

JUAN J. VALVERDE ABRIL, *Io. Genesisius Sepulveda. Epistolarum libri septem*, München-Leipzig: Bibliotheca Teubneriana, K.G. Saur Verlag, 2003, 342 pp., ISBN 3-598-71252-9²⁰.

Several years ago *Bibliotheca Teubneriana* expanded its catalogue to include editions of texts not by ancient authors. The book under review here does not, in fact, mark the first time Teubner has published a Spanish humanist (that being Francisco Socas's splendid 1991 edition of *De statu Belgico deque religione Hispanica* by Francisco de Enzinas), nor is it even Sepúlveda's first appearance, A. Ramírez de Verger having published *De Orbe Novo* in 1993. Valverde now brings us the fruit of his doctoral work in his edition of Sepúlveda's *Epistolarum libri septem*. The textual tradition represented here is radically different from those of the above-mentioned examples: Socas and Ramírez de Verger developed their editions from available manuscripts while Valverde bases his on a printed book, namely, the 1557 Salamanca edition, produced by Sepúlveda's friend Diego de Neila, to whom the author entrusted the work for publication.

This last interesting detail is a determining factor in establishing critical principles to guide a modern edition:

- a) in most cases the text has no manuscript tradition.
- b) The printed Salamanca text gives the definitive versions of Sepúlveda's letters, consciously modified by the author *vis à vis* the form in which they were originally sent. One can assume, at least provisionally, that they therefore reflect Sepúlveda's authorial intent (in the few cases where a manuscript tradition exists, one is sometimes faced with appreciable differences in the text).

²⁰ I am indebted to Dr. Jonathan Nelson for his translation of the final draft of this review. This is part of the Research Project BF2003-04117 of the Spanish Ministerio de Ciencia y Tecnología and funded by the FEDER programm of the European Community.

c) At the same time, the fact that Sepúlveda entrusted the printing to a friend, thus relinquishing direct control of the book, obliges one to qualify the weight of authority given to the printed text.

The inclusion of a list of *errata* at the end of the Salamanca edition shows clearly enough that the results were not fully satisfactory. As it happens, throughout the process of composition errors slipped through; these were partly corrected in the *errata* but others escaped detection, occasioning the proposals for improvements which one finds in subsequent editions (Cologne 1601 and Madrid 1780).

Valverde's edition follows the above principles, to which he adds a further, no less important one, formulated on p. vi and reiterated in note 23 (pp. xvii-xix): namely, that the volume which Sepúlveda himself prepared contains his final decisions regarding the ordering of documents and other preferences, and that therefore any subsequent editorial criteria must respect these. For this reason, it seems strange that Valverde himself does not respect this principle in certain minor cases. For example, when numbering the letters he gives first place to the Madrid edition's system (book, letter within the book), while the original system (simple correlative numbering in Roman numerals) is given afterward and in smaller type. This is a strange choice, especially given that the Madrid system erred in its numbering of book VI. Besides this, the editor's normalizing of the letters' *inscripciones* lacks congruency and, furthermore, is not always noted in the critical apparatus.

Valverde's edition is a careful one, deserving of praise, and showing an obvious willingness to respect the *textus receptus*. This leads him to be conservative, preserving non-classical spellings (*foemina, sylua*, etc.), unimportant variants (*acquiesco / adquiesco*), and odd conjoinings (*decimooctauo, benemerentem, magnifacio*); even so, his approach is not entirely systematic (for example, *id est* where S has *idest*). The rule of respecting the *usus scribendi* of humanist authors is explained most amply, and therefore the mention of *Letter 5.14.1* (Sepúlveda to Colines) should have been avoided as inappropriate, since Sepúlveda is not writing to the printer about spellings, but rather *forma et characteribus* here refers to format and fonts.

The editor has opted for a positive critical apparatus that bears witness to the *uariae lectiones* of older sources while almost never mentioning the readings, conjectures, and variants presented by editors of the nineteenth century or later. In fact, he has made no list of editions later than the eighteenth century containing selected letters of Sepúlveda, and it is difficult to see what criteria lead him to mention, for example, the Allen edition of Erasmus's correspondence while failing to note the recent critical edition by A. Moreno Hernández of *Letter* 5.8, or Á. Alcalá's edition of *Letter* 2.5 in the *Obras Completas* de Alfonso de Valdés.

