

monarch realized that he had to placate the Toledan nobility, divided into two family factions: the Alvarez and the Mendoza.

By painting a romantic picture of a “rebel” Garcilaso inspired by “republican zeal” but soon turned into a “model imperial servant” by “political opportunism,” Graf removes the poet too quickly from the complex nationalist resentments over economic privileges that fueled the rebellion (1319–20). Garcilaso’s “disillusionment” with the emperor peaked much earlier than his 1532 expulsion to an island on the Danube (1320). Although Graf calls Garcilaso’s older brother, Pedro Laso, an “ultramoderate who defected back to the royalist camp when the *comunero* movement radicalized” (1320), Charles did not allow Pedro Laso back into Toledo until 1531; indeed, the poet spent most of his short life trying to patch things up between the two. (I note these tensions in my article “Self-Fashioning in Spain: Garcilaso de la Vega,” *Romanic Review* 83 [1992]: 517–38.)

The second aspect concerns Graf’s elision of women from Garcilaso’s biography, a glaring example of their general disappearance from the historical record. The most eventful discovery for Garcilaso studies in recent years, the identity of the mother of the poet’s illegitimate son, Lorenzo Suárez de Figueroa (thanks to Carmen Vaquero Serrano, we now know her to be Guiomar Carrillo, daughter of Fernando de Ribadeneira), helps also to document Garcilaso’s political aggravations. The poet and the young noblewoman were single at the time she became pregnant, and both belonged to distinguished Toledan families. There was, then, no reason for the lovers not to marry, save for the significant deterrent that Carrillo belonged to a family of *comuneros*; like Pedro Laso, her brother never received royal pardon for his treasonable conduct (Carmen Vaquero Serrano, *Garcilaso: Aportes para una nueva biografía* [Toledo: Oretania, 1996]). While Garcilaso never once mentions Carrillo by name, he flouted the emperor’s control by publicly recognizing the son as his own, by giving him one of the most illustrious of his family’s names, and by having his own mother raise the boy in his household.

Graf rightly asserts that Garcilaso’s strained relations with Charles resound in his poetry, which, regardless of its amorous content, “does not escape the political realities of Hapsburg Spain” (1327). These realities, however, can never be complete or

historically accurate until they include women’s agency. Although Garcilaso chafed under imperial rule, more often than not this rule was exercised by the empress Isabel de Portugal, appointed by Charles “lieutenant general and governor of the realm” in his absence. After the emperor’s coronation in Bologna, Isabel dispatched Garcilaso to the Franco-Spanish border to spy on the French (Archivo General de Simancas, Estado, *leg.* 20, *fols.* 265–67, 16 Aug. 1530). Despite what most literary histories repeat, it was not Charles—who, as usual, was out of the country—but Isabel who ordered Garcilaso’s expulsion to the Danubian isle. Furious over his presence at a wedding she did not authorize, the empress wrote Charles that she had exiled the poet, who had already left Castile with the duke of Alba, for responding airily to her magistrate in the Basque country (Archivo General de Simancas, Estado, *leg.* 24, *fols.* 395–96, 19 Feb. 1532).

Nor was women’s agency in early modern Spain limited to royalty. While Graf names the male “principal instigators” of the *comunero* rebellion (1319), he leaves out María Pacheco, Juan de Padilla’s wife. A member of the Mendoza clan, she was condemned to death for continuing the struggle after her husband’s beheading, but she escaped to Portugal, where she taught Greek and Latin. As feminist historians and literary critics have known for some time, we need only search the archives to find the female presence so long kept from public view.

Anne J. Cruz
University of Illinois, Chicago

TO THE EDITOR:

A few months ago my interest was particularly aroused by the announcement of a forthcoming article in *PMLA*, written from, it seemed, a new-historicist point of view and dealing with the early modern Spanish poet Garcilaso de la Vega. The close association and the conflicts of this poet with the emperor Charles V have been known of for a long time; I was eager to read a more profound analysis of this relationship and its political implications.

