that his rebuttal is so belated, as well as reproaching those friends of Lope who have not spoken out before him [2011:129]. In the body of the *Expostulatio*, Columbario confesses that he does not possess sufficient strength of will simply to ignore Torres Rámila's vile tirade, a rant which is doubly inappropriate given that Lope has apparently done him no harm and, in any case, enjoys a Parnassian status which should stop critics such as Torres Rámila in their tracks [2011:166-169]. However, despite this latter assertion, Columbario is willing to admit that no writer's oeuvre can be without defects; rather, the problem with the «ingenio satírico» lies in the unwillingness of such critics to weigh up «con sumo cuidado en una balanza, según la costumbre de los persas, los aciertos y los desaciertos con un criterio ecuánime», for Torres Rámila has instead «censurado todas las cosas según el fiel de [su] propia balanza» [2011:171]. This is not to say that the *Expostulatio* presents less than a glowing endorsement of Lope, simply that its tone and its argumentation are by no means uniform.

The technique of interpolating and then confuting Torres Rámila's own words which will form the basis of Columbario's method in the *Expostulatio* is prefigured by the insertion and deconstruction of a letter purportedly written by Torres Rámila to José González de Salas, in which the former offers patronising advice on how the latter might improve his manuscript «disertación sobre el uso antiguo de

4. This section of the text is a fine example of the *somnium* tradition, written with considerable verve, and Conde Parrado [2012:55-60, 84-87] sheds valuable light on some of its antecedents. Despite this, it would still merit a more in-depth study of its literary qualities.

5. Tubau [2009:325] notes that this part of the *Expostulatio* is perhaps the one best known by students of Lope, «tanto por el interés de sus contenidos como por la circunstancia de haber sido traducido parcialmente por Marcelino Menendez Pelayo».

los cálculos» [2011:172-181].[6] In his interspersed comments, Columbario rebukes Torres Rámila for acting in bad faith and also draws attention to what considers instances of defective Latin in the epistle, a reproof to Torres Rámila's abilities in the classical language which recurs throughout the *Expostulatio* and elsewhere in the volume as a whole.[7] After dismissing the validity of the criticisms levelled at González de Salas, Columbario now comes to the *Spongia* itself, the «sponge» with which Torres Rámila sought foolhardily to wipe away the indelible mark of Lope's genius; Columbario will act with an «estricto sentido de justicia», and, he declares, the overwhelming emotion felt upon reading the *Spongia* is «risa» and not «ira» [2011:183], a belittling device, to be sure, but one which captures the tonal changes in the *Expostulatio*, always ready to shift from invective to ridicule, harshness to humour.

Extensive quotations from Torres Rámila's lost polemic are included immediately, as Columbario seeks to enact a targeted and comprehensive demolition of the particular charges brought in the *Spongia*. The first named work by Lope attacked by Torres Rámila is the *Arcadia*, on the grounds that it neglects decorum by having shepherds discourse of erudite matters; Columbario defends this aspect of the work by adducing pastoral convention and having recourse to the practice of that most illustrious precedent, Virgil [2011:194-199]. Then, Torres Rámila had sought to undermine *La hermosura de Angélica*, questioning Lope's suitability to build upon Ariosto's assertion in the thirtieth canto of his *Orlando furioso* that «forse altri canterà con miglior plettro»; Columbario, naturally, believes that Lope has accepted the challenge and succeeded, and he responds in kind to the crude insults levelled in the *Spongia*, as well as using the critic's own words against him [2011:198-201]. Of particular interest here is Torres Rámila's assertion here that Lope has never «pisado la escuela de los peripatéticos», a barb aimed at Lope's supposed ignorance of Aristotelian literary principles, in so far as his poem supposedly lacks harmony and proper disposition, which prompts Columbario in turn to underline the «episodios […] tan entrelazados» [2011:201] of the poem. Little time is spent on the third text by Lope, *La Dragontea*, a work which Columbario believes Torres Rámila has misunderstood completely, not least in its less than wholly negative portrayal of

6. González-Barrera [2011:348-349, n. 204] identifies this work by González de Salas as the now lost *De Antiquorum Calculis Diatriba*, and not the *Disertación de la tierra descubierta y cubierta de las aguas*, as claimed by Entrambasaguas [1947:I, 333-334] and Tubau [2008:73].

