

UNA DAMA ANDANTE



PIEDAD ZENEA DE BOBADILLA

This lady, who is called an andante, in the best sense of the word, is not going to go around the world crying about war, but simply to preach verses of the gospel of art, and through them to sing Spanish glories.

This lady has a name that sounds like the history of Spain, because it says poetry, revolutions and divisions: she is called Piedad Zenea.

The tragic death of her father and other circumstances removed this lady from the dangers of localism, a deadly environment for all clear intelligence and for all highly spirited individuals. Born in Cuba, she was educated in the United States, traveled throughout much of Europe, lived in Paris and married a full-blooded Spaniard. And since this Spaniard is called Emilio Bobadilla, the champion of truth against the pious indulgences of the good Juan Valera (Let him who can take, take), it is easy to understand what the meaning of his influence must have been.

Now, Piedad Zenea is going to use her cosmopolitanism to sing about Spain, singing her art.

After a long study done in collaboration with her husband, of whom Piedad, with a perfectly feminine feeling, he only considers himself a spokesperson, she embarks on a journey through Europe and America to give lectures on classical Spanish painting. Her preparatory studies have dealt with the six culminating figures of the great century: El Greco, Velazquez, Murillo, Ribera, Zurbaran and Cano. And these will be the subject of the series of lectures that she will give successively in Paris, London, New York and other cities in

America, to then return to Europe and continue in Belgium, Holland, Austria and Germany, and to the Scandinavian countries.

As the lecturer speaks English and French as well as Spanish (or perhaps better, because she has the bad taste of mixing too many French phrases in private conversation), in many countries she will deliver her lectures in the corresponding language, which will have much more appeal.

Forgive me, illustrious lady, for not inserting a paragraph here pondering the merit of these future conferences, but I never express an opinion on what I do not know. But that doesn't matter; because the greatest of all merits is in this beautiful trait of feminine Quixotism, which Piedad Zenea inaugurates.

To put it in parentheses, a large dose of Sanchopanzism can result from this Quixotism, since spreading the beauties of Spain throughout the world is equivalent to encouraging visits to that country.

The lectures will be given in the favorite spots of elegant society (in the chicest or most snobbish places, as my illustrious friend would say). The first, those in Paris, will be at the Theatre Femina on the avenue des Champs-Elysees.

If Piedad Zenea only had to address the intelligent public, she would just say that the subject of her lectures: among that medium, Velazquez and Murillo are likely to have more influence than Edward VII or Nicholas II.

But Piedad Zenea needs to be examined, too, and preferably by the elegant society, for the same reason that made the parable of the shepherd, who pursues the lost sheep and rejoices when he has found it, have more zeal and by other meaning is usually in opposite conditions to the first. That is why the lady-errant wanted to receive the support of royal hands, before embarking on her adventure. In Madrid she has received from the Royal Family all the moral support asked of them, and that will certainly transcend to other European Courts. The lady-errant, in recounting her preparations for the journey, has adamantly displayed her gratitude for this royal protection and for her desire to make it public through the articles that the press would be willing to publish on the matter, and I gladly agreed to that desire.

It should be noted, however, that Piedad Zenea's company should be seen, above all, as a Spanish national company. This is how the Republicans perceive it at this time, and I say this time, because when Jacinto Benavente invited Cuba's Head of State, to the inauguration of the *Teatro de los Ninos*, they spoke badly about the plays. Among the stand outs, without leaving out, of course, the great Costa (as everyone calls him with dissent from the undersigned), Piedad Zenea has heard the warmest expressions of enthusiasm.

And I, who, though insignificant, because I have never enjoyed parliamentary immunity, have at least the distinction of being, like Ibsen's hero, absolutely alone, I ask you to accept mine, too.

EMILIO H. DEL VILLAR

MUSA GITANA (CANCION DOLIENTE)

Musa gitana
de ojazos negros,
musa gitana
de mis desvelos
no me desprecies!
que estoy enfermo,
y sin el fuego de tus amores
se que me muero.
Mirame alegre,
como los hiciste en otro tiempo;
no seas malal
yo te lo ruego,
yo te lo exijo
por las cenizas de quien mas quiero,
por las cenizas de mi abuelita
que esta en los cielos.

II

Estoy muy triste,
me estoy muriendo,
se que en tu alma
no ha sentimientos,
se muchas cosas, musa gitana,
Cuando te mueras tenio por cierto!
todas las flores del camposanto
se Iran abriendo
para contarte lo que en la tumba
dije en secreto
para contarte lo que en la vida
me daba miedo,
para decirte que la hermosura
que en este mundo derriba imperios
tan solo sirve para comida,
tan solo sirve para alimento
de los gusanos
que se revuelven entre los huesos,
como tiranos que se apoderan
de nuestros cuerpos

Musa gitana!
no me des celos
no me desprecies
que estoy enfermo,
y sin el fuego de tus amores
se que me muero.

GONZALO DIAZ LOPEZ