

GIBERT, Javier García. *La humanitas hispana*. Sobre el humanismo literario en los Siglos de Oro. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 2010, 239p.*

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La humanitas hispana aims to fill the research about the Spanish humanism, which has been deficient between the scholars' interests. In this book J. García Gibert exposes a meticulously justified defence of the Spanish humanism, in the context of the European current. As the author distinguishes the Iberian from the continental movement in that he argues that the first one did not break with the past as the French or the Italian movements did, he analyzes the historiographic debate about this subject. He also distinguishes the Spanish from the European humanism because the first one aimed to popularize the knowledge while the humanists from other regions did not do so, as he emphasizes along the book. The author also analyzes other differences, such as the mutual influences between the national and the continental movement, especially in reference to Italy, as proved by examining individual cases.

García Gibert finds two difficulties that tries to solve along the book, which concern to the possibility, in ideological terms, for the Spanish culture to have a renaissance humanism and if it was prepared the linguistic aspect. The first part is solved by the author posing that there was a black legend about Spain, which he doesn't accept, while he reviews this historical debate. He poses that the Spanish humanism was different because did not destroy the aspects that were part of an heritage, but could be built from them, having wrong methods and procedures but the humanistic intentions and following the formal aspects, which is related with the second problem and solves it this way.

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García Gibert parses different books and corpus, movements or particular writers, separating form and function of discourse. He compares the Spanish authors, but he also includes writers from other European countries. Throughout this book, we can find many analyses on Spanish literature and some intellectual biographies, too. We can also find an extremely interesting iconographic study in which he examines the function of books in the Spanish funerary sculptures, through the variations of the positions of the lying bodies, paying attention to the volume they are bearing. This study is useful to analyse the change in the importance of literature for nobles and clergymen, and it is a very interesting from the methodological point of view.

The author especially draws his attention to the matter of the Catholic Reformation and defends the possibilities of a humanism development enshrined in this movement, against the possibility of a protestant one. He concludes that we cannot distinguish between the renaissance humanism and the posttridentine mind, which influenced and encouraged it in Spain.

Concerning this problem, García Gibert reviews the discussion about the influence of the Inquisition on the humanist movement. The author claims that, despite the fact that the Inquisition expurgated books and annoyed numerous intellectuals, it aroused the spirit of writers, who raised awareness on the importance of their messages. The author refers to the clarity of the rules and prohibitions in this reduction of the Inquisition intervention in the intellectual Spanish movement. This defence means that the accusers were hold responsible for the difficulties intellectuals experienced. The author concludes that the Spanish counterreformatist thought was not restricted by external repressive agents besides, the Spanish renaissance spread through the peninsula and influenced the counterreform, making the fusion of both movements possible.

Two ideas prevail along the book: free will and disappointment. As regards the first one, we can find many references along this study, relating the work of many authors - as he does in the interesting comparison between Alonso de Cartagena, Marqués de Santillana and Juan de Mena - to this concept. References to disappointment are even more interesting and are placed within the XVII Spanish humanism century, as long as it is understood as a psychological reaction to a particular historical situation. He finds here the shape of the scepticism in Spain during this period while in other places it laid the foundations for the scientific and philosophical revolution. The Spanish thought would not have been particularly interested in these knowledge areas as it had been in mystic subjects.

The weakest aspect of this book is the idea that refers to the Spanish "national soul", where the author finds a romantic justification for this phenomenon: the lack of interest of Spanish thought in the scientific research would express its loyalty to a long philosophical tradition focused on spiritual

subjects. The idea of the Spanish soul was proposed in its time, but finally discussed and abandoned by historians.

Nevertheless, the book has some other original ideas. That is the case of the most outstanding study of this book, which concerns the concept of analogy. The author analyses how the human being has been considered an analogical centre through a mechanism that made it possible to overcome the distance between the finite and the infinite in such a way that this idea incorporated the notion of transcendence.

The author also finds some particularities in this humanism related to the development of the erasmism in Spain, and the absence of discussion between classical and modern proposals. This way, he introduces the importance of idealism and realism in the Spanish renaissance literature, but also the importance of scholastic think as a particularity of the movement.

Finally, García Gibert analyses the work of the main writers of the baroque period, attending to the different paradigms they raised: Cervantes and freedom; Quevedo and the potential moral improvement of the human being -taking account his free will and the importance of the written culture in order to achieve that objective-; Baltasar Gracián, whose humanist project is considered by the author as the most representative one of the Spanish baroque movement as long as the most characteristic of the counterreformatist mind. As from the analysis of this writer's work, the author brings the matter of "discretion" and the concept of "person" to discussion, considering humankind as a cultural concept: if artifice is the stigma of human imperfection, then, it is also the symbol of its identity and nature.

The ideas posed by García Gibert make this book a particular reading that can surprise the scholars because of its transgression but also the new ways of reading classical literature considering it form concepts that have been not usual not only for this period but also for historians, mixing them with some other concepts that have already been abandoned by the historiography.