7. Conde Parrado [2012:41-48] examines this aspect of the *Expostulatio Spongiae* in some detail.

Francis Drake, to which the critic objects on nationalist principles. Treated in the most depth, however, is the fourth work placed under discussion, the showpiece *Jerusalén conquistada*, which, we are given to understand, was the target of Torres Rámila's most sustained criticism, beginning with a rebuke for Lope's shamelessness in attempting to emulate Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata* [2011:203].

Indeed, it is the defence of this text that Columbario sees as the crucial battleground, the arena in which Lope's genius will be vouchsafed, and he invites the reader to be the arbiter: «bajemos al campo y entablemos combate cuerpo a cuerpo. Tú, lector, que asistirás como mediador de esta pelea, mira si me apropio de la palma de este desigual encuentro sin merecerla» [2011:203]. The quibbles raised by Torres Rámila are numerous, with two of the more significant relating to a lack of literary decorum in the decidedly untragic death of Saladin [2011:204-207], and in the treatment of the character of Alfonso VIII [2011:210-213], which Columbario counters in both cases by pointing to the historical record and Lope's unwillingness to diverge from it. The major question here, though, centres on the supposed disrespect manifested by Lope's text towards Aristotelian precepts, for Torres Rámila believes that this epic work lacks unity of action as a result of its possessing too many heroic protagonists. Columbario dismisses this censure, stating that the «muchas acciones» do not compromise the text's unity, that Virgil and Homer integrated multiple characters and that «no encontramos nada en esta epopeya que contradiga la *Poética* de Aristóteles, el *Arte* de Horacio o incluso, por último, si recurrimos a los neotéricos, al mismo Julio César Escalígero» [2011:205]. As González-Barrera [2011:43] notes in his introductory study, the issue was a live one, for Juan Pablo Mártir Rizo, a good friend of Torres Rámila's whose name appeared on a number of copies of the *Spongia*, would raise the same point in relation to Lope's *Jerusalén* in his translation and commentary of Aristotle's *Poetics* in 1623,[8] but, as González-Barrera [2011:43-46] also makes clear, both were building upon a controversy which had exercised the Italian theorists since the mid-sixteenth century without their finding consensus, not least since Aristotle had not himself treated the question of an appropriate number of principal protagonists.

After its examination of the *Jerusalén*, the *Expostulatio* —and, by extension, one might imagine, the *Spongia*— starts to run out of steam, as Columbario addresses miscellaneous accusations, such as the imputation that Lope is incapable

8. See also Entrambasaguas [1946:I, 291-293].

of reading Latin, which Columbario rejects in emphatic terms, or that Lope is dependent on two more erudite friends, Baltasar de Medinilla and Miguel Cejudo [2011:217]. The *Expostulatio* then proposes an Epilogue, in which Columbario reiterates the debt of friendship he owes to Lope, which has motivated his response to a crass libel which did not even merit an answer, and threatens further, more punishing retribution from other friends of the *Fénix* [2011:220-223]. And he finally deals, somewhat unconvincingly, with his own adoption of a pseudonym, a decision apparently made to protect himself from slanderous insults, but not because he fears Torres Rámila [2011:224-227]. It is clear from all of the above, therefore, that each of the contemporary personages quoted earlier in this piece who offered a summary of the *Expostulatio Spongiae* in Ferrer and Pérez Roy's *interrogatorios* settled upon some pertinent aspect of the text, although for Lope to say in 1622 that the work cast no aspersions upon the «costumbres y calidad del dicho Rámila» is more than a little disingenuous, and all the more so if we buttress the comments made in the body of Columbario's counter-polemic with some of the opinions expressed in the poems of the following section, the *Varia Illustrium Virorum Poemata*, such as the anonymous «Escazonte contra Pedro de Torres», which begins «Estiércol pestilente de torpes calumnias» [2011:248-253], or the thirty-second composition, attributed to Lope himself, which begins with Torres Rámila's parentage: «¡Oh, prole más oscura que su oscuro padre, de su época / infamia y deshonra de nuestra Hesperia» [2011:257]. This piece, along with many others of the forty-six poems which constitute this part of the *Expostulatio Spongiae*, have elements in common with two anonymous satires directed against Torres Rámila and now generally accepted to have hailed from Lope's pen.[9]