It is an understatement to say that I was disappointed when I read E. C. Graf’s “From Scipio to Nero to the Self: The Exemplary Politics of Stoicism in Garcilaso de la Vega’s Elegies”: more than disappointed, I was dismayed. I will limit my remarks

here to three examples of Graf's inability to understand, let alone interpret, Garcilaso's poetry.

Graf cites only one edition of Garcilaso's poetry, the 1969 edition of *Poesías castellanas completas* done by Elias L. Rivers for the student series Clásicos Castalia. While the text of this edition is basically dependable, the annotations are minimal, inappropriate for scholarly purposes. (Graf does include in his list of works cited the classical commentaries of Brocense, Herrera, Tamayo de Vargas, and Azara, first published centuries ago and reprinted in 1972 by Antonio Gallego Morell.) He should instead have used the latest critical edition, done by Bienvenido Morros in 1995 for the Biblioteca clásica; this would have helped him avoid his perhaps most glaring error.

On page 1326 Graf writes of Garcilaso's second elegy:

In a poem that is so explicitly about form, that so blatantly reifies the poetic self and then runs the ideological gamut from the irretrievable ashes of Vergilian epic to the glorification of Senecan contempt, it is precisely at this moment, in which political suicide and tyrannical murder become indistinguishable, that Garcilaso writes the syntactically impossible. At the end of line 144, heroic things literally fall apart. The singular masculine adjective "desatado" 'untied' cannot refer to the plural feminine substantive "venas" 'veins'; but neither can it modify the poetic self of "en este dulce error muero contento" 'upon this sweet mistake do I die content' without leaving "las venas dulcemente" 'his veins sweetly' to dangle.

It is obviously true that in line 144 normal Spanish syntax is violated, as briefly indicated by Rivers's note referring to the Greek accusative. In his own note 23 Graf consults Herrera's brief comment on "desatado" as a "Grecismo," but he does not understand this reference to the Greek accusative: he says that "Herrera appears to use the term 'Greekism' to indicate a line of poetry in which the normal morphological rules of Spanish are temporarily suspended for the sake of rhyme." Morros explains the Greek accusative by paraphrasing line 144: "Es decir: 'dulcemente desatado por lo que respecta a las venas' (se trata del acusativo griego de parte o de

relación)" 'That is, "sweetly undone with respect to his veins" (it is a case of the Greek accusative of part or relationship).' Morros goes on to say that we find the same construction in Garcilaso's Horatian ode and, I might add, in the poetry of Fray Luis de León, Góngora, and other well-known poets. It is not a matter of Spanish syntactic breakdown but of a fairly common Spanish imitation, in poetry, of classical syntax (following the example of Latin poets and their so-called Greek accusative, used instead of the normal Latin ablative in such cases).

Almost as glaring a misreading is the pun that Graf's ear apparently led him to detect in line 1 of Garcilaso's second elegy:

Indeed, the first thing we note in the second elegy is the pun on the name of Garcilaso's friend and fellow poet Joan Boscà de Almugaver: "Aquí, Boscán, donde" sounds like "Aquí buscando" 'Searching here,' an idea reinforced by the "donde" 'where' of the same line and later by the "nos hallamos" 'we find ourselves' of line 5. In this way Garcilaso emphasizes the fumbling nature of Charles V's quest for mystical access [. . .]. (1323)

But for centuries this "pun" has gone unnoted by any Spanish ear. And if there were a pun here, how could we find it to be related in any way to Charles V's imperial mission?

Graf's translations of Garcilaso's lines often do not help the English reader. For his translations he tries to keep the rhyme scheme and has invented a strange form, an English eleven-syllable line, which seldom turns out to be a normal iambic pentameter (the English Renaissance cognate of the Spanish eleven-syllable line). His translation of one tercet (lines 94–96 of the first elegy) will suffice as an example:

veráse allí que como polvo al viento,
así se deshará nuestra fatiga
ante quien s'endereza nuestro intento.

