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More on “Libros de caballería” and “Libros de caballerías”

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In the fall, 1976 number of *La corónica*, B. Bussell Thompson has taken me to task for censuring the use of the term “libros de caballería,” which I stated to be unknown before the mid-nineteenth century, since Martín de Sarmiento had used it a century earlier. I am pleased that Thompson has documented the earlier use of “caballería”; although it is true that Barton Sholod had quoted Sarmiento's use of the term in his *Memorias para la historia de la poesía y los poetas españoles* (see Sholod's “Fray Martín Sarmiento, *Amadís de Gaula* and the Spanish Chivalric ‘Genre,’” *Studies in Honor of Mario A. Pei*, UNCSRL, 114 [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972], p. 198), there was no way to be sure that this was what Sarmiento had in fact [p. 117] written and not an error of the none-too-accurate Buenos Aires, 1942 edition, which was all either Sholod or myself had at hand. That Sarmiento had written this was in my mind particularly doubtful, because in the same article, p. 195, Sholod quotes a

manuscript copy of a manuscript of Sarmiento which uses the plural. It is thus particularly valuable that Thompson has further documented Sarmiento's use of the singular form.

I would, however, like to state the reasons why, Sarmiento to the contrary, I maintain my original position that "libros de caballerías" is the correct term and should be used exclusively "by any scholar worth his salt," as Thompson paraphrases me. Against the evidence of Sarmiento, the "error involuntario" of *BAE* 40, which is clearly the source of the singular's popularity and one use by the *Diccionario de Autoridades*, in explaining a frase hecha,¹ we have the evidence of Cervantes, who repeatedly and exclusively uses the plural form, as does Avellaneda. Lope de Vega used the plural form in the dedication to *El desconfiado* (cited by Henry Thomas, *Spanish and Portuguese Romances of Chivalry* [Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1920], p. 154), and in *El galán escarmentado* and *Las fortunas de Diana* (cited by Carlos Fernández Gómez, *Vocabulario de Lope* [Madrid: Real Academia Española, 1971]). Tirso used the plural in *La fingida*

¹Whereas the *Diccionario* evidently prefers the plural form. Diego Clemencín also used the singular in his *Biblioteca de libros de caballería*, ed. J. Givanel Mas, Publicaciones cervantinas, 3 (Barcelona, 1942), pp. Viii, 5, and 54, but he uses the plural on pp. 10, 24, 32, 51, 62, and many times in his edition of *Don Quijote*; I have found five examples from rapidly skimming the prologue alone.

Arcadia,² and the literary critic Francisco López Pinciano did likewise in his *Philosophía antigua poética*.³ The plural was used by Santa Teresa in her *Vida*,⁴ and by Pedro de Ribadeneira in his life of Loyola.⁵ The plural was also used by Fran Luis de Granada (cited by Thomas, p. 173), Pedro Malón de Chaide (p. 174), and Francisco Cervantes de Salazar (pp. 164-65), as well as the lesser-known Vanegas del Busto (p. 168) and Luis de Guzmán (p. 167). Edward Glaser cites uses of the plural by Francisco Díaz Romano, Agustín Salucio, Juan de Tolosa, Marco Antonio de Camos, Pedro

²Cited by Werner Krauss, "Die Kritik des Siglo de Oro am Ritter- und Schäferroman," *Homenatge a Antoni Rubió i Lluch* (Barcelona, 1936), I, pp. 225-46, at p. 243, the passage may be found on p. 1408 of Volume II of the edition of Tirso's *Obras dramáticas* by Blanca de los Ríos, 2nd ed. (Madrid: Aguilar, 1962).

³Ed. Alfredo Carballo Picazo, reimpresión (Madrid: CSIC, 1973), III, 177.

⁴Edited from the autograph by Efrén de la Madre de Dios, O.C.D., and Otger Steggink, O. Carm., 4th ed. (Madrid: Editorial Católica, 1974), p. 30.

⁵*BAE* 60, p. 14b.

de la Vega, and Benito Remigio Noydens.⁶

The plural form is used by Francisco de Monzón in his *Espejo del príncipe cristiano*,⁷ and in the answer of “Capitán Salazar” to the humorous “Carta del bachiller de Arcadia,” most easily consulted in *BAE*, 176, p. 38. It is used by Luis Zapata in his *Miscelánea*,⁸ and by the lexicographer Covarrubias, as well as by his successor Noydens (Glaser p. 408); it was used in the eighteenth century by Gregorio Mayáns y Siscar, in his *Vida de Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra*.⁹ Although the authors of the romances of chivalry themselves do not often use the term, since they customarily speak of their works as “historias” or “crónicas,” it is used by Ortúñez de Calahorra in the prologue to his *Espejo de*

⁶“Nuevos datos sobre la crítica de los libros de caballerías en los siglos XVI y XVII,” *AEM* 3 (1966), 393-410.

⁷Cited by Marcel Bataillon, *Erasmus y España*, trans. Antonio Alatorre, 2nd ed. (Mexico; Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1966), p. 629.

⁸Ed. Isidoro Montiel (Madrid: Castilla, 1949), I, 79.

⁹Ed. Antonio Mestre, *Clásicos Castellanos*, 172 (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1972), pp 27, 31, 35, 37, 46, 82, 127-28.

*príncipes y caballeros.*¹⁰

The plural is found in the inquisitorial documents concerning Román Ramírez,¹¹ and is used in a New World document asking for the prohibition of the romances.¹² The plural is used by Nicolás Antonio in describing two works whose titles he does not know (*Bibliotheca Hispana Nova*, II, 668). It is the term used in the *Diccionario de Autoridades*, which cites as its authorities, besides Cervantes, Jerónimo Gracián de la Madre de Dios and the historian Mariana, and is in fact the term officially authorized by the current Academy dictionary. [p. 118]

While I believe it would be possible to add to the above examples, they are, I think, sufficient to make my point: while the precedents for the use of “libros de caballería” are very limited,¹³ and are not earlier than 1700, much less contemporary with the romances of chivalry themselves, the precedents for the use of

¹⁰Ed. Daniel Eisenberg, *Clásicos Castellanos*, 193-98 (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1975), I, 14.

¹¹L. P. Harvey, “Oral Composition and the Performance of Novels of Chivalry in Spain,” *FMLS*, 10 (1974), 270-86, at p. 280.

¹²Antonio E. Serrano Redonnet, “Prohibición de libros en el primer sínodo santiagués,” *RFH*, 5 (1943), 162-66, at p. 165.

¹³In gathering the above examples I have found no further instances of “libros de caballería” save those mentioned above.

“libros de caballerías” are overwhelming. I therefore continue to defend it as the correct term.