Upon finishing the *Expostulatio*, the reader may perhaps be surprised at the paucity of references to Lope's dramatic art, for they are genuinely few in this main part of the polemic, although it becomes clear from the opening section of Sánchez de Moratalla's calmer and more academic *Appendix* to the *Expostulatio Spongiae* that Lope's theatre *was* subjected to censure by Torres Rámila, and we learn that the grammarian also attacked *El peregrino en su patria* and the *Isidro* [2011:305]. However, Sánchez de Moratalla draws particular attention to Torres Rámila's attack on the *Jerusalén conquistada*, as had Columbario, stating that Lope could have borne the needless criticisms of the *Spongia* «con ánimo tranquilo»

9. See Entrambasaguas [1947:II, 239-411] and Tubau [2008:152-171].

[2011: 305] had this work not been impugned. Given that shortly after Sánchez de Moratalla refers to Torres Rámila's having sought to undermine «cada uno de tus mejores trabajos», we might reasonably assume that the *Jerusalén* was considered the peak of Lope's art —and of his artistic pretensions— up to that date by the most significant participants in the heated debate.[10] As we have seen, the main objection moved against it by Torres Rámila is neo-Aristotelian in nature, but for González-Barrera in his introductory study, this is not enough to confirm that the overall nature of the conflict between Torres Rámila and Lope, and between their respective supporters, was rooted in Renaissance interpretations of the Stagirite. Rather, González-Barrera dissents from this view, promoted by Entrambasaguas and Tubau, and proposes a significant Gongorist element to the polemic.

In underlining the propitious mix of circumstances which made the particular historical moment seem opportune for Torres Rámila to launch an attack on the *Fénix* and which made said attack so dangerous to Lope and his followers, González-Barrera picks out not the moral arguments increasingly being advanced against the theatre[11] or the prestige enjoyed by conservative theorists such as el Pinciano or Francisco Cascales, but rather the ascendance of Gongorism and the «nueva poesía».[12] Of primary importance for González-Barrera [2011: 5-7, 76] is the symbolic victory enjoyed by Góngora and his supporters at the poetic *certamen* organised to celebrate the inauguration of the new Chapel of the Virgen del Sagrario in the Cathedral of Toledo in the autumn of 1616, a contest which became effectively a promotion and legitimisation of Góngora and Gongorism and whose conspicuous ripples were immediately noted in literary and courtly circles. We know that Torres Rámila participated in this event, albeit not taking any of the prizes, but the fact that only one of the four poems he contributed is in the vernacular and the fact that we possess so little else of his poetic production, severely complicates the description of Torres Rámila by González-Barrera as a «poeta gongorista de tercera fila» [2011:75]. The sonnet, beginning «Quien las ardientes lumbres de la esfera / al blanco escudo

10. Indeed, in the *interrogatorios* of 1622, Mártir Rizo stated that the cause of Lope's antagonism to Torres Rámila was precisely Torres Rámila's having criticised the *Jerusalén*, «en la cual censura notó grandísimos desatinos y ignorancias» (Entrambasaguas 1947:II, 103).