Notwithstanding the above-noted faithfulness to the Salamanca text, the editor, in the critical apparatus, usually does not mention modifications of punctuation which he made to S, whether changes he himself has introduced, or those based on another edition or on a modern editor's suggestion, as in the following example from 1.4.7:

sic enim habeto, raro vulgatam Graecorum editionem a veteri translatione nostra discrepare (discrepat autem, ut nosti, saepissime) ut a Vaticano illo exemplari non dissentiat, ac ne te teneam, trecentis sexaginta quinque locis scripturae diversitatem adnotavimus.

(discrepat - saepissime) *dist.* Allen Valverde

In the critical apparatus, textual references are linked to paragraphs, even though this volume, like others in the Teubner series, contains line numbering in the inner margins. The referencing by paragraphs occasionally causes problems which would have been avoided had line numbers been used instead, as the following text (5.14.3) shows:

Centum exempla mihi satis erunt, quae tradi volo haeredibus Colinaei ut singula totidem meorum opusculorum codicibus addantur, praeter sex aut septem quae ad nos per transeuntes a Caesare tabellarios mitti volo. Quam curam idem orator ut beneficium absolvat suscipiet. Hoc cum effeceris, erit diligentiae tuae ut Trechselum, ne forte laborem inanem capiat, certiore facias.

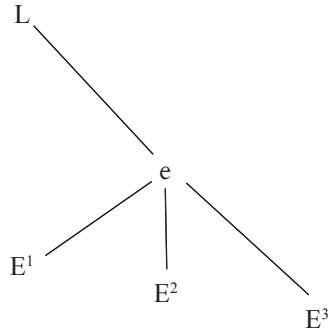
quae δ : que S

As it stands, this note is useless because the text contains two instances of *quae*. As it happens, the variant in question is the second one (*quae ad nos*); that is, line 13, not line 10.

Besides the critical apparatus the edition contains a very well developed apparatus of sources (though it seems a bit excessive to have included the full text of each reference). These are almost always correct, but one occasionally wishes for additional citations, usually an underlying classical source (especially Cicero and Pliny). As an example, in *Letter 2.8* one is not told that the literal source of *virtus ipsa sui lena est atque blanda conciliatrix* is Cic. *nat. deor.* 1.76 and that the following *in amore vinci turpissimum esse magnis auctoribus existimo* corresponds to Plin. *epist.* 4.1.5. Similarly, in *Letter 6.11* there is a failure to reference the famous *perit labor irritus anni* from Ov. *Met.* 1.274.

It seems odd that, contrary to normal procedure, printed editions are here cited in upper case letters while manuscripts are denoted in lower case – though perhaps this is simply a way of representing graphically the pre-eminence of the *editio princeps* of the *Collected Letters*. In any case, the reader gets used to it. An entirely different issue is the categorising as a manuscript (in lower case, therefore) of k (Biblioteca Pública del Estado de Soria, ms. L-Z, c. 14, fol. 444r-v) when this is in fact some printed pages bound in a factitious codex. (Furthermore, it is a copy of the edition which Valverde denotes as I¹ and so is redundant.)

A more problematic point is the *stemma* shown on p. xxiii, which is completely unacceptable and is derived from the organisation of witnesses proposed by Valverde on the preceding pages. The *stemma* contains not only the collated printed editions and manuscripts but also eight Greek letters which the author has introduced for the purpose of grouping editions and/or manuscripts. For example, the three editions of the *Epistolae clarorum uirorum* (E¹, E², E³) have their *consensus* indicated by the letter ω. It is true that the need to economise space makes this a common practice in critical apparatus, but its introduction into a *stemma* creates phantom sources that alter the entire textual tradition. Valverde's way of representing the above-mentioned point is contrary to all philological usage:



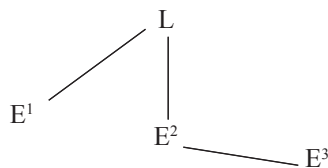
Anyone studying this illustration would conclude that the editor had postulated a lost source from which E^1 , E^2 and E^3 derive, without there being any direct relationship amongst these three. But the reality appears to be otherwise in light of readings such as 2.14.4:

...annus nouus eat Calendas Ianuarii
 eat $\omega LE^1 \times$: erat E^{2-3}

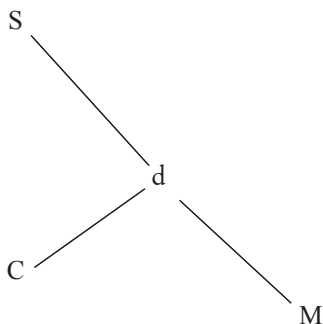
also 1.12.2:

