

LA BUENA REPUTACIÓN

A Good Reputation



UK panel's choice Year 2015

Author: [Ignacio Martínez de Pisón](#) [1]

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Language: Spanish

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Genre: Literature

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Melilla, the nineteen fifties. Faced with the decolonisation of Morocco, the Spanish inhabitants of the Protectorate are forced to return to the Iberian Peninsula. North African Hebrews hope to stop this exodus by installing themselves in the recently created state of Israel. In this context of uncertainty, a middle aged couple worry about their future and that of their two children. The husband, Samuel, is a Sephardic Jew; his wife, Mercedes, is Catholic. In this saga, which continues into the eighties, the author explores family conflicts, the value of secrets and the persistence of the past. *La Buena Reputación* is a novel about inheritance. Inheritance in the strict sense because the lives of the characters are determined by a will. But also in the wider sense, because all their fates are written down in a pre-existent dialectic in which it is hard find a place.

UK panellists opinion:

La Buena Reputación is a family saga spanning the course of thirty years from the 1950s to the 1980s and focusing on the lives of Samuel and Mercedes, their daughters, Miriam and Sara, and two of their grandchildren, Miriam's sons Elias and Daniel. The story begins in 1950s Melilla where Samuel and Mercedes live with Miriam, twenty, and Sara who is in her late teens. The family straddles two cultures as Samuel is Jewish and grew up in Melilla's Jewish communities, one of the few to thrive at that time, and Mercedes, a Catholic, first came to Melilla due to her father's military posting there.

Martínez de Pisón has a readable and consistent style and La Buena Reputación is well written and constructed. The dialogue is a particular strength as Martínez de Pisón has made excellent use of register, vocabulary and forms of address to give a sense of his characters' personalities, how they see themselves and their relationships with one another and how these change over time

(...) the lives of the different characters and the related plotlines blend smoothly to create a believable and coherent picture of a family and their community and there are some unexpected twists and turns (...)

These themes of family relationships, identity and belonging, appearances versus reality and intercultural relationships should travel well to the UK and appeal to UK readers.

From the reader's report by [Isabelle Kaufeler](#) [3]

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Additional information **Prizes and reviews:**

"His finest novel. A family saga that is also a story of frontiers, secrets, prejudices and suspicion (...) Pisón is now a master of his trade." J. M. Pozuelo Yvancos, ABC

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