11. On this see Cotarelo y Mori [1997].

12. González-Barrera's lengthiest comments on the matter are found in the sub-section of the introduction entitled «El verdadero rostro de la polémica: Pedro Torres Rámila y el gongorismo» [2011:75-85].

trasladó valiente»,[13] is indeed Gongorine, but in itself it is not sufficient to define Torres Rámila so emphatically, nor is the allusion to Torres Rámila's supposed predilection for the verse of the Cordovan in one of the satires against him attributed to Lope: «¡Oh quién tuviera estilo gongorista / que es el que más te agrada, para darte / un churrete, calvete a letra vista!» (González-Barrera 2011:83; Entrambasaguas 1947:II, 260-261). Furthermore, if for González-Barrera [2011:76] it is significant that Manuel Ponce, one of Torres Rámila's friends alluded to in the *Oneiropaegnion*, was an early commentator of the *Soledades*, we might accord equal significance to the fact, noted above, that another good friend, Mártir Rizo, criticised Lope's *Jerusalén conquistada* in his translation-commentary of Aristotle's *Poetics* in 1623.

Nevertheless, these elements do aid us in building up a composite picture, one which is further enhanced by Torres Rámila's invocation of Góngora in his own *Spongia*, where he references quite clearly a sonnet addressed by the *culterano* poet to Quevedo, «Anacreonte español, no hay quien os tope, / que no diga con mucha cortesía», in which Lope's rapid literary production and supposedly concomitant sloppiness are satirised [2011:49-50, 211].[14] Yet, although Columbario states in his prologue to the «lector benévolo» that he must «combatir a este enemigo de la facción contraria» [2011:129], a phrase which González-Barrera [2011:76] interprets as indicating the affiliation of Torres Rámila with the Gongorists, the brief utilisation of Góngora by Torres Rámila in the *Spongia* and his assertions regarding the Cordovan's pre-eminence over Lope, at least in so far as they are reproduced by Columbario, do not necessarily imply that Torres Rámila was a committed member of that poetic set and may simply be an expedient means by which to taunt the *Fénix* over his apparently waning literary position. Indeed, if Torres Rámila was incited to compose the *Spongia* by his good friend Cristóbal Suárez de Figueroa, as implied in one of the satires directed against

13. «Quien las ardientes lumbres de la esfera / al blanco escudo trasladó valiente, / y el pardo leño con que osadamente / frenó de Libia la invasión primera, / cuando capaz el orbe apenas era / para que triunfos a su nombre ostente, / breve de tierra espacio, blandamente / sella por prendas de la acción postrera. / Fuerza del tiempo sí, mas no vitoria, / que animando Bernardo generoso / está el cadáver, funeral memoria. / Tanta pobreza inscribe en su reposo, / y en sombras libra deste horror historia, / que entre ofensas le aclama vitorioso» (Pedro de Herrera, *Descripción de la capilla de Nuestra Señora del Sagrario*, ff. 99v-100r; Tubau 2008:29-30).

14. The relevant lines are found in the second quatrain: «¿No imitaréis al terenciano Lope, / que al de Belerofonte cada día / sobre zuecos de cómica poesía / se calza espuelas, y le da un galope?» (Luis de Góngora, *Sonetos completos*, p. 275).

Torres Rámila and attributed to Lope, an argument postulated with vigour by Entrambasaguas [1946:I, 251-252], welcomed cautiously by Tubau [2008:50-52] and treated with studied indifference by González-Barrera [2011:7, 82], then we would find ourselves with the neo-Aristotelian faction, given that Suárez de Figueroa's remarks on the *comedia nueva* in the *Plaza universal* (ff. 322v-323r), and, especially, in *El pasajero* (I, pp. 214-226) are decidedly of this sort. Suárez de Figueroa, despite praising the *Polifemo* as a «felicísimo parto de don Luis de Góngora» in this latter work (II, p. 433), could by no stretch of the imagination be counted amongst the Gongorists or even as a firm supporter of Góngora at this stage in his literary career.