Then it will be seen that like dust to the wind,
Our suffering will be in this way undone
Before him who straightens out what drove
our minds. (1322)

Line 96 has never required an explanatory note; I take the obvious meaning to be "Before him to

whom our effort is addressed.” I cannot understand Graf’s English translation in itself, much less its relation to the Spanish original.

A lot more could be said about this article, but to do so would be an abuse of space. I can only add, in conclusion, that normally I consider publication in *PMLA* to be one of the highest honors to be bestowed on an article written by a member of the MLA. But in this case it is clear that the article had not been adequately reviewed before publication.

Elias L. Rivers

State University of New York, Stony Brook

Reply:

I would like to thank Anne J. Cruz and Elias L. Rivers for taking the time to read my article on Garcilaso de la Vega and for sharing their extensive knowledge concerning several details that I did not explore to the extent that I should have. A number of their comments are suggestive and helpful, although I am not convinced by all of them.

Cruz is certainly right to indicate that the late date of 1531 for the return of the poet’s brother to Toledo is telling of an ever-present tension between the Hapsburgs and the Spanish nobility. Nevertheless, just how, when, or where Garcilaso’s disillusionment with Charles V “peaked” will only ever be a matter of debate, and my essay devotes a significant number of pages to showing that the potential for such *desengaño* was there all along. I would like to assure Cruz that it was never my intention at any point in my essay to remove the poet from the political complexities of his day. To the contrary, I take as a given that all the categories we are forced to use when mapping the early modern ideological terrain—imperialist, noble, nationalist, republican, and so on—are always already dynamically related to one another and that the boundaries between them are particularly uncertain when we consider in-between cases like Garcilaso. For this reason, I would still argue that the nationalist rebellion against the newly installed Flemish ministers of the Hospital del Nuncio anticipates the republican zeal of the *comunero* rebellion. Cruz’s easy distinction between the insurrection of 1519 and the revolution of 1520–21 strikes me as specious. Nor am I certain just how she arrives at my having erred by “painting a romantic picture” of the poet, since in the very sentence

that she cites as an example of my misrepresentation I associate Garcilaso with “the kind of modern political pragmatism advocated by Machiavelli” (1320).

The remainder of Cruz’s comments are far more insightful. Garcilaso’s love affair with Guiomar Carrillo is precisely in line with my reading of the political significance of his supposedly transcendental sentimentality, and I thank Cruz for bringing Carmen Vaquero Serrano’s book to my attention. In addition, Cruz’s insistence that we pay attention to the implications and effects of the kind of female agencies found in Isabel de Portugal and María Pacheco is duly noted. Such attention, I hope, will go much further than simply uncovering “the female presence so long kept from public view” and yield real insight into the dynamics of gender in early modern events, not least of which should be the production of literature.

Rivers’s comments are also informative, although they evince a spirit emblematic of the traditionalism that still rages in early modern Hispanism. I must confess to having always been puzzled when listening to mid-career Hispanists speak of a crisis or lament the orthodoxy in early modern peninsular studies. I have always believed that medieval and golden age Hispanism’s impressive legacy of philological and historical work would eventually allow those few interdisciplinary approaches responsible enough to take it into account to begin to cultivate interesting ways of scrutinizing a field that has no justifiable reason to be as boring as it has become. But I think I am beginning to understand the frustration involved here. I indeed deserve to be upbraided for what Rivers calls my “most glaring error,” in the omission of a more extended commentary on Garcilaso’s use of the Greek accusative, by which an adjective (normally one associated with a body part) is transferred into an epithet for a person. But evidently Rivers would have us believe that the origin of such a technique in Latin poets like Horace and Vergil precludes us ipso facto from interpreting its meaning even in the radically peculiar context of a poetic suicide. I am dismayed, though hardly surprised, to find that a professional critic of Rivers’s caliber envisions the early modern poets as effecting little beyond a stumbling mimicry of their classical forebears. The fact that such a technique was quite startling even to a Latin ear (hence its association with a “Greekish” style) would mean nothing to