

La colección de libros impresos del IV Duque de Uceda en la Biblioteca Nacional de España. Estudio y catálogo. By MARGARITA MARTÍN VELASCO. Pp. 582. Madrid: Calambur-CEEH-BNE. 2009. ISBN: 978-84-8359-180-2

Anyone who has spent time working with early modern texts in the Biblioteca Nacional de España in Madrid will quite likely have had the good fortune to find themselves handling a copy of one of the IV Duke of Uceda's books or manuscripts, easily recognizable in their green binding with the coat of arms of the Duke in the centre. Indeed, the BNE holds a large number printed and manuscript volumes from the Duke's library; a smaller number are to be found in the Biblioteca General de Navarra, the Real Colegiata de Roncesvalles, and the Biblioteca Marqués de Valdecilla of the Universidad Complutense of Madrid.

In this extremely informative and well-researched volume, Margarita Martín Velasco has set out to track down and catalogue the books that belonged to the IV Duke, Juan Francisco Pacheco, before and during the time he was Viceroy in Sicily. In 1696 he returned to the

Peninsula, having sent his vast library on ahead of him. As part of the process, which required a special authorization from the Inquisition, he had his librarian, Joannes Sylvester, catalogue the whole collection. This catalogue, which lists some 2076 entries, is dated 1692 and is the object of study of this current volume.

As well as transcribing Sylvester's catalogue and identifying all of the entries and, in particular, locating those copies to be found in the BNE, Martín Velasco also gives us a very useful short biography of the IV Duke, who spent most of his life in service to the Spanish monarchy. It was, however, the sudden change of allegiance in the last years of his life, when he switched loyalties from Philip V to the Archduke Charles III during the War of the Spanish Succession, that merits most discussion, for the simple reason that it was this change that led to the sequestration of Uceda's library and its incorporation into the Royal Library, from whence it eventually passed into the Biblioteca Nacional. Martín Velasco provides an interesting account of the Duke's struggles of conscience in the matter of where his loyalties lay, especially after he learned of the death in captivity of two of his noble friends: the Duke of Medinaceli and the Marquis of Leganés, both accused (but never actually tried) of betraying the cause of Philip V. Once he threw his lot in with the Austrian pretender, he could never return to the Peninsula or recuperate his estates and possessions there, among them his precious library. He died in Vienna in 1718.

Although Uceda suffered in exile the consequences of what was seen in Spain as treason, the one advantage for book lovers is that it meant that his superb library, one of the largest ever assembled in seventeenth-century Spain, remained intact and not sold at public auction and dispersed after his death as was the fate of most libraries of the time. Martín Velasco's reconstruction of the library as it was in 1692 has provided all those working on private libraries, book-ownership, and library inventories with an excellent tool for further research. The first chapter is a useful overview of current studies on readers and book ownership in this period, with particular emphasis on the various inventories of Uceda's library; chapters two and three concern his life and participation in the War of the Spanish Succession; chapter four examines various contemporary treatises on the organization of a library and their influence on the criteria chosen by Joannes Sylvester for the organization of the Duke's library, which Martín Velasco rightly designates a 'biblioteca museo'; but the meat of the volume is Part II, the catalogue of Uceda's books and the very helpful index of authors that accompanies it. Interestingly, Martín Velasco found that there are many books that belonged to Uceda now in the BNE that are not in Sylvester's catalogue, possibly as many as 40 per cent of those currently there. She was able to link 895 entries in Sylvester's list with 1162 actual volumes in the BNE. This would suggest that either the Duke added to his collection after the inventory was carried out in 1692 and before he returned to Spain in 1696 (quite likely), and/or that not all the books he owned at that time were listed by Sylvester (also quite likely).

The production standards of the volume are generally high, with some helpful illustrations; there are, however, some very annoying errata, such as the date of his death, given as 1781 on p. 52 (which would have made him 132 years old!), or the lack of footnote 73 on p. 84 (we are given the actual footnote text but not the number in the main text that it refers to), or the numerous errors of orthography and punctuation. A book of this quality needed and deserved better proof reading from all concerned in its production. It remains, however, an important contribution to the growing field of studies on the history of the book and its author is to be congratulated on the way she has set about her task in describing and locating the 2076 entries.