González-Barrera is on much firmer ground when he demonstrates the exiguity of identifiably neo-Aristotelian elements in Torres Rámila's argumentation; yet, this is not necessarily evidence that the grammarian did not conceive of his polemic in Aristotelian terms, as it could equally suggest that he simply wasn't well enough versed in their complexities to apply such principles appositely or consistently. As we have seen above, the *Spongia* censures Lope's *Hermosura de Angélica* for its supposed lack of harmony and correct *dispositio* with an explicit reference to Aristotle; however, González-Barrera [2011:77] argues with some justification that this is a very general criticism of Lope in the period, and so is not a cast-iron proof of a rounded neo-Aristotelianism literary mindset. González-Barrera [2011:43-46, 78-79] then explores one of Torres Rámila's most vehemently stated neo-Aristotelian arguments, that concerning a lack of unity in the *Jerusalén conquistada* brought about by a surfeit of heroic protagonists, but, as we have noted above, he is able to show not only that Torres Rámila has mistaken a multitude of heroes for a multitude of actions, but also that Torres Rámila is unaware of the nuances surrounding the topic of Aristotelian unity teased out by the Italian theorists of the previous century. The next argument of this nature advanced by Torres Rámila also concerns the *Jerusalén*, as Lope is reproached for omitting the Aristotelian tenet of pity in tragedy from his self-styled «epopeya trágica»; whilst González-Barrera cannot doubt the pedigree of this principle, he —and Columbario— are both right to underline the maladroitness of its employment by Torres Rámila, given that Saladin, did indeed, according to every historical version, perish in a wholly nondescript manner [2011:46-47, 79-80, 204-207]. The final markedly Aristotelian element of the *Spongia* examined by González-Barrera [2011:80-82] is not of a literary nature, but

rather concerns Torres Rámila's criticism of Lope's understanding of the workings of the soul, once more in connexion with the *Jerusalén*. González-Barrera is able to demonstrate convincingly that Torres Rámila's interpretation of Aristotle on this point is erroneous and most likely second-hand, and that Lope and Columbario are much closer to the Aristotelian positions expounded in *De anima* and *De animalium motione*.[15] Yet, what in fact emerges from both this questioning of the idea of Torres Rámila as an aspiring neo-Aristotelian *preceptista* and González-Barrera's attempt to incorporate him into the Gongorist legions is a picture of a decidedly minor literary and cultural figure seeking opportunistically to assault the legacy of a supposedly declining Lope de Vega, using any and every weapon he believed to be at his disposal.

Elsewhere in his introduction, González-Barrera [2011:VIII, 19] notes the significance of the fact that the *Spongia* had hailed from the ambit of academia, given Torres Rámila's position as a «maestro de gramática» at the Complutense; even though he was a junior figure, were such an attack allowed to stand unchallenged, it might well encourage other invectives from that same academic quarter, where Góngora's star was in continual ascent. González-Barrera is right, therefore, to point up both the importance of Sánchez de Moratalla's sober and methodical *Appendix* defending Lope's suitability to «fundar un nuevo arte poético» [2011:315],[16] given this individual's status within the Complutense as professor of Greek and Hebrew [2011:67], and the significance of Columbario's dedication of the *Oneiropaegnion* to the Count of Coruña, patron of the same university [2011:64]. However, this potentially fruitful avenue is not explored further in this introductory study, as González-Barrera instead turns his hand to some detective work: namely, unmasking the mysterious Julio Columbario.[17] This pseudonymous figure has generally been identified as Francisco López de Aguilar, who appears elsewhere in the *Expostulatio Spongiae*, not least when he presents the forty-six compositions of the *Varia Illustrium Virorum Poemata* to the Duke of Sessa and includes a piece of his own «a Lope de Vega Carpio, varón clarísimo» given his great «vínculo de amistad» [2011:247] with the *Fénix*.

15. The lines in question are from the twentieth canto of the *Jerusalén*: «El perro de oro, que en su temple estaba, / mostraba en Candia movimiento y vida, / por artificio semovente andaba / una diosa de Dédalo esculpida» (González-Barrera 2011:80).

16. See also Tubau [2009] for a short discussion and alternative translation of this element of the *Expostulatio Spongia*.