...ea res magno mihi argumento fuit...
 magno mihi ωLE^1 : mihi magno E^{2-3}

In this case (without bringing up other issues) it appears, rather, that we are faced with the following type of tradition:



Along these same lines, the proposed distribution of the three editions of the *Epistolarum libri septem* creates a great deal of confusion:



In the introduction the editor lays out his doubts regarding the authority of C's corrections: *textus igitur hac in editione paranda retractatus fuit; utrum ab auctore ipso prius quam mortem obiisset, an ab eius scriba, affirmare non possumus* (p. x). Although his caution is praiseworthy as a premise for proceeding scientifically, in presenting these alternatives he fails to take into account a third and more plausible explanation: the Cologne editors simply worked from a copy of S whose errors they put right with a relative degree of correctness and a bit of *ingenium*. The divergences in C are no greater than, for example, those resulting from changing a verb's mode (3.16.31: *memorantur* SLfM : *memorentur* C) or substituting a word in a verse (2.1.7: *sales* SfM : *iocus* C). Actually, Valverde is not proposing the existence of a lost source older than C from which both C and M derive without there being any direct relationship between these two (which is what one would conclude from the *stemma*). He is simply indicating that there are frequent coincidences of CM in opposition to S. This is clearly true, because M was the product of serious philological labour, having been prepared in light of the previous two editions and incorporating corrections made in the Cologne edition (for example, in 3.5.2: *bellumne* CM: *bellum ne* S, not noted by Valverde). Then too, because M gives excessive weight to C, it also incorporates some of C's errors.

There is a fundamental methodological step in establishing texts which, had it been taken here, would have avoided a number of problems: namely, that when one prepares an edition based on a sixteenth century printed text, critical method alone is not enough, because it does not take into account the different emissions and issues in which a single edition can exist. One must apply bibliographic criteria in order to determine possible variants in one and the same edition. One finds none of this in Valverde's critical text; in fact, he appears to base his work on a single copy of S, even though he mentions the existence of more than a dozen copies in different libraries (in fact, it is easy for an edition to be found in different libraries). The truth is that variant issues of S do exist. This is easily demonstrated by a single instance drawn from the four copies held in the Biblioteca de Castilla-La Mancha (the old Biblioteca Pública del Estado) in Toledo:

num parua priuatorum damna quae ad publicum
bonum referentur a communi lege excipienda sint...

Valverde notes: referentur δf : referuntur S. But: S *exemplaria variantur*, referuntur 16572, 4/8437, 4/9664 : referentur 3180

It is clear, then, that various issues of S do exist. Consequently, only an edition that takes into account a number of copies can offer an acceptable text. Without this, it is impossible to explain some of the coincidences between the Columbine manuscript and C over against S. The valid reading should, in principle, be determined by the criteria established by Jaime Moll in his works on this matter and, as a last resort, should reproduce the most frequent reading.

The best course, then, is to do away with any attempt at a *stemma*, not only for the reasons given, but also because it creates the false impression that a multitude of witnesses exists. The reality is quite different: there are only three editions of the complete text (the above-mentioned S, C, M). The rest of the abbreviations refer to single pieces of correspondence or small collections of these (the most extensive being the nine letters contained in the *Epistolae clarorum virorum*, Lyon 1561). As an

example, one need only look at the whole branch of the *stemma* deriving from Aug., which transmits only a single epistle (5,8). At the same time, many of the witnesses are of minimal critical interest, deriving as they do from S; though admittedly the scope of a single letter often is too limited a basis upon which to draw critical conclusions of an apodictic quality on this point.

In view of the *stemma* and the organisation of witnesses in the introduction, there are a number of points worthy of attention and detailed discussion.

1) On p. xxiii Valverde affirms that S, C, M, and f *conscriptio[n]em ab auctore recognitam praebent*; but this is only true in the case of S, and one must have reservations even about this, since an editor other than the author mediated the text, and there are clear errors in it, as has already been said.

