

The Spanish Picaresque Novel and the Point of View (Cambridge Iberian and Latin American Studies)

Francisco Rico

The Spanish picaresque novel of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is not only a major genre in its own right; it was a decisive influence on the subsequent literature of Spain and the development of the modern European novel. When first published Professor Rico's book broke new ground by analysing historically and critically the form of the picaresque, particularly the narrative style of the three greatest novels of this genre, *Lazarillo de Tormes*, *Guzman de Alfarache* and *Quevedo's Buscon*. The author shows how *Lazarillo's* and *Guzman's* fictional autobiographies made a highly original break with contemporary theory by attempting to see from within the life of people of low rank, rogues and buffoons. The point of view of the narrator in these novels, becomes the unifying element; plot, structure and style are all manifestations of a fully developed narrative persona. For this 1984 translation, the author updated the bibliography and extended his account of the later development of the picaresque in the postscript. This study will be of value to students of comparative literature as well as those studying the picaresque as a major topic in Spanish courses.

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