



The Spanish Sharper

Francisco de Quevedo

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A classic picaresque novel, Francisco de Quevedo's "The Spanish Sharper" chronicles the adventures of Don Pablos, a buscón or swindler, who aims in life to learn virtue and to become a caballero, or gentleman, both of which he fails miserably at. The work is a notable piece of satire that criticizes not only Spanish society but the protagonist Pablos himself. His ambition to elevate his status to that of a gentleman is, in Quevedo's opinion, unobtainable; as such aspirations from the lower classes would only destabilize the social order. Written around 1604 and first published in Spanish as "El Buscón" in 1626, "The Spanish Sharper" stands as one of the earliest and premier examples of the popular genre of Spanish literature known as the picaresque novel.

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