2) Consequently, when determining the text, Valverde gives the highest validity to readings from this group (which he calls ω): *lectiones ibi repertas praeferimus iis quae in aliis familiis inueniri possunt*. Nevertheless, it might be perfectly possible to find a variant (x vis à vis ω) in epistles that have witnesses independent of S. In that case, bringing to light the author's original intent would not then involve the criterion of the *consensus* of SCMf — which simply has the character of *descripti* of CMf — but rather other criteria: grammatical, lexical, stylistic, and so on. This can be seen in the following example:

2.13.9

Id uero quod affers de anno corrigendo, ut scilicet statim ac simul tot diebus annum unum minorem faciamus, quot errauimus, cum non uulgaris turbatio tum fastorum, tum negotiorum uideri posset si id fiat, minus mihi probatur quam si, dimissa diei intercalatione totidem annis quot sufficiant resarciendis diebus illis quibus anteuertimus, sensim ratio anni, uel instituta a Iulio Caesare, uel quae exstabat Nicaeni concilii tempore, restituatur.

negotiorum ω LE¹⁻³z : negociorum E² | posset ω : possit φ |
 probatur ω LE¹⁻²z : probatui E³ | resarciendis ω : sarciendis
 φ | longe minori ω : multo minore φ | hanc sententiam ω :
 sententiam meam hanc φ

This text contains simple spelling variants (*negotiorum*), mere errors (*probatui*) and some variants that are stylistic corrections (*resarciendis*). The reason for the variant *posset* / *possit*, however, is not clear; it could be a copyist's error. The question arises, then, as to whether the error should be attributed to S or L. The unanimity of ω does not reinforce the validity of its reading. Its *posset* could be preferred on the argument that it is *difficilior*, since the sequence *posset* – *si fiat* sounds strange. On the other hand, this could result from carelessness in S, the idea being that Sepúlveda would never have fallen into such an inconsistency. Whichever hypothesis one chooses, the decision does not rest on the unanimity of ω .

3) Valverde gives undue consideration to what he calls the *florilegium Columbinum* (f, Biblioteca Capitular y Colombina de Sevilla, ms. 59-2-7): he affirms that it contains 49 letters *ex Salmanticensi editione exscriptas* (p. viii) and that, consequently, one should recognise its validity as identical with that of every other *descriptum* of the tradition (m^2 , m^3 , I^2 , I^2 , etc.). It is even more astounding that he takes the grave errors of f (*numeris* for *muneris*; *prohiuere* for *prohibere*, etc.) to be instead *ingeniosas coniecturas* (p. ix). Thus, from every standpoint the critical value of f is nil.

In establishing the text, Valverde has opted rightly for a very conservative edition, since his interest was to highlight the importance of the *Epistolarum libri septem* in the form they took in the 1557 edition. When faced with readings of similar weight he usually favours S. Here I shall look first at corrections and then at conjectures. He introduces only a few of the former, but even so, they are not always necessary:

3.20.5

Segouienses *corr.* Valverde *recte* : Segobienses ω : gobrienses L

The uniform tradition in favour of *-b-* gives way before the *usus* of Sepúlveda in the whole body of his work, where one finds systematically the *-u-* spelling.

6.7. inscr.

Austrio ω *retinendum* : Austriae *corr.* Valverde

The adjective *Austrius -a -um* is well documented, so that it is senseless to make such an unsupported correction, and wiser to respect the *textus receptus*.

7.9. inscr.

Guilielmo M : Gulielmo SC Valverde | 7,9,1 Guilielme ω
: Gulielme *scr.* Valverde

The problem in this letter is S's inconsistent spelling of the name *Gulielmus* / *Guilielmus*, ratified by use. So, the critical edition could have retained this lack of uniformity; or, if choosing to make the spelling uniform, it would seem wiser to prefer the text's reading over that of the *inscriptio*, since the latter usually evidences a greater degree of intervention on the part of S's editor.

Regarding the conjectures: in keeping with the edition's conservative tone, none are introduced. Using a *conieci olim* (for example, in 2,7,1), the editor notes some conjectures –presumably from his doctoral thesis– in the critical apparatus (a good decision, since they are irrelevant). Nevertheless, the edited text is at times unsatisfactory and would have benefited from a more energetic intervention on the part of the editor, as in the following examples, in which I also include my own conjectures.

2.9.3

Tu modo da operam ut ingenium tuum agnoscas nec in
tanta studiorum occasione tempus nequiquam teras.

nequiquam *conieci* : nequidquam S : nequicquam CM Valverde

2.14.7

Plinius [...] subdit: “Bruma Capricorni octava scilicet parte a. d .VIII Calendas Ianuarii”

a. d. *conieci* (cf. Plin. *N.H.* 18,221) : ab ωφ Valverde

Here one finds an obvious error by either the copyist or the editor, which cannot be attributed to Sepúlveda, who knew very well the work of Pliny and the particular subject with which it dealt. There is no room for doubt in the citation from Pliny (Valverde reproduces it whole in the source apparatus) and the confusion can be easily explained by the similarity of the letter strokes.