17. González-Barrera's findings on this matter are contained principally in a sub-section of his introductory study entitled «¿Quién fue realmente Julio Columbario?» [2011:86-108].

After a detailed exposition of the *status quaestionis*, González-Barrera is quite adamant in dismissing López de Aguilar, for a number of reasons: he does not think it likely [2011:92] that this individual would write two dedications to the Duke of Sessa, one in the guise of Columbario at the beginning of the *Expostulatio Spongiae* and one as himself in the *Varia Illustrium Virorum Poemata*, and he also notes [2011:93] that in the «Carta […] con la que responde a Simon Chauvel» in the *Elogia Illustrium Virorum* which precedes the main body of the *Expostulatio*, López de Aguilar rules himself out of the task of replying to Torres Rámila. Clearly, however, this evidence is tenuous at best, and could even suggest that González-Barrera is falling victim to a basic bluff. In seeking firmer ground, he then fastens onto the use of «adulescens» in both Columbario's dedication to Sessa and in the *Oneiropaegnion*, claiming that this term would not be used of a man in his thirties, as López de Aguilar was, but rather of a man in his twenties [2011:93-96]. This point leads González-Barrera to restrict his list to two names: the Frenchman Simon Chauvel and José Antonio Gonzalez de Salas, both of whom fit into the postulated age range, possess an appropriate humanist background and maintained a feud with Torres Rámila. Indeed, the feud between Torres Rámila and González de Salas is graphically illustrated, as we have seen above, by the inclusion and deconstruction at the beginning of the *Expostulatio* of a letter apparently sent by the former to the latter, which Columbario interprets as having been dispatched in bad faith [2011:172-181]. González-Barrera's first reason [2011:97-98] for discarding Chauvel is based, wholly counter-intuitively, on Lope's own identification of Chauvel with Columbario in the *interrogatorios* of 1622, as he does not believe that Lope would include a true fact in amongst evidence which is otherwise plentiful in falsehoods. Slightly more convincing is the fact that Columbario refers to a friendship of long-standing with Lope [2011:98], whereas Chauvel had not long been in Madrid, although such exaggeration would not be unheard of. González de Salas, on the other hand, fits the proposed bill, and González-Barrera [2011:101] settles in particular on his Latin style, dense, erudite and often obscure, and not dissimilar to that of Columbario. Building upon this observation, he notes [2011:102-103] in particular the presence in the *Expostulatio* of allusions to Petronius, an author still far from well known in Spain, and upon whose *Satyricon* González de Salas had written a learned commentary, finally published, after manuscript circulation, in 1629.

Yet, the argument advanced by González-Barrera in favour of this authorial attribution withstands only light critical scrutiny, as he himself seems finally to recognise; in the abrupt back-pedalling of his conclusion, he states that «el misterio de la autoría sigue en el aire» and he limits himself to discounting Francisco López de Aguilar as the main hand behind the text [2011:108]. With resignation he declares: «Faltaría, claro está, alguna clase de documento de archivo que cerrara el debate de una vez por todas» [2011:108]. But, what sort of archival evidence might he be talking about? If he is referring to a sworn and signed affidavit claiming responsibility for the *Expostulatio Spongiae*, he is indeed right, for none has so far been found extant; however, archival documents of a different kind are deployed, alongside a philological tour-de-force, by Pedro Conde Parrado [2012] in order to settle the question of authorship beyond all reasonable doubt. The individual proposed by Conde Parrado is Juan de Fonseca y Figueroa, whose words of praise for Lope appear in the paratextual *Elogia Illustrium Virorum* (González-Barrera 2011:161). The method used to arrive at this attribution is initially philological, as Conde Parrado examines close similarities between the texts of the *Expostulatio* and *Oneiropaegnion* on the one hand and a number of near-contemporary neo-Latin works on the other. First, he demonstrates [2012:48-55] the presence in the *Expostulatio* of expressions from Charles Scribani's linguistically abstruse *Amphitheatrum Honoris* (1605-06). Then, he notes [2012:55-60] the even greater use made by the so-called Columbario of John Barclay's *roman à clef*, the *Satyricon* (the first part of which was published in 1605), phrases from which pepper both the *Expostulatio* and the *Oneiropaegnion*. Finally, Conde Parrado locates [2012:60-70] in the *Expostulatio* borrowings from the *Commonitoria* (1607) by the pseudonymous Claudius Musambertius; this text was a response by Teodoro Marcilio to criticisms made of him and other commentators of Martial by Lorenzo Ramírez de Prado.

Using these elements and others, Conde Parrado sets to unmasking Fonseca y Figueroa as the man behind Julio Columbario. This figure did not publish any of his work, but through his manuscript texts, extant or otherwise, we know that he was a man of great erudition and humanistic learning. Conde Parrado examines a number of relevant writings by Fonseca y Figueroa, beginning [2012:73-74] with his key to Barclay's *Satyricon*, in which Fonseca y Figueroa identified the real people behind the names of Barclay's fictional protagonists. Next, he looks

[2012:74-78] at Fonseca y Figueroa's point-by-point defence of Ramírez de Prado's commentary on Martial, penned in response to the attacks on Ramírez de Prado by Marcilio; although this work by Fonseca y Figueroa has not survived, it is alluded to by Nicolás Antonio in his *Bibliotheca Hispana Nova* (1672), by Ramírez de Prado, and by Fonseca y Figueroa himself in two letters, in the first of which he also mentions a commentary written by him on the *Satyricon* of Petronius. Whilst Fonseca y Figueroa is scathing about Marcilio's effrontery, he manifests admiration for his Latin style, going so far as to borrow from another of his works in a letter of his own, dated 1606. Then, Conde Parrado [2012:78-81] seizes on a comment made by Antonio in the *Bibliotheca*, in which we hear of a manuscript note referring to Jacques Guthière made by Fonseca y Figueroa in his (now lost) copy of Tamayo de Vargas's *Novedades antiguas de España* (1624); significantly, Guthière's *De Iure Manium […]* (1615) provides some material for the latter part of the *Expostulatio*. Finally, Conde Parrado [2012:81-89] moves on to rough copies of nine Latin letters written by Fonseca y Figueroa and conserved in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid; in these, Conde Parrado locates notable phraseological coincidences with the *Expostulatio*, as well as – in a letter dated 1618, the same year as the publication of the *Expostulatio Spongiae* – borrowings from Joseph Justus Scaliger which also crop up in the *Expostulatio* and *Oneiropaegnion*. In conclusion, the critic terms these two parts of the *Expostulatio Spongiae* «un muy ingenioso y muy habilidoso centón, urdido por alguien que, lejos de ser un triste plagiario, era un avezado y erudito latinista» [2012:90], a Latinist who can only be Juan de Fonseca y Figueroa, at this times in his early thirties despite González-Barrera's supposedly clinching detail of «adulescens».

Despite González-Barrera's ultimately fruitless quest to establish the authorship of González de Salas, and the relative paucity of textual evidence he is able to marshal in support of his hypothesis in comparison to the abundant and varied proofs adduced by Conde Parrado, González-Barrera's edition is still of considerable philological worth, and the copious end-notes to the text manifest an easy command of much of the classical and humanist background to the *Expostulatio Spongiae*,[18] to which Conde Parrado's own forthcoming edition can only add. Indeed, the paratextual apparatus provided by González-Barrera is generally useful,

18. In a recent article, González-Barrera [2012] demonstrates the particular importance of Erasmus's *Adagia* to the fabric of the *Expostulatio*.