3.7.1

Vetustissimus, ut nosti, mos fuit, atque utinam temporis prauitas eum non aboleuisset, ut proceres ac magni uiri historiam scriberent. Nam ut regem Iubam omittamus, scis item quantus uir fuerit Ptolemaeus, qui in Aegypto regnauit, quantus Aristobulus, ambo magni Alexandri purpurati, quis Thucydides, quis Xenophon, quis Tacitus et Sallustius et non absque reuerentia nominandus Titus Liuius; sed ut numerosissimam classem istorum omittamus, ueniendum est ad illum qui solus rationi meae patrocinari potest, diuum Iulium Caesarem, iudicio meo hominum ultimum.

item *conieci* : enim SCM Valverde

I have reproduced completely this long period so that one can appreciate the impossibility of *enim* being allowed by the syntax. Its inclusion would imply that there is a parenthetical clause from *scis* to *Liuius*; and oddly enough, this would be reinforced by the reiteration of *ut ... omittamus* which follows. It might be possible to suppose that there is, in fact, such a parenthesis and that the following *sed* has a resumptive force, but when one actually reads the complete period that way, the result is

so clumsy that it seems unacceptable. One might further ask what explanation *enim* is supposed to introduce. Conjecturing *item* (or, less likely, *etiam*) avoids this anacoluthon and aids the flow of thought. Nevertheless, the suspicion remains that Pedro Dávila, Marquis of Las Navas and the author of this letter, was not a good Latinist and needed someone to retouch the epistle for him; the text would be perfectly fine without the colon *nam ut regem Iubam omittamus*. Was this a later addition to the original redaction? If one accepts this hypothesis, was it added by Sepúlveda for his edition or by a friend of the Marquess before it was originally sent?

7.1.29

Non igitur aperta et explicata Christi fides priscis vel Hebraeis vel gentilibus necessaria erat ad salutem, sed intacta et complicata satis fuisse praesidii theologi magno consensu declarant, auctorem adhibentes Paulum, qui *Ad Hebraeos* scribens (capite 11): “Oportet”, inquit, “accidentem ad Deum credere, quia est et inquirentibus se remunerator existit”.

intacta *conieci* : in tecta SCM Valverde

2.14.4

In Ouidii uero uersu, quod sol nouus et annus nouus eat Calendis Ianuarii, non fuisse seruatum exactum illud quod Graeci dicunt, ut scilicet propterea uelimus eam fuisse diem brumae cum sol Capricornum attingit, perspicue ostendit auctor idem inferius, qui scribit secundo post Carmentalia die, XVI scilicet Calendas Februarii, ingressum solis in Aquarium, qui utique esse nulla ratione posset si ipsis Calendis sol primum attigisset Capricornium.

Calendis Ianuarii *scripsi* : Kalend. Ianuar. ω : Cal. Ianuar φ : Calendas Ianuarii Valverde | eat ωLE¹κ : erat LE²⁻³ | perspicue ω : perspicuum φ | *primum* qui ωLE¹⁻²κ : quin E³

In conclusion: this edition makes the text of the *Complete Letters* of Sepúlveda available to the researcher. It includes a significant study of the sources, and considerable effort has been made to bring together the manuscript and printed sources which contain any or all of the Cordoban humanist's letters. Nevertheless, the critical principles upon which it is based are, in my opinion, not wholly satisfactory for several reasons: (1) the *stemma* which it presents is unacceptable, (2) no notice is taken of the various emissions and issues of S, (3) punctuation is changed without explanation, and (4) nearly all the editors who have published letters of Sepúlveda from the nineteenth century onward are missing.

Finally, another group of Sepúlveda's letters exists which is separate from the *Epistolarum libri septem*. It is quite true that S is a worthy literary work in its own right. Yet the existence of another thirty documents, belonging to the same class but preserved through other channels, must oblige one to take into account the whole epistolary *corpus* when making any study of how Sepúlveda, considered the most Ciceronian of Spanish Humanist authors, cultivated the art of letter writing. It makes one wish for another volume to complement this one that would examine the whole of his correspondence.

IGNACIO J. GARCÍA PINILLA
Universidad de Castilla-La Mancha
Ignacio.GPinilla@uclm.es