although not without flaws. The introduction to the text contains both a manageable overview of the *Expostulatio Spongiae*, some telling details, and new theses to be tested, as will have become apparent over the course of this note; however, its division into three ultimately overlapping sections ensures the duplication of some material, and both this study and the end-notes indulge in some wholly unnecessary sniping at Tubau's scholarly endeavours on this same subject, when these should in fact be taken as complementary to González-Barrera's work. The parallel translation is extremely accurate, both materially and stylistically, although there are a few lapses into hackneyed prose, whilst the end-notes clarify obscure passages and allusions that even an educated reader might miss. The list of errata pertaining to the original Latin text ensures a clean source document, and, finally, the short biographies of those individuals entangled, in one way or another, in the polemic sheds further necessary light on the affair, one which began before the *Spongia* (Entrambasaguas 1946:I, 253) and would continue to exercise Lope after the publication of the *Expostulatio Spongiae*, for instance in *La Filomena* of 1621.[19] What clearly emerges from this sorely needed volume is the seriousness, bitterness and pettiness with which the dispute, whatever its precise nature and categorisation, was played out amongst what Pérez Roy, in closing the account of his and Ferrer's *interrogatorios*, defined as «en esta Corte […] la secta, junta y hermandad de los críticos, poetas, humanistas y políticos […] harto dificultosos de hallar y topar porque viven y andan como brujos […]» (Entrambasaguas 1947:II, 130).

19. Tubau [2008:81-82] shows how the «contienda» between «la Filomena» and «el Tordo» in the «Segunda Parte» of the poem should be interpreted as a dialogue between Lope and Torres Rámila respectively, in which many of the objections from the *Spongia* are dismissed in a similar fashion to how they are countered in the *Expostulatio*.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Conde Parrado, Pedro, «*Invectivas Latinescas*. Anatomía de la *Expostulatio Spongiae* en defensa de Lope de Vega», *Castilla. Estudios de Literatura*, III (2012), pp. 37-93.

Cotarelo y Mori, Emilio, *Bibliografía de las controversias sobre la licitud del teatro en España*, facsimile ed., intro. by J. L. Suárez García, Universidad de Granada, Granada, 1997.

Entrambasaguas, Joaquín de, *Estudios sobre Lope de Vega*, C.S.I.C., Madrid, 1946-1947, 2 vols.

García de Paso Carrasco, María Dolores, and Gregorio Rodríguez Herrera, «Los *Varia Illustrium Virorum Poemata* reunidos por Francisco López de Aguilar para alabanza de Lope de Vega y escarnio de Torres Rámila: *Poemata* I-XXV», *Fortunatae*, XI (1999), pp. 125-159.

García de Paso Carrasco, María Dolores, and Gregorio Rodríguez Herrera, «Los *Varia Illustrium Virorum Poemata* reunidos por Francisco López de Aguilar para alabanza de Lope de Vega y escarnio de Torres Rámila: *Poemata* XX-VI-XLVI», *Fortunatae*, XII (2000-2001), pp. 37-83.

Góngora, Luis de, *Sonetos completos*, ed. B. Ciplijauskaité, Castalia, Madrid, 1985, 6th ed.

González-Barrera, Julián, *Expostulatio Spongiae. Fuego cruzado en el nombre de Lope*, Reichenberger, Kassel, 2011.

González-Barrera, Julián, «Erasmo de Rotterdam o las armas de Vulcano en la pelea por la *Spongia* de Torres Rámila», *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, LXXXIX 2 (2012), pp. 125-133.

Herrera, Pedro de, *Descripción de la capilla de Nuestra Señora del Sagrario […]*, Luis Sánchez, Madrid, 1617.

Suárez de Figueroa, Cristóbal, *Plaza universal de todas ciencias y artes*, Luis Sánchez, Madrid, 1615.

Suárez de Figueroa, Cristóbal, *El Pasajero*, ed. M.I. López Bascuñana, PPU, Barcelona, 1988.

Tubau Moreu, Xavier, «Lope de Vega y las polémicas literarias de su época: Pedro de Torres Rámila y Diego de Colmenares», Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, 2008, unpublished doctoral thesis.

Tubau Moreu, Xavier, «El *Appendix ad Expostulationem Spongiae* de Alfonso Sánchez. Edición y traducción», in *Aún no dejó la pluma. Estudios sobre el teatro de Lope de Vega*, ed. X. Tubau, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra, 2009, pp